

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 19, 2024

The Council Meeting of Tuesday, March 19, 2024 was called to order by Council President, Thomas Lepera, at 6:30 PM in Municipal Hall Chambers, 235 East Airy Street, Norristown, PA.

There was a **Moment of Silence** followed by the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

The following Council members were in attendance:

Rebecca Smith
Lauren Hughes
William McCoy
Dustin Queenan
Thomas Lepera

Also in attendance were:

Acting Municipal Administrator, Fire Chief Thomas O'Donnell; Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor; Police Chief Jacqueline Bailey-Davis; Sean Turner, Assistant Director of Planning and Municipal Development; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works; Richard Lockhart, Assistant Fire Chief; Bri'Ana Hawkins, Recreation Director

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hughes, seconded by Vice President Queenan**, to approve the Minutes of the March 5, 2024 Council Meeting. **The motion passed 5-0.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

Council President Lepera announced that Council met in Executive Session prior to the Council Meeting to discuss personnel and real property issues.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carolyn Fisher – She asked if there could be a speed bump on the 300 block of Marshall Street. She was told to provide the information to Thomas Odenigbo, Public Works Director.

Jim Watters, Hamilton Street – He said it's been two years since he graduated from the Citizens Leadership Academy. He said he is disappointed with the condition of parts of Norristown. He provided a copy of a graph to Council President that he gave to the Norristown School Board. He said that he researched and found that some of the issues with the abandoned properties is they can't find the

owners or they have the wrong addresses for them. He said that according to the Act 1 Commission, there is a negative growth for Norristown.

Jennie Cho, Barbados & Airy, Norristown – She pointed out that no Latinos are part of running Norristown. She pointed out that Oregon and Philadelphia follow Diversity/Equity/Inclusion.

APPOINTMENTS

Resolution 24-33: Request for Council to approve Olivia Brady to the Shade Tree Commission

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Vice President Queenan**, to approve Resolution 24-33. **The motion passed 5-0.**

FIRE

Resolution 24-27: Requesting Council approval to apply for a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hughes, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to approve the application for a SAFER Grant in order to hire six additional full-time firefighters to enhance the safety of our citizens. **The motion passed 5-0.**

Resolution 24-28: Requesting Council approval to apply for Assistance to Firefighter (AFG) Grant.

Assistant Fire Chief, Richard Lockhart, said that there is a wide range of uses for this grant.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Vice President Queenan**, to approve Resolution 24-28 for a Firefighter health and wellness grant in the amount of \$61,500 with a local match of \$5,591 and the Federal share requested is \$55,909. **The motion passed 5-0.**

Resolution 24-29: Request for Council to approve the purchase of Personal Protective Equipment from Witmer Public Safety Group, Inc.

There was a **motion by Councilman McCoy, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes**, to approve Resolution 24-29 for the purchase of five structural firefighting coats and pants for Fire Department personnel. **The motion passed 5-0.**

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATOR

Resolution 24-26: Request Municipal Council to approve the sale of four (4) Surplus Vehicles via Public Auction

Fire Chief O'Donnell noted these vehicles are no longer in service.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes**, to approve Resolution 24-26 to sell four (4) surplus Public Works vehicles, each valued at \$2,000 or more, to be sold via public auction on Municibid, as outlined in Municipal Code 4-36. **The motion passed 5-0.**

Resolution 24-34: Request for Council to approve an agreement with Pelham Advisors for Management Consulting Services

There was a motion by Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McCoy, to approve Resolution 24-34 to approve an agreement with Pelham Advisors for Management Consulting Services. The motion passed 5-0.

PLANNING & MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Resolution 24-31: awarding a contract to Widener University Small Business Development Center in the amount of \$68,000 for the Norristown Small Business Assistance Center Program

Sean Turner, Assistant Planning Director, noted that the current contract expires April 20, 2024. He noted that 10 proposals were evaluated and given to Council for review. The selection was Widener University Small Business Development Center. Mr. Lennon, Director, provided a summary of highlights of his organization.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes, to award a contract in compliance with Section 7-713 of the Home Rule Charter and Section 7-713 of the Home Rule Charter and Section 4-35(A)(6) of the Administrative Code which states, "All contracts in excess of \$23,200 shall be in writing and shall be awarded by Municipal Council, and the contract shall be executed by the Municipal Administrator." The motion passed 5-0.

Presentation of a proposed warehouse development at 808 East Main Street by Cornerstone Consulting Engineers & Design Services, Inc.

President/Owner of Cornerstone Consulting Engineers conducted a Power Point showing the sketch plans for the Norristown Warehouse. He said they are looking for feedback from Council. He went through the Variances that are needed according to the Municipal Engineer.

POLICE

Police Chief Bailey-Davis noted that Lieutenant Dumas is the primary contract person and that there are currently 2 towing companies for Norristown.

Ltd. Dumas said that an RFP (Request for Proposal) needs to go out to receive new bidders.

There was a motion by Councilman McCoy, seconded by Vice President Queenan, to approve the release of an RFP for a Norristown Towing Contract. The motion passed 5-0.

Resolution 24-32: Request for Council to approve the Revised Fee Schedule for towing in the Municipality of Norristown

Lieutenant Dumas noted that the RFP contains the new fees which are an increase of \$15.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes, to approve Resolution 24-32 approving Norristown Code including Sections 293-2 and 293-16, authorizing Council to adopt and revise by Resolution a Fee Schedule from time to time for towing and related services

within Municipal boundaries, including for removing vehicles of all types that are damaged, disabled, abandoned or snowbound, and for providing a safe storage of such vehicles until their disposition, and private towing and storage. **The motion passed 5-0.**

Resolution 24-30: Motion to approve requests for Disabled Parking Spaces

Lieutenant Dumas noted that the resident met the requirements for a Disabled Parking Space.

There was **a motion by Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to approve a Disabled Parking Space at 539 E. Main Street. **The motion passed 5-0.**

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

February 2024 Activities with the presenting departments

Assistant Fire Chief Lockhart presented the results of the February 2024 activities. It included 237 dispatches, response time 4.17 seconds, 75 training classes, no Firefighter injuries, 1 Civilian casualty, 55 home inspections, 95 Public Education classes, smoke detectors installed in 306 homes.

ADJOURNMENT

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Hughes, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to adjourn the Council Meeting. **The motion passed 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo