

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 2, 2024

The Council Meeting of Tuesday, April 2, 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
Rashaad Bates
Tiffani Hendley
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; Lieutenant Dumas, Norristown Police Department; 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 Smith, seconded by Vice President Queenan**, to approve the Minutes of the March 19, 2024 Council Meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Town Hall Meeting at the Montgomery County Public Library on April 8th from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

The next Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 24th due to Election Day on the 23rd.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Watters, Hamilton Street – Jim said there's a problem with tree erosion coming downstream from Evansburg State Park. He said it was supposed to be flood-controlled and he said that it is poisoning our

drinking water. He said he is writing another book called, "The Bridges of Montgomery County." He said there is uncontrolled storm water and the rivers are polluted.

Denisse Agutto – (with translator) – She said that the Spanish-speaking community feel there is no inclusion with regard to funding and grants that are available for businesses. She said whatever information is provided is written in English. She also complained that they were told they need to provide the number of people attending their events in order to provide Officers. She said there is no way to give an exact number.

Jennie Cho, Barbados & Airy, Norristown – She said she agrees with including Latinos in government affairs regarding funding. She also said that there needs to be an online calendar for community events where you can select what is town-sponsored and what is not. She added that even though there is no Animal Control Officer in Norristown, one can be appointed. She said some of the houses in the neighborhoods are too close together to have animals running around.

BUILDING & CODE COMPLIANCE

Historical Architectural Review Board – March 2024

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Vice President Queenan**, to approve the HARB applications received, reviewed and recommended for approval by the HARB for the following addresses:

1014 West Marshall Street
1232 West Airy Street
701 Dekalb Street

The motion passed unanimously.

FIRE

Resolution 24-41: Requesting Council approval for the purchase of drones from Unmanned Vehicle Technologies

Assistant Fire Chief Lockhart explained that the cost is covered by grants and donations. He added that this would be a great asset because it would give a birds-eye view.

There was a **motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to approve Resolution 24-41 to purchase 3 commercial drones to be available for deployment at emergency scenes. **The motion passed unanimously.**

POLICE

Resolution 24-36: Request for Council to approve the Intergovernmental Agreements and Memorandum of Understanding with the Borough of Pottstown for the use and allocation of certain Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program Award Funds

Lieutenant Dumas explained that the pre-approved funds will be redirected for the License Plate Readers.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Hughes, seconded by Councilwoman Hendley**, to approve Resolution 24-36 so that the Municipality and Pottstown can amend their prior agreements and enter into MOUs for each award year in order to reflect the Municipality's intended use and reallocation of its JAG Award amount and that are collectively attached hereto as Exhibit "A". **The motion passed unanimously.**

Resolution 24-37: Request for Council to approve the purchase of License Plate Readers

Police Chief Bailey-Davis explained that many surrounding areas already have the license plate readers because they are a valuable tool. She said that the boundaries are in place and there will be guidance on their use.

There was **a motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve Resolution 24-37 for the purchase of License Plate Readers. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Resolution 24-38: Request for Council to approve Painting for a Purpose

Lieutenant Dumas explained that part of a settlement between the manufacturer of the opioids and the towns required the towns to provide engaging activities such as therapy painting, family events and sporting events.

There was **a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes**, to approve Resolution 24-38 so the Norristown Police Department could provide awareness and training about the dangers of, prevention and recovery of opioid addiction through formal instruction, group discussion and participation in community activities to share in the common goal to conquer and defeat opioid abuse. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Motion to approve the collaboration with the Lincoln Center

Lieutenant Dumas explained that the Gear Up Program is the new version of D.A.R.E.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Hendley**, to approve the collaboration with the Lincoln Center to apply for the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA) program. The Norristown Police Department also wishes to partner with the Lincoln Center in the Gear Up Program. **The motion passed unanimously.**

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Police Chief Bailey-Davis provided information regarding the 2024 Goals and Objectives including Community Policing. She said that 88 surveys were conducted in March. She also said there is an increase in community events such as talking with the Chief on Wednesday nights, free steering wheel locks, assistance for the Women's Center and Read Across America. Chief added there are 17 new policies since January 1st. She said there have been 27 supplemental training classes to provide professional development, an educational website as to what course of action to take, inform neighbors

about safety. She provided information about "Shots Fired" saying there were 29 activations with 14 being unfounded.

Chief Bailey-Davis provided Part I Crime statistics. She said that March showed 2-4 robberies, 5-11 burglaries, assaults decreased and a decrease in crime overall year-to-date.

ADJOURNMENT

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Hendley**, to adjourn the Council Meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo