

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

December 19, 2017

The Council Workshop Meeting of the Municipality of Norristown was called to order by Council President, Sonya Sanders, at 6:30 PM in the Council Chambers.

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

Council President Sanders asked everyone present to join in a Moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following Council members were present:

Sonya Sanders, President
Olivia Brady, At-Large
Valerie Scott-Cooper, 3rd District
Hakim Jones, 4th District
Heather Lewis, 2nd District

Also present were:

Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator
Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor
Chief Talbot, Norristown Chief of Police
Betsy Helsel, Assistant Director of Planning/Development
Chenora Burkett, Director of Finance

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Meeting Minutes from 12-05-2017

All in favor. Motion Carries.

There was a motion by Valerie Scott-Cooper with a second by Olivia Brady to Motion to approve the Minutes from the 12-05-17 Meeting.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUCEMENT

Council President Sanders stated that Council did not meet in Executive Session prior to tonight's meeting.

ANNOUCEMENTS:

There were no Announcements.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ms. Blanche Stowe, Riverside Apts.

Ms. Stowe wanted to break lease. The landlord at Riverside Apts. told her it was quiet. She was homeless for 8 months. She wasn't told that a freight train ran at night. She presented pictures of conditions she lived in at Riverside. She said it was infested with drugs. She left Atlantic City because of corruption. She asked where she could go to help make a difference. Council President Sanders advised her to set up with the right people, exchange info with her Council Rep, go through the Code Department, download the Norristown App and attend meetings.

COMMUNICATION:

There were no Communication items.

ITEMS FOR ACTION:

Municipal Council

Resolution 17-175: Condemning the Libyan Slave Trade

Council will consider a Resolution that publicly condemns the Libyan Slave Trade and calls on other local, state, federal, and international leaders to take actions to end this grave injustice.

Mr. Crandall Jones explained that Staff was asked to take a look at the condemned conditions with the Libyan Slave Trade and to pass the Resolution to confirm what Norristown's stance is.

There was a motion on the floor with a second. A Roll Call Vote was taken. All in favor.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to approve Resolution 17-175: Condemning the Libyan Slave Trade. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

FINANCE:

Resolution No. 17-174 Fee Schedule

Council will consider a Resolution to update the Municipal Fee Schedule

Director of Finance, Chenora Burkett presented the changes for the Fee Schedule including:

Police residential parking permit annual fee changed to \$3.00

Code Enforcement building permit fees updated to \$4.50
Code Enforcement U&O wording change in Section 6.4
Code Enforcement rental license, Section 6.6b: penalty for failure to obtain license

Zoning Land Development, Section 7: new fees are required at the time of submission
Wording change for required escrow to "escrow reduced"
Land Development: incremental based on unit number

Public Works , Section 9.1, changed to \$160
Opening of Streets and Sidewalks: \$160 proposed for conduits
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Recreation Department: \$300 registration for residents and \$350 to \$400 for non-residents

Motion carried 4-1.

There was a motion by Valerie Scott-Cooper with a second by Heather Lewis to Motion to approve Resolution 17-174: Fee Schedule. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper
Nays: Jones

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

PLANNING AND MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT:

Motion to open the Public Hearing

There was a motion on the floor to open the Public Hearing. All in favor.

There was a motion by Valerie Scott-Cooper with a second by Heather Lewis to Motion to open the Public Hearing for the Zoning Map Change.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

Zoning Map Change - Public Hearing

A Public Hearing to consider the adoption of Ordinance 17-19 of 2017 which amends Zoning Map at 200 E Logan Street.

Solicitor Kilkenny explained the Public Hearing process which includes entering the Exhibits, a presentation and an opportunity for Council and the Public to comment, and to close or continue the Public Hearing, or take action.

Solicitor Kilkenny noted that the Adoption of the Ordinance was not put on the agenda.

The following exhibits were entered into the record:

T1: Advertisement of the Public Hearing
T2: Copy of the Ordinance
T3: Recommendation by the Montgomery County Planning Commission
T4: Copy of the Julia Tempest letter

Ms. Betsy Helsel introduced Julia Tempest and her attorney, Frank Caiola.

Mr. Caiola provided background information regarding the parcel at 200 E. Logan Street. He explained that back in 2012, the property was put on the market. Hallman developers came and proposed a Senior Center to include the 200 E. Logan Street parcel. Council supported that effort at that time. The property was marketed for commercial and residential use by they have received no residential offers in 2 years.

Referring to the diagram of the property, Mr. Caiola noted it is identical to what Council already approved.

Public Comment:

Doris Smith-Starks - Ms. Starks asked for an explanation of the property location.

There was a motion on the floor with a second to close the Public Hearing.
All in favor. Motion Carries.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to PUBLIC HEARING: Motion to approve a Zoning Map change.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

Motion to open the Agenda for the adoption of Ordinance 17-19 of 2017 which amends Zoning Map at 200 E. Logan Street

There was a motion on the floor with a second. All in favor.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to open the Agenda for the adoption of Ordinance 17-19 of 2017 which amends the Zoning Map at 200 E. Logan Street. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

Motion to approve/disapprove Ordinance 17-19 of 2017

All in favor. Motion Carries.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Heather Lewis to Motion to approve/disapprove Ordinance 17-19 of 2017. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

Motion to close the Agenda.

All in favor. Motion Carries.

There was a motion by Valerie Scott-Cooper with a second by Olivia Brady to Motion to close the Agenda.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

2017 Fair Housing

Request to advertise the Fair Housing Rights Center of Southeastern PA contact and service information.

Betsy Helsel, Assistant Director of Planning, noted that this would provide people with contact information and information regarding that the services that the Fair Housing Rights Center provides.

All in favor. Motion Carries.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to request the advertisement of the Fair Housing Rights Center of Southeastern PA contact and service information.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

Motion to open the Public Hearing for the Community Development Block Grant 2018 Ordinance 17-18 of 2017

All in favor. Motion Carries.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to open the Public Hearing to consider adoption of the 2018 CDBG Budget/Action Plan.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

There was a motion on the floor with a second. All in favor.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by to Motion to open the Public Hearing to consider adoption of the 2018 CDBG Budget/Action Plan.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Motion to open the Agenda to consider the adoption of the Community Development Block Grant 2018 Ordinance: Ordinance 17-18 of 2017

All in favor. Motion Carries.

There was a motion by Valerie Scott-Cooper with a second by Olivia Brady to Motion to open the Agenda to consider adoption of the Community Development Block Grant 2018 Ordinance 17-18 of 2017.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

Community Development Block Grant 2018 Ordinance - 17-18 of 2017

Public Hearing to consider adoption of the 2018 CDBG Budget/Action Plan - Ordinance 17-18 of 2017.

Solicitor Kilkenny explained the Public Hearing process which includes the submission of the exhibits, the presentation, comments from Council and the Public and either close or continue the hearing and take action.

Solicitor Kilkenny submitted Exhibit M1 - copy of the advertisement of the Public Hearing and M2 - copy of Ordinance 17-18 of 2017.

Betsy Helsel noted that the breakdown is included in the Ordinance.

Motion to close the public hearing. All in favor. Motion Carries.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Heather Lewis to PUBLIC HEARING: Consider adoption of Ordinance 17-18 of 2017: Community Development Block Grant Budget/Action Plan.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

Motion to adopt the 2018 CDBG Budget/Action Plan for Ordinance 17-18 of 2017

There was no Public Comment.

Motion carried 4-0. (Valerie Scott-Cooper was not present for voting.)

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Heather Lewis to Motion to adopt the 2018 CDBG Budget/Action Plan for Ordinance 17-18 of 2017.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders

Absent: Gardiner, Perry, Scott-Cooper

Motion to close the Agenda for the CDBG 2018 Budget/Action Plan.

All in favor. Motion Carries.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Heather Lewis to Motion to close the agenda for the CDBG Budget/Action Plan - Ordinance 17-18 of 2017.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Finance Report

Chenora Burkett, Finance Director, provided details of the report.

She noted there continues to be activity on the Capital Improvement Plan including equipment, vehicles, computer and equipment upgrades.

Processes are still being finalized for the 2018 Budget which, per the Ordinance, must be approved by December 31st.

Working through the transition with TD Bank. She noted there will be the ability to do rapid deposit.

There is consideration of a matching grant for a long term strategic plan to improve the policies and procedures for financial aspects. Ms. Burkett noted they will meet with staff and more information will be forthcoming.

Tax collection letters were sent out and collections continue to be processed.

Cash: \$6,834,394 unrestricted dollars and \$2,775,303 restricted dollars.

Collected over 87% of tax bills.

Current Balance as of this year is \$4,899,369.50 expenses collected; YTD collected

\$27,621,360 in Revenues.

Public Works Report

Mr. Crandall Jones presented the report in the absence of Mr. Odenigbo.

He noted there are no issues with leaves not being picked up.

The Right-of-Way inspectors are being trained.

Mr. Jones noted that Mr. Thomas Odenigbo, Public Works Director, designed the brining system that was used recently and noted that the results were great. It saved tens of thousands of dollars.

Planning & Development Report

Betsy Helsel reported for Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning and Development with:

Matt Bailey is the Grants Coordinator.

Owner occupied - \$72,000 dedicated to the program from the CDBG budget. It would help 4 or 5 homes per year. There are currently 14 being managed in different stages.

Regarding Duplexes - people not wanting to convert. There have been more in front of the Zoning Hearing Board, The ZHB is being more assertive in their approach. Some duplexes are being illegally converted. It was decided that they would be denied if there is a lapse in their Rental License since this is needed to prove occupancy.

Ms. Helsel commented on the "We Buy Houses" signs that are posted. She asked to contact Planning if anyone has any information about this.

Regarding current use or proposed use, Planning could coordinate with the U&O when business license is issued so the uses that are coming can be zeroed in on.

Office of the Administrator Reports

Crandall Jones reported:

"Keep Norristown Beautiful" is moving along including a litter assessment.

There will be an update of the RFQs that closed yesterday.

State Hospital agreement: Will continue discussions.

Waiting for 2nd letter from DGS relating to local labor.

In negotiations with FOP labor agreement - Mr. Jones doesn't see any issues.

Mr. Jones explained that Norristown is one of 2 finalists in the National League of Cities Resiliency Grant. He noted that the Conference was well represented by Council members. They are currently going through the assessment process and a decision will be made by February 2018.

Non-presenting Department Reports

ADJOURNMENT:

All in favor. Motion Carries.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Heather Lewis to Motion to adjourn the Council Workshop Meeting of December 19, 2017.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Brady, Jones, Lewis, Sanders, Scott-Cooper

Absent: Gardiner, Perry

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo