

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

February 20, 2018

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 to join in for a Moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following Council members were present:

Sonya Sanders, Council President, 1st District
Derrick Perry, Council Vice-President, At-Large
Olivia Brady, At-Large
Hakim Jones, 4th District
Heather Lewis, 2nd District
Valerie Scott-Cooper, 3rd District
Rebecca Smith, At-Large

Also present were:

Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator
Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor (left before Planning/Municipal Development portion)
Anthony Ciuca, Acting Municipal Solicitor (replaced Sean Kilkenny)
Chief Mark Talbot, Norristown Chief of Police
Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning and Development
Chenora Burkett, Director of Finance
Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Meeting Minutes from 2-6-2018

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to approve the Council Meeting Minutes from February 6, 2018.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUCEMENT

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

PRESENTATIONS:

Mural Arts in Norristown

Council will hear a presentation on potential sites for mural art projects in Norristown.

Carrie Kingsbury, Founder of Promiseland Murals, conducted a Power Point presentation regarding the idea of painting murals for the visual interest and to deter graffiti. She showed some of the work she has done in other cities. She explained that she uses public and private funding to pay for the murals.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

WORKSHOP FOR BUSINESSES: DEVELOPING A MORE EFFECTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY - Sponsored by the Norristown Chamber of Commerce and on February 21st from 6-8 pm at the , 56 Buttonwood Street, Norristown.

READ ACROSS AMERICA - Elmwood Park Zoo, March 3rd. Free for all ages from 11-3 pm. There will be special guests and activities.

DR. SEUSS'S BIRTHDAY - Norristown Public Library, March 3rd at 2 pm in the Children's Learning Center. Join Municipal Administrator Crandall Jones and Councilwoman Valerie Scott-Cooper.

NAACP CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH - Saturday March 3rd at 11 am for a lunch banquet at the Valley Forge Sheraton. See Councilwoman Scott-Cooper. \$45 ticket.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES INFORMATION SESSION - March 1st from 3-6 pm. Join Councilman Jones and Senator Daylin Leach at the Norristown Public Library for information on COMPASS and other available resources.

FREE ENTRANCE FOR NORRISTOWN RESIDENTS - Elmwood Park Zoo on March 4th at 2 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Devery Johnson, 324 Cherry Street, Norristown -

Mr. Johnson owns a Barber Shop in Norristown on Cherry Street and stated there is a 2-hour parking sign near his shop and he and some of his clients keep receiving parking tickets even if they are not parked for 2 hours. They may leave and come back before 2 hours' time. He spoke to the Police Officer in charge of parking and was advised to come to a Council Meeting regarding this. He was told by Council President Sanders to reach out to Chief Talbot.

COMMUNICATION:

There were no items.

ITEMS FOR ACTION:

Appointments

Resolution 18-115: Board and Committee Appointments

Council will be making appointments to the following citizen advisory boards: Planning Commission, Civil Service Commission, and Recreation Committee.

Planning Commission:

- Rashaad Bates (replacing Hugh McGhee), term expiring December 31, 2022

Recreation Committee:

- Theresa Myers (re-appointment), term expiring December 31, 2023
- Suanne Gardiner (replacing Pam Feliciano), term expiring December 31, 2023

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Valerie Scott-Cooper with a second by Rebecca Smith to Motion to approve/reject Resolution 18-115 of 2018: Appointments to various Boards, Committees and Commissions.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

PLANNING AND MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT:

McDonald's Traffic Change Proposal

Presentation on proposal to change a portion of Penn Street from 1 way traffic to 2 way traffic.

Director Musonye introduced ? from Pennoni and McDonald's representatives, ?

Mr. Grande of McDonald's Corporation noted that because of the forthcoming PennDOT project, it complicates entry into the McDonald's so modifications are needed.

? presented handouts to Council proposing some alternatives.

He noted he will present Council's remarks along with the meeting Minutes to PennDOT for their consideration.

? explained the alternatives as:

1. Extend the median and make Penn Street a one-way to the entrance of McDonald's.
2. Extend Penn Street to Barbados Street as a two-way.

? noted that providing a left-turn lane would be reviewed.

Director Musonye noted that the Municipal Engineer would need to review and provide comments regarding the proposed modifications.

Councilman Perry asked about improving the look of the McDonald's property. ? told him there was a projected remodel planned for late 2019-2020 but he would bring this issue back to the Region to convey Council's expressed interest in the property improvements because it is a gateway to Norristown.

Fair Housing - Presentation

Fair Housing Rights Center will provide a PowerPoint presentation to Municipal Council regarding ongoing fair housing activities in Norristown.

Angela McIver, CEO of the Fair Housing Rights Center conducted a Power Point presentation which highlighted the details of the "Agreement for Fair Housing" and information regarding the Fair Housing activities in Norristown. Some of the programs are: Federal Judge re-entry program, Veterans Affairs, Home Seekers Lists, Housing Discrimination, PA Human Relations Committee. She also explained some of the issues the Center faces regarding discrimination in the housing market.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

Resolution 18-113: Handicapped Parking

Resolution 18-113 will ask Council to consider authorizing the removal of handicapped parking spots at 507 E. Basin St. and 1343 Markley St. and install a new sign at 44 W. Basin St.

Chief Talbot explained that there was a request to remove Handicapped Parking Signs at 507 E. Basin Street and 1343 Markley Street because they are no longer needed and to install one at 44 W. Basin Street due to a medical condition that impacts mobility.

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Heather Lewis with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to approve/reject Resolution 18-113: Handicapped Parking.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Resolution 18-114: Conditional Offer for Entry Level Police Officer

Resolution 18-114 will ask Council to consider offering a conditional offer to hire candidate Tiffany Bobb for an Entry Level Police Officer Position.

Chief Mark Talbot asked Council to consider this conditional offer.

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Heather Lewis to Motion to approve/reject Resolution 18-114: Conditional Offer for Entry-Level Police Officer.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATOR:

Advertisement of Ordinance 18-01: Mobile Food Vendors

Council will consider advertising Ordinance 18-01, which would establish a new policy for licensing and inspecting food trucks and set new regulations regarding the operation of mobile food vendors in the Municipality.

Mr. Crandall Jones explained this new process would require annual registration and inspections by the Norristown Fire Department. The fee would be \$50 per day up to 3 days for special events. A Vendor License would cost \$300 for the first year and \$150 starting the following year. The license process would require each vendor to provide a health inspection from the Montgomery County Health Department, a Business License to operate in Norristown, a copy of their current vehicle inspection and registration and photographs of the exterior of the food truck so it matches the photograph in the Municipal records, and a letter from the property owner giving permission if the truck is operating on private property.

Council asked if Swede Street and Main Street (at the Courthouse) and Lafayette (near the Transportation Center) not be restricted. Mr. Jones noted there could be modifications to the Ordinance before advertisement.

There was a motion on the floor with a second to table this item. Councilwoman Brady, Councilwoman Scott-Cooper and Councilwoman Smith voted "nay."

Motion carries 4-3 - item tabled.

There was a motion by Heather Lewis with a second by Hakim Jones to Motion to approve/reject advertisement of Ordinance 18-01: Mobile Food Vendors which would establish a new policy for licensing and inspecting food trucks and set new regulations regarding the operation of mobile food vendors in the Municipality.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

Ayes: Jones, Lewis, Perry, Sanders

Nays: Brady, Scott-Cooper, Smith

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Finance Report

Director Chenora Burkett provided details of the Finance Report for January 2018.

- Use of a new software providing the re-design of the Real Estate Tax Bill which allows online payments and access to real estate tax bills.
- Still transitioning from Bank of America to TD Bank. Will meet with TD Bank representatives to discuss installation of an ATM in the Municipal Building and the location, security and access for loading and reloading the machine.
- "Employee Banking Days" offering education on banking services and products.
- In the interview process with the National Resource Net Force regarding a long-term strategic financial plan grant. Norristown is one of five cities considered for the award to participate in a partnership to create a long-term financial plan for the Municipality.
- The 2018 audit field work has begun with an anticipated field work start date of April 2018 and the employee benefit plans will also be scheduled around that time in order to meet deadline requirements.
- Finance Department is fully staffed.
- Issuance of tax bills which reflect tax increase and parcels for tax exempt.
- Bills mailed to property owners by January 31st.
- Portnoff was contacted for trash fee collection for 2017.
- Capital Improvement Plan - used money to fund infrastructure, equipment, property acquisition and renovations. Economic Development funds in 2017 were used for professional services for properties being evaluated at the end of 2017.
- Road Improvement Plan: Municipality awarded a \$3.5 million loan from the PA Infrastructure Bank for the 1st phase of a 3-cycle plan to allow the improvement of 50 segments of road. \$500,000 was spent to date. The next phase is expected to start in Spring 2018.
- Road Project has 3 components ADA ramps, paving, residential paving. At the end of last year, an issue with the certificate from the vendor that did not properly identify the funds for the resident paving was identified and the liquid fuels account was reimbursed and properly documented.
- January numbers are unreconciled while preparing to close out the fiscal year of 2017.

Public Works Report

Mr. Odenigbo reported his department has been repairing potholes, cleaning alleys, inspecting streets for paving, cleaning bridges, estimating cost of overlays.

There was a discussion regarding what can be done with some of the private alleys.

Planning & Development Report

Director Musonye noted that work has begun on the Main Street Development.

The Recruiter has met with several restaurants and will report back to Council.

Met with "10,000 Friends of PA" who contracted with DCD, a state agency, that helps communities like Norristown to help with funding to get applications sent for "green" infrastructure improvements to such areas as the corridor from Simmons Park to Lafayette Street and the Schuylkill River.

Received money from the State to help bring the Brownfield sites (350 East Main Street) to the next level (Act II Plan.)

CMAQ Grant was awarded to Norristown for the improvement for traffic lights from Forrest Avenue and each light down, not including the light at Markley Street.

Office of the Administrator Reports

Mr. Crandall Jones noted that an update on the PAL Center acquisition was provided in Council's packet.

Mr. Jones noted that there was a meeting with the State, and everything is lined up that temporary use of the fields is ok with the state. Mr. Jones noted it is up to Council to decide what to do with the fields after the money is received from the County.

There will be further discussion.

Non-presenting Department Reports

ADJOURNMENT:

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Heather Lewis with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to adjourn the Council Workshop Meeting of February 20, 2018.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo