

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 18, 2018

The Council Workshop of September 18, 2018 was called to order by Council President, Sonya Sanders, at 7:30 PM in the Municipal Conference Room.

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

The following Council members were present:

Olivia Brady
Valerie Scott-Cooper
Hakim Jones
Heather Lewis
Rebecca Smith
Derrick Perry
Sonya Sanders

Also present:

Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator
Patrick Hitchens, Acting Municipal Solicitor
Chief Mark Talbot, Norristown Police Department
Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning and Development
Thomas O'Donnell, Norristown Fire Chief
Amrinder Singh, Code Manager

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Council President Sanders noted there were corrections to the Minutes. Referring to the motion under "Appointment of Pennsylvania League Delegates," Councilwoman Lewis was not present so that will now read "Councilwoman Brady." Also, under "Adjournment," the motion was made by Councilwoman Brady, not "Cooper."

There was a motion on the floor to approve the Council Meeting Minutes of September 4, 2018 by Councilwoman Brady with a second by Councilman Perry. All in favor. Motion carries.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

There were no Announcements to be made.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Anna Shin, 246 Willow Avenue, Wayne, PA - Ms. Shin told Council that there is a food truck that parks in front of her Main Street restaurant. She said it used to come on Fridays only but now it comes every day from 10:00 am to 8:30 pm. She made a request to Council that this food truck go back to only coming on Fridays and not in front of the Courthouse.

Jim Perna, 241 West Fornance Street, Norristown, PA - Mr. Perna asked about the status of Royal Farms, the old Montgomery Hospital site and the street paving on Swede Street near Gotwals School. He also informed Council that a tree cutting company left a pile of branches in the back alley off of Juniper Street. He also told Council about the parking in front of his house that was taken away with the Markley Street project. He is making a request to Council for a cutout and he also noted that he has no access to the alley behind his house because he was denied access for his backyard.

COMMUNICATION: None.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

MUNICIPAL PERFORMANCE BONDS

Mr. Crandall Jones explained that these bonds are an inducement to make sure projects get done on time. He added if there is a problem, the bond provision by the contractor can be used and it puts proper punitive measures in place.

ITEMS FOR ACTION:

PLANNING AND MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC HEARING ON AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

There was a motion on the floor by Councilwoman Brady with a second by Councilman Jones to open the Public Hearing. All in favor. Motion carries.

Solicitor Hitchens explained the Public Hearing process and named the following Exhibits:

- M1 - A copy of Resolution 18-140 2018
- M2 - A copy of the affidavit of the public advertisement
- M3 - A series of 5 letters from June 15, 2018 to surrounding and neighboring municipalities
- M4 - A letter dated June 3, 2018 Montgomery County Planning Commission review of the proposed amendment

Solicitor Hitchens read the “Whereas” section of Resolution 18-40, the revision of Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan and the comments from the Montgomery County Planning Commission.

All of Council was in agreement with it saying that it is a way to attract more people to Norristown and it is important for the economic future of Norristown. Councilwoman Brady suggested that the Municipality ensures that skills can be provided for the workers.

Public Comment

Doris Smith-Starks, 330 Sandy Hill Terrace, Norristown - Ms. Starks agreed with Councilwoman Brady adding that we should know what jobs are able to be offered to our residents.

Anna Shin, 36 East Main Street (business address) - Ms. Shin noted she hires locally.

There was a motion on the floor by Councilman Perry with a second by Councilwoman Brady to close the Public Hearing. All in favor. Motion carries.

Resolution 18-140: Comprehensive Plan Amendment

There was a motion on the floor by Councilman Jones with a second by Councilman Perry to adopt Resolution 18-140. A Roll Call Vote was taken:

Olivia Brady	yes
Valerie Scott-Cooper	yes
Hakim Jones	yes
Heather Lewis	yes
Rebecca Smith	yes
Derrick Perry	yes
Sonya Sanders	yes

All in favor. Motion carries.

Resolution 18-145: Keystone Communities Grant Submission

Director Musonye explained that the streetscape project is continuing east to connect to the Arch Street Greenway. She informed Council that funds can be manuevered to help match the streetscape funding. She is asking Council for permission to use unused funding for the match. \$250,000 is needed to match. She explained that the Economic Development funds were set aside but not used, being the Main Street Initiative and 2017 CDBG funds. She noted that it can be put back in the 2019 budget.

There was a motion on the floor by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper with a second by Councilwoman Brady to approve Resolution 18-145. A Roll Call Vote was taken:

Olivia Brady	yes
Valerie Scott-Cooper	yes
Hakim Jones	yes
Heather Lewis	yes
Rebecca Smith	yes
Derrick Perry	yes
Sonya Sanders	yes

All in favor. Motion carries.

Resolution 18-148: Preliminary/Final Land Development (1437 Dekalb Street)

Director Musonye noted that the applicant went before Council in June and gave an overview of their project. They submitted applications per Code which were reviewed by the Municipal Engineer. They

requested waivers and the Norristown Planning Commission and the Montgomery County Planning Commission both recommended approval.

Attorney Alyson Fritzes, representing the applicant, provided a brief review of what the client is planning to do. She noted the plan is for an expansion of the first floor of 1437 Dekalb Street for the relocation of CHOP from 1340 Dekalb Street. Mr. Steve Wilmont, Senior Director of Primary Care, explained that this practice will provide primary care to children ages birth to 21. He also noted that CHOP plans on partnering with the Norristown School District for “telehealth visits.”

2018 EPA Community-Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant

Director Musonye provided background information including a 2012 \$400,000 grant for Phases I and II and an additional \$300,000 2018 grant for October 2018 through September 2021. She noted that an RFP went out in July and 9 proposals were received. She recommended Landan Engineering and Environmental Services, LLC for the project. She noted that the award for \$295,000 was within the scope.

There was a motion on the floor by Councilwoman Brady with a second by Councilman Jones to award the professional services agreement to Landan Engineering and Environmental Services, LLC. A Roll Call Vote was taken:

Olivia Brady	yes
Valerie Scott-Cooper	yes
Hakim Jones	yes
Heather Lewis	yes
Rebecca Smith	yes
Derrick Perry	yes (wasn't present for voting but gave his approval when he returned)
Sonya Sanders	yes

All in favor. Motion carries.

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

Resolution 18-149: Norristown Student Leadership Academy

Council President explained that students in the Academy will be actively involved and they will do research on true Norristown issues.

There was a motion on the floor by Councilwoman Smith with a second by Councilwoman Brady to approve Resolution 18-149. A Roll Call Vote was taken:

Olivia Brady	yes
Valerie Scott-Cooper	yes
Hakim Jones	yes
Heather Lewis	yes
Rebecca Smith	yes
Derrick Perry	yes
Sonya Sanders	yes

All in favor. Motion carries.

FINANCE

Resolution 18-147: The 2019 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO)

Mr. Crandall Jones notified Council that it is time to make the 2019 Pension requirements authorization before Council. He noted that allocations need to be made and submitted to the State for Public Safety and Non-Uniform employees. He added that the estimates on return need to be more realistic.

There was a motion on the floor by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper with a second by Councilwoman Brady to approve Resolution 18-147. A Roll Call Vote was taken:

Olivia Brady	yes
Valerie Scott-Cooper	yes
Hakim Jones	yes
Heather Lewis	yes
Rebecca Smith	yes
Derrick Perry	yes
Sonya Sanders	yes

All in favor. Motion carries.

PUBLIC SAFETY

There was no information for this agenda item at this time.

PUBLIC WORKS

Stormwater Discussion

Mr. Thomas Odenigbo is absent. Mr. Crandall Jones provided a Power Point presentation with information from findings regarding stormwater issues in the Municipality that need to be addressed. He noted that terra cotta and clay inlets would require less maintenance than the brick and concrete inlets. He added there are depressions in the road and sinkholes related to stormwater. Mr. Jones informed Council that the Public Works Director, Mr. Odenigbo, drives the roads in Norristown looking for issues.

Mr. Jones remarked that maintenance is better than reconstruction which would cost 4 times more. Mr. Jones recommended to Council an approach by establishing a Stormwater Utility Fee, authorized by the state of PA, Act 68 of 2013. He noted it would also be collected from tax-exempt users and it would be more equitable than a property tax. He added it would provide a dedicated revenue stream.

Mr. Jones stated that the reasons for opposition to this fee are mistrust in government, inability to pay the bill, unfair to non-profits and there are bigger priorities.

Mr. Jones noted that one strategy would be to hire a third party to lead Council and the community through it. He said he could come back to Council after a community outreach and recommend a rate.

Mr. Jones informed Council that the EPA requires that each state has until 2022 to invest and be in compliance as far as stormwater management.

There was a motion on the floor by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper with a second by Councilwoman Brady to issue an RFQ for the establishment of a firm to hold several educational meetings regarding the issue of stormwater management. All in favor. Motion carries.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Police Report

Chief Police Talbot provided information for the monthly report. He noted there was a Multi-Agency Bar Tour to assess if local bars were in compliance. He noted that crime was down in the summer with a drop in violent crimes. He noted they no longer have a Community Affairs person.

Fire Report

Chief O'Donnell reported that there were 788 dispatches; average response time is 4 minutes 2 seconds; busiest time is Friday 6 pm; there were 10 firefighter injuries, 1 civil casualty; 374 community inspections, 28 U&O inspections, 121 smoke detectors were installed; 3 of the 5 departmental goals were completed and they are 95% upgraded.

Code Enforcement Report

Mr. Singh reported his department will be collaborating better with Planning and Public Works. Quarterly meetings were held regarding operations and ongoing projects; there was a steady growth of permits in 2018; more investments in buildings and land use. Mr. Singh informed Council he would like to have the Code Department accredited by 2020. There are plans for an educational campaign regarding violations. Rental application invoices were sent out to property owners. Mr. Singh noted that 2,440 properties are not inspected and a plan needs to be in place to inspect them. There will be a mandatory meeting on September 28, 2018 for inspectors and staff members. Mr. Singh told Council about the parcel ranking - 1 - no issues; 2 - minor violation; 3 - structural defects and 4 - may demolish (blighted and affecting community.)

Mr. Singh noted he would like to work with Crandall Jones and the legal advisors to update Ordinances to have the tools to go after blighted properties.

ADJOURNMENT:

There was a motion on the floor by Councilwoman Lewis with a second by Councilwoman Scott-Cooper to adjourn the Council Workshop. All in favor. Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo