

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

January 16, 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.

The following Council members were present:

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

Also present:

Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator
Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor
Chief Mark Talbot, Norristown Chief of Police
Betsy Helsel, Assistant Planning Director
Chenora Burkett, Director of Finance
Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works
Michael Simonson, Code Manager

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Special Meeting Minutes from 12-28-2017

All in favor. Motion carries 6-0.

There was a motion by Valerie Scott-Cooper with a second by Olivia Brady to Motion to approve the Special Meeting Minutes from 12-28-17. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Reorganization Minutes from 1-2-2018

All in favor. Motion carries 6-0.

There was a motion by Valerie Scott-Cooper with a second by Heather Lewis to Motion to approve the Reorganization Minutes from 1-2-18.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Meeting Minutes from 1-2-2018

All in favor. Motion carries 7-0.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes from 1-2-18.. 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 issues.

ANNOUCEMENTS:

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE - The Norristown Planning Commission will be presenting information regarding the Lafayette Street Project Phase III on Wednesday, January 17, 2018 from 4:00 to 8:00 pm in Norristown Municipal Hall.

FREE MOVIE NIGHT - The Norristown Recreation Department will host this event at the First Presbyterian Church on Main & DeKalb Streets on Friday, January 19, 2018 from 5:50 to 8:00 pm.

ELMWOOD PARK ZOO FREE ADMISSION - Free admission for residents on the first Sunday of each month after 2:00 pm.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS - There are several openings on the Municipal Boards and Commissions. Go to www.norristown.org.

THEATRE HORIZON - Showing "The Revolutionist" from February 1st through the 25th. Some free tickets are available on the website.

Appointments

Resolution 18-110: Appointment of an Ambassador

Council will consider the re-appointment of Hank Cisco as the Ambassador of Norristown.

Mr. Crandall Jones read the body of Resolution 18-110 appointing Hank Cisco as the Ambassador of Norristown.

Councilman Perry wanted to clear up some confusion among the residents regarding this appointment and asked the Municipal Solicitor for answers to questions regarding the duties of the Council President, tabling an item, explanation of an Executive Session and the appointment of an Ambassador.

Councilman Perry explained that information was leaked out of an Executive Session which may have caused the residents to be misinformed about this.

Councilman Jones commented that he did not agree with "tabling a position to a life-long resident..."

Councilwoman Scott-Cooper noted that "it is not business as usual with this Council."

There was a motion on the floor with a second to approve the appointment of Hank Cisco as Norristown Ambassador.

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Valerie Scott-Cooper with a second by Olivia Brady to Motion to approve/disapprove Resolution 18-110: Appointment of an Ambassador. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Peggy Becker Dellison, 707 Beech Court, Bridgeport, PA

Ms. Dellison shared that she had a business in Norristown for over 40 years. She commented that Hank Cisco dedicated his life to Norristown with love and that he never said a bad word about Norristown. She added that he should be "celebrated with sweetness and love."

Mary Ellen DiGregorio, 564 E. Main Street, Norristown, PA

Ms. DiGregorio expressed that the Minutes from the January 2, 2018 Council Meeting did not "reflect an accurate account of what I said." She submitted to the Clerk of Council a typed correction which reads: "Mrs. DiGregorio demanded a Point of Order, Mrs. DiGregorio pointed out to Council that they overlooked the "Public Comment" section listed under the January 2, 2018 Agenda....Mrs. DiGregorio also expressed her dissatisfaction of Council's continued production of errors that violate both "Oath of Office" and the "Pennsylvania Sunshine Law" regarding Public Comment and following agendas..."

COMMUNICATION:

There were no Communication items.

ITEMS FOR ACTION:

PLANNING AND MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT:

Small Business Development Services - Award Professional Services Agreement

Council will consider Awarding a Professional Services Agreement to The Enterprise Center to provide small business development/technical assistance as a service of the Norristown Small Business Assistance Center for \$45,000/year from the 2017 HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) award.

The representative explained that this agreement provides business and technical assistance and education through the HUD Community Development Block Grant award. She further noted that Workshops in Spanish and English will be set up to address the need to support women minorities in business.

Council President Sanders asked if the Enterprise Center could provide a quarterly update regarding types of projects, services provided and new businesses coming into Norristown.

There was a motion on the floor with a second to approve a 3-year Professional Services Agreement to be renewed on an annual basis to The Enterprise Center to provide small business development and technical assistance as a service of the Norristown Small Business Assistance Center for \$15,000 per year.

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Heather Lewis to Small Business Development Services - Award Professional Services Agreement to The Enterprise Center.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Fair Housing Program - Award Professional Services Agreement

Council will consider Awarding a Professional Services Agreement to the Fair Housing Rights Center in Southeastern Pennsylvania (FHRC) to provide a fair housing program for \$32,000/year for a three year term with 2017 HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

Ms. Hesel explained that this agreement would provide a Fair Housing program for \$32,000/year for a three-year term with 2017 HUD Community Development Block Grant Funds. Ms. Hesel explained that the Center distributes publications regarding Fair Housing Rights.

Councilwoman Brady suggested adding information about resources regarding landlord and tenant regulations. Ms. Hesel noted a .pdf file could be made available on the Municipal website.

Councilman Perry asked the Solicitor about adding language to the Ordinances against "slum lords."

Solicitor Kilkenny noted he will speak with the Municipal Administrator and the Code Manager regarding the current Ordinances.

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Valerie Scott-Cooper with a second by Rebecca Smith to Professional Services Agreement to the Fair Housing Rights Center in Southeastern Pennsylvania.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Gallo Brothers Development, Inc - Land Development Proposal

Presentation on a land development proposal for 6 to 8 single family units at the corner of Forest Avenue and Elm Street.

Mr. Rick Gallo presented information regarding a proposal for land development for 6 to 8 single-family units at the corner of Forrest Avenue and Elm Street.

Ms. Helsel noted that Gallo Brothers Development received an Agreement of Sale for 3 parcels of land. She noted they plan to demolish the current single-family dwelling and maintain the existing Veterinary Hospital.

Ms. Helsel explained that the Zoning process hasn't even started.

Councilwoman Brady asked Mr. Gallo about using environmental friendly building materials to which he was in agreement.

Council President Sanders suggested having a Community Meeting with residents regarding the project.

Resolution 18-109: Hancock Elementary School - Preliminary/Final Land Development Approval

Council will consider Resolution 18-109 of 2018 granting preliminary/final land development approval to the Norristown Area School District for improvements at Hancock Elementary School.

Ms. Helsel explained to Council that the applicant addressed some Zoning issues suggested by the Zoning Hearing Board. She added that the project was recommended by Planning to Council for approval and that she provided a copy of the Engineer's letter to Council that sets forth the Waivers.

Attorney for the Norristown Area School District, Gregory Heleniak, introduced the Engineer who provided a summary of the improvements proposed for the Hancock Elementary School. He noted they pertain to issues such as access, visibility of the school, parking for pick-up and drop-off and emergency vehicle circulation.

Motion carries 5-1 (President Sanders was absent for the vote)

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to approve/disapprove Resolution 18-109 of 2018 granting preliminary/final land development approval to the Norristown Area School District for improvements at Hancock Elementary School.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Nays: Perry

Absent: Sanders

Sherbiny Property Group - Land Development Proposal

Presentation by Sherbiny Property Group on a land development proposal for the northeast and northwest corners of Dekalb and Main Streets.

The Director of the Sherbiny Property Group, Ali Sherbiny, introduced each member of his team. The Architect provided a Power Point presentation showing a super-imposed version of the proposed project. He noted the project would include 2 buildings - one with 6 stories of residents with a retail base and the other 9 stories of residents with a retail base with 20 units per floor. Parking issues will be discussed during the planning process.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

Resolution 18-103 Promotion - Police Lieutenant

Council will consider Resolution 18-103 to promote Sergeant Michael Bishop to Police Lieutenant

Chief Talbot noted that Sergeant Bishop is the best suited of the remaining candidates.

