

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2024
MUNICIPAL HALL, 6:30 PM
235 EAST AIRY ST., NORRISTOWN

CALL TO ORDER

The Council Work Session of December 17, 2024 was called to order by Council President, Thomas Lepera.

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

ROLL CALL

The following Council members were in attendance:

Rebecca Smith
Rashaad Bates
William McCoy
Lauren Hughes
Dustin Queenan
Thomas Lepera

Also in attendance:

Leonard Lightner, Municipal Administrator; Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor; Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning and Municipal Development; Captain Michael Bishop, Norristown Police Department; Lieutenant Dumas, Norristown Police Department; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Keith Gordon, Building and Codes Manager; Tom O'Donnell, Norristown Fire Chief; Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works; Khal Hassan, Pennoni Engineering, Bri'Ana Hawkins, Director of Recreation.

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the Minutes from the December 3rd, 2024 Council Meeting. **The motion passed 6-0.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

Council President Lepera announced that Council met in Executive Session prior to tonight's meeting to discuss personnel issues.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council Vice President Queenan announced that there are Spanish translator headsets available in the rear of the Chambers.

Contact State Representative Greg Scott's office for information such as LIHEAP. His office is located at 1019 West Main Street, Norristown.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

David McMahon, Haws Avenue - He said he'd rather see more plantings in the area where the Billboard is being proposed.

Jim Watters, Hamilton Street – He remarked about the new traffic-calming devices on Dekalb Street and said that PennDOT needs to improve other areas as well.

Yvonne Platts, Arch Street - She said there is still a continued cycle of racism around the country. She referenced the Alabama Chief of Police. She said some of the Officers left her just like here in Norristown. She said that losing our Chief was a loss to the community. She was happy to see the Police and community interaction at the Juneteenth celebration. She asked Council to listen to the voices you represent.

Heather Lewis, Haws Avenue - She said she came as a student of Yvonne Platts with compassion and love. She said that according to the Home Rule Charter, there should be an active search to replace the current open Council Seat. She spoke about the lack of transparency.

Shanita Fields, Arch Street - She received 2 parking tickets which she disputed because she said the block of 1100 Arch was never illegal in the past and the neighborhood should have been informed that parking is not allowed there now. She said it is illegal and causing stress.

Gordon Fields, Arch Street - He said that rubber strips are needed on the street between Spruce and Wood Streets. He said there have been many accidents and also that accommodations are made to home owners. He asked Council to consider the

apartment building on Arch & Basin Streets where the owner doesn't shovel and they don't live in Norristown.

APPOINTMENTS

Motion to swear in new Probationary Police Officers Kane Barry and Shane Emrich

Montgomery County Judge, Garrett D. Page swore in the 2 new Officers who were with their family members.

PRESENTATIONS

A presentation by Patrick Larkin, Esq., Gallagher Global Brokerage

Mr. Larkin presented an Executive Summary with Key Attributes which included Property Casualty, Third Party Claims, Auto Liabilities, Public Official Liabilities, Privacy and Cyber Claims, Commercial Claims, Coverage Review.

Council Vice President Queenan asked about Loss/Ratio figures. Mr. Larkin provided a breakdown.

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATOR

Resolution 24-130: Request for Municipal Council to approve the 2025 Council Meeting Schedule

A copy of the Schedule was provided to Council members.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Hughes, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve the 2025 Council Meeting Schedule. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 24-134: Request for Municipal Council to accept the resignation of Dr. Jacqueline Bailey-Davis as Chief of Police

Mr. Lighter noted that a Letter of Resignation was submitted on December 13, 2024.

There was **a motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to accept the resignation of Dr. Jacqueline Bailey-Davis as Chief of Police. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 24-135: Request for Municipal Council to authorize the execution of an Agreement of Sale with John D. Altieri and Steven A. Altieri for the purchase in lieu of condemnation of 244 East Airy Street

There was a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Bates, to authorize the execution of an Agreement of Sale with John D. Altieri and Steven A. Altieri for the purchase in lieu of condemnation of 244 East Airy Street. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Request for Municipal Council to approve the Interagency Agreement to provide American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds to the Parks and Recreation Department for the Parks Revitalization and Safety Upgrades Project in the Municipality

Mr. Lightner noted that the money was submitted under contract and there are new interdepartmental regulations.

There was a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes, to approve the ARPA Funding to the Parks and Recreation Department to facilitate the implementation of the Parks revitalization and Safety Upgrades Project in the Municipality. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Request for Municipal Council to approve the Interagency Agreement to provide American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds to the Public Works Department for the implementation of the Beautification and Infrastructure Enhancement Project in the Municipality

Mr. Lightner noted that the additions have already been approved to replace street signs, walkways, sidewalks and to address graffiti.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Bates, to approve Public Works to facilitate and implement the Municipality Beautification and Infrastructure Enhancement Project in the Municipality. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Request for Municipal Council to approve the Interagency Agreement to provide American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds to the Public Works Department for the implementation of the Recreation Center roof and Facility Repairs Project in the Municipality

Khal Hassan noted that the original bidder made an error in their proposal.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Hughes, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to rescind the previous award for the Recreation Center Roof and award the contract to Pro Com Roofing Corporation with the same conditions and project requirements. **The motion passed 6-0.**

BUILDING & CODES COMPLIANCE

Ordinance 24-08: Ordinance of the Municipality of Norristown amending Sections 241-3, 241-4, 241-9 and 241-11 of Chapter 241 titled “Property Transfer and Sewer Lateral Inspections and Section 128-10 of Chapter 128 titled “Change of Use or Occupancy” of the Norristown Municipal Code

Mr. Gordon explained that these are changes in applying for a Property Transfer that will eliminate unnecessary situations.

There was **a motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve Ordinance 24-08. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 24-132: Request for Municipal Council to approve Project Permit Fee Waiver to allow for Waivers of Permit Fees related to projects done on behalf of the Municipality

Mr. Gordon noted this will allow the Municipal Administrator and Finance Director to waive fees on projects done on the Municipality’s behalf.

There was **a motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to approve Resolution 24-132. **The motion passed 6-0.**

FINANCE

Report to the Council on a reallocation of the 2024 Budget between departments and recommend a Fund Balance Transfer between the General Fund and the Capital Improvement Project Fund: 1. Transfer budgeted funds between departments for unplanned or rescheduled projects. There is no change to the 2024 Operating Budget. 2. Allocate a portion of the General Fund Balance to the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) Fund Balance

Kathy Pfister noted funds are needed to replace the sewer tank and she said that the transfers between departments is listed on the provided document. She noted that the Fund Balance will need to be built up.

FIRE

Resolution 24-127: Requesting Municipal Council approval to apply for Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG)

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Council Vice President Queenan**, to approve Resolution 24-127 to award an Assistance to Firefighter Grant for a Firefighter Health and Wellness Grant in the amount of \$61,500.00 with a local match of \$5,591.00. The Federal share requested is \$55,909.00. **The motion passed 6-0.**

HUMAN RESOURCES

Resolution 24-133: Request for Municipal Council to approve the Professional Services Agreement with Penn Medicine to provide medical examinations for the Municipality's Fire Department and new Police Officer Hires for the Norristown Police Department and related services.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to approve Resolution 24-133. **The motion passed 6-0.**

PLANNING & MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Presentation for a proposed changeable Billboard at 333 West Lafayette Street

Jayne Musonye noted that the applicant will be going before the Zoning Hearing Board. She introduced the owner of the property. The owner noted that it will be on the side of the building. He said there is a 3-step process yet to go through which includes a process with PennDOT. He said he will return to Council. He asked Council to submit to the Solicitor a list of approved uses.

Request for Council to authorize Municipal Staff to prepare an Ordinance to vacate 232 East Spruce Street

Jayne Musonye explained that the expansion didn't occur and is requesting that the property revert back to Ebernezer Church.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hughes, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the vacation of 232 East Spruce Street. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 24-129: Endorsement and Adoption of the "Norristown Redevelopment Area Transportation Study"

Ms. Musonye noted that this is a housekeeping matter. She said the study will be done so they are prepared for Grant Funds. She said that Khal Hassan of Pennoni Engineering will provide an explanation of the study highlights. He noted that there are overlaps with the downtown area. He said that there are recommendations to add crosswalks, restripe the crosswalks, pedestrian signals and add crossing signage, connect sidewalk gaps and modify the bike route.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to endorse and adopt the Norristown Redevelopment Area Transportation Study and recommendations as prepared by Pennoni and the Department of Planning and Municipal Development with funding from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). **The motion passed 6-0.**

Ordinance 24-09: Request authorization to advertise Ordinance 24-09 for the FY2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Proposed Budget

Ms. Musonye noted that a second Public Hearing was held on December 2, 2024 with no comments. She provided a breakdown of the Projects for the CDBG Proposed Budget. She said that now they wait for Congress approval.

There was **a motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve Ordinance 24-09. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Request for Council to approve the Interagency Agreement between the Office of the Municipal Administrator (“OMA”) and the Department of Planning and Municipal Development (“Department”) to provide and/or encumber American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds for the Norristown Parks Story Path Pilot Program

Ms. Musonye said that bids went out and they don’t want to wait.

There was **a motion by Councilman McCoy, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve the Interagency Agreement. **The motion passed 6-0.**

POLICE

Motion to approve the graduating class of the Citizens Police Academy

Captain Bishop provided information about the program. He handed out the Certificates to the graduates.

He noted that “They worked hard and learned a lot.”

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Hughes, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve the Citizens Police Academy graduating class. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 24-131: Request for Municipal Council to approve the purchase of (80) firearms and accessories from Witmer Public Safety Group in the amount of \$53,676.60

Lt. Dumas said these are to replace the current service weapons. He added there is a four-month backlog and there is a cost savings for a trade-in.

There was **a motion by Council by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to approve Resolution 24-131. **The motion passed 6-0.**

PUBLIC WORKS

Resolution 24-128: Request Council to authorize submission of Grant pre-application to PennDOT in the amount of \$551,489.00 in the Green Light Go Program Funding for a traffic signal at the intersection of East Fornance and New Hope Streets.

Thomas Odenigbo stated that improvements are needed and he recommended the replacement.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes**, to authorize the submission of the Grant pre-application to PennDOT. **The motion passed 6-0.**

ADJOURNMENT

There was **a motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Council Vice President**, to adjourn the Council Work Session. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo
Clerk-of-Council