There was a motion on the floor to approve Resolution 18-103 to promote Sergeant Michael Bishop to the rank of Police Lieutenant.

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Heather Lewis to Motion to approve/disapprove Resolution 18-103: Promotion to Police Lieutenant. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Resolution 18-104 Promotion- Police Sergeant

Council will consider Resolution 18-104, promoting Nicholas Dumas to Police Sergeant.

Chief Talbot explained that Mr. Dumas is the best suited of the remaining candidates.

There was a motion on the floor with a second to approve Resolution 18-104 promoting Nicholas Dumas to Police Sergeant.

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to approve/disapprove Resolution 18-104 Promotion of Police Sergeant.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Resolution 18-105 Promotion - Police Corporal

Council will consider Resolution 18-105, promoting Brian L. Graham to Police Corporal.

Chief Talbot explained that Mr. Graham is the best candidate of those remaining.

There was a motion on the floor to approve Resolution 18-105 promoting Brian Graham to Police Corporal. A Roll Call Vote was taken.

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Valerie Scott-Cooper with a second by Heather Lewis to Motion to approve/disapprove Resolution 18-105 - Promotion of Brian Graham to Police Corporal.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Resolution No. 18-106 regarding requests for disabled parking spaces.

Council will consider Resolution No.18-106 regarding requests for disabled parking spaces.

Chief Talbot noted the addresses for the disabled parking spaces are:

- 1210 Washington Street
- 569 Stanbridge Street

He explained that the residents have medical conditions that impact their mobility and they must park close to home.

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Heather Lewis with a second by Olivia Brady to Motion to approve/disapprove Resolution 18-106 regarding requests for disabled parking spaces.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Municipal Administrator

Special & Cultural Events Discussion

Council will discuss allocating funds to the Norristown Chamber of Commerce to take over the organization and management of community-wide events in Norristown for 2018.

Mr. Crandall Jones presented another way to carry out special events in the Municipality by considering a contract with a private entity such as the Norristown Chamber of Commerce. He noted that Council would determine what 3 events would be carried out.

Mr. Jones provided a cost comparison between using Municipal Administration staff members versus an outside contract. He explained that the proposed \$15,000 for the contract would bring time and fund-raising for having the event. He noted that volunteers are welcome as well.

Council President Sanders commented she is comfortable using the Chamber of Commerce due to their contacts, networks and financial stability.

There was a motion on the floor with a second to have the Municipal Administrator and Municipal Solicitor draw up an agreement for Council's consideration for the management of 3 events in 2018 determined by Council using an outside contract.

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Special & Cultural Events Discussion.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Motion to open the agenda.

There was a motion on the floor with a second to open the agenda to consider waiving the Non-Resident Fee for Mr. DePaul and have him pay the Resident Fee to hold his Community Event regarding "Healthy Eating" in the Municipal Hall.

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Heather Lewis with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to open the agenda.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Motion to waive the Non-Resident Fee and allow payment of the Resident Fee for use of the Municipal Hall.

Councilwoman Brady explained that a former resident, Mr. DePaul, who has a business outside of Norristown would like to host a community event using the Municipal Hall because of the need for a larger venue to speak about healthy eating. She added that he is requesting a waiver of the Non-Resident Fee and pay the Resident Fee. Councilwoman Brady is making the request since it requires Council's approval.

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Heather Lewis with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to waive the Non-Resident Fee for use of Municipal Hall.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Police Report

Council Vice-President Perry noted that Council accepts the Police Report as submitted.

Fire Report

Council Vice-President Perry announced that Council accepts the Fire Report as submitted.

Code Enforcement Report

Councilman Perry announced that Council will accept the Code Enforcement Report as submitted.

Non-presenting Department Reports

ADJOURNMENT:

All in favor. Motion carries.

There was a motion by Valerie Scott-Cooper with a second by Rebecca Smith to Motion to adjourn the Council Workshop of January 16, 2018.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo