

**NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY**  
**COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES**

**April 17, 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 (arrived 8:10 pm)  
Patrick Hitchens, Acting Municipal Solicitor  
Chief Mark Talbot, Norristown Chief of Police  
Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning and Development  
Rochelle Rawlins, Assistant Director of Finance  
Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Meeting Minutes from 04-03-2018

**All in favor. Motion carries.**

There was a motion by Derrick Perry with a second by Olivia Brady to Motion to approve the Minutes from the April 3, 2018 Council Meeting.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

**EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT**

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

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**"KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL"** was a success over the weekend. Over 80 volunteers and almost a metric ton of litter/trash collected by volunteers.

**"CIVIC ENGAGEMENT ESSAY SCHOLARSHIPS"** sponsored by the Pennsylvania Municipal League. Participants are asked to write a theme about opportunities in their community that allow for civic engagement. Deadline is Friday, June 8, 2018. Mail information to the Pennsylvania Municipal League, 414 North Second Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101 or call (717) 236-9469, ext. 232.

**CADCOM GIRLS CODE CLUB** - 2nd Annual Code Club 8 weeks on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6-8 pm at Universal Copy & Print. Still accepting applications. Ages 10-18.

**HELP A SINGLE PARENT** - hosting annual fundraiser on Saturday, May 26th from 8 pm to midnight. \$25 per person.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

### ***Obed Almeyda, 208 Chain Street, Norristown.***

He is from "Mid-Atlantic DreamCenter." He said they have one event per month at a park. It is a start-up non profit and he is asking to waive park fees and is free for the community. Each event is 2 hours with 1 hour for set up and clean up. Music for 5 or 10 minutes and a short word from the Bible. People take what they want to take: Groceries or shoes or coats.

## **COMMUNICATION:**

There were no Communication items.

## **ITEMS FOR ACTION:**

### **Municipal Council**

Mural Arts Discussion by Council Member Brady

Councilmember Brady will ask Council to discuss a potential mural arts project and current laws/policies governing murals in Norristown.

Councilwoman Brady noted there is a potential mural arts project on a building on West Main Street. She looked into the process for the property owner. She commented that the current Ordinance is not conducive to public art in Norristown. She noted that murals are a conditional use which requires a legal agreement, going before Planning and Zoning with an application which needs

to be reviewed. She said that because of these steps, it is a monetary expense for the property owner. She stated it is not fair to charge the property owner.

Councilwoman Brady added that Philadelphia has many murals which drive economic restoration.

She asked Council to look at the Ordinance and allow for a less stringent way to have public art on a building and to find ways of getting help to apply for grants.

Other Council members commented:

Hakim Jones - need to be more flexible. Good idea.

Sonya Sanders - opposed to using Staff resources. Need Community input.

Heather Lewis - find a non-profit to be the grant writer.

Rebecca Smith - not necessary to have a Committee for proposed mural projects.

Hakim Jones - not one on every street.

There was a motion to review the Sign Ordinance and consider making a change.

**All in favor. Motion carries.**

There was a motion by Derrick Perry with a second by Heather Lewis to Mural Arts Discussion by Council Member Olivia Brady.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

### **Municipal Engineer**

Hancock School ADA Ramp Discussion

The Municipal Engineer will be presenting Council with a request from the Norristown Area School District regarding the reconstruction of ADA ramps as part of their Renovations at Hancock Elementary School.

Municipal Engineer, Khal Hassan, presented to Council for the applicant of the project.

He noted that the applicant does not have the funds to complete the project which includes re-aligning the ADA ramp with the crosswalk. He noted that the applicant would like Council to reconsider the ADA ramp requirement. Mr. Hassan stated that he supports Council's decision.

He noted that the applicant makes the final decision whether or not to complete the project by either conforming or not.

Mr. Hassan will report back to Council on the applicant's decision.

### **Municipal Solicitor**

Local Hiring Policy Discussion

Council will discuss potential actions that could be taken by the Municipality to promote the hiring of local labor for private development projects in Norristown.

Solicitor Kilkenny explained that his office was asked to look into local hiring. There were several meetings with Municipal Staff and input from Council.

He stated that under PA State law, Norristown is restricted regarding local hiring. They cannot mandate that local employees are hired.

He suggested that Council can make an amendment to the comprehensive plan talking about local hiring as a goal.

He explained that if there is a development project, a representative from his office states that local hiring is a goal pointed out in the comprehensive plan. He noted there needs to be a firm basis in the law.

He suggested that Council compose the language regarding local hiring initiatives and forward to Sean's office.

Mr. Crandall Jones explained there needs to be a revised intake document that a developer would have. The document will have to give a statement regarding local hiring. This would be information for Council that can be used as a tool to challenge. He added that part of the intake document could include what jobs are needed to be filled? This can be put on the record and used as a condition.

He also stated that If a LERTA developer has not complied in the past, Council can refuse their next project.

### **MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATOR:**

Update on Norristown's Capital Improvement Plan

The Municipal Administrator and Engineer will be providing Council with an update on Norristown's first-ever Capital Improvement Plan, with an emphasis on what projects been accomplished and upcoming facility improvements.

Mr. Crandall Jones noted this is a previously-approved CIP project. He noted that the

Municipality's credit rating is AAA- and money was borrowed at a premium - \$2 million was allocated to Pension Funds.

There was public feedback for allocation of money.

Economic Development Funds - one use was for blight.

The website regarding spending needs to be updated: a new fire truck is being built.

Non-Economic Funds: spent 2.3 million on IT, facility acquisition, police, fire and recreation. Update: construction manager interviews - they will identify the most cost effective way to use funds. Council will make decisions on design and layout. Recreation related to the parks. Need public outreach.

Information will be available on the Municipal website.

Roads: 2015 approved a Master Plan for road paving. Every segment of road in the Municipality, including ratings of needing attention. Will utilize Liquid Fuels: 5 year plan. Borrowing process went through. \$3.5 million to address priority 1 roads.

Phase 2 priority 1 this year. Swede to Lafayette. Explained the repair method. Map available. There will be one more update, a public meeting, bids.

Public Works provides input and limits shutdown necessity.

## **PLANNING AND MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT:**

Reviving Norristown's Main Street Q2 Report

Quarterly presentation of retail recruiting activities by the Retail Development Manager.

Deborah Carey, Retail Development Manager. Reviving Norristown's Main Street Q2 Report. There was a slide presentation regarding:

Project Overview, Development, Integrative Approach, 90 day progress, strategies, restaurants, retail, residential, aligning strategy with the vision,

She covered items such as the budget, marketing campaign, social and print media campaign.

She noted this is month 5 into the initiative and she stated that Norristown is poised to become the next thing. The goal is to bring investors to Norristown.

She explained "Share Space" businesses which are businesses that want to diversify.

She added that looking ahead: Courthouse construction begins.

Marketing of newly opened businesses.

Multi-media approach.

Expansion plan for 1437 DeKalb Street

MEH Investment owner of 1437 DeKalb Street is proposing to expand the existing first floor in order to accommodate Children's Hospital of Philadelphia ("CHOP") who has outgrown its current location at 1307 DeKalb Street.

Director Musonye explained this is a Zoning Use determination.

The Attorney for the applicant explained that CHOP is relocating from 1307 DeKalb Street to 1437 DeKalb Street. There will be a lobby and an improved ADA ramp. CHOP can use the full building for their program. Changes include removing some paving to allow for a landscaping island, restriping of parking stalls and reduction of impervious coverage.

Council President noted that the applicant will get clarification on details of the expansion of the medical office and report back to Council.

#### 705 Chain Street Zoning Hearing Board Application

Pradeep John of 1811 Arbor Ct. Jamison, PA 18929 is seeking a variance from article V- R2 Residence District Section 320-41.A for the use of a quadraplex.

Director Musonye explained that the applicant lost non-conformity use in 2010 and it reverted back to what is allowed which is R-2. She noted that the applicant wants to revert the property back to a 4-unit building.

Director Musonye asked Council to send Solicitor to oppose application.

Sean Kilkenny noted that the applicant has a right to request relief but needs formal information that it is being opposed.

There was a motion on the floor to send the Solicitor to oppose the application. **All in favor. Motion carries.**

There was a motion by Valerie Scott-Cooper with a second by Heather Lewis to 705 Chain Street Zoning Hearing Board Application. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

#### Open agenda for KOP Rail Line update

There was a motion on the floor with a second to open the agenda.

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

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

#### KOP Rail Line Update

There was a slide presentation by Liz Smith, Director of Strategic Planning.

The items covered included:

What is expected to happen over the next year or so?

Project Background

Project Need

KOP (King of Prussia) is the largest employment center outside of Philadelphia.

She explained this is an extension of the Norristown High Speed Line. There was a decision made on the rail line route. It was adopted by the SEPTA Board and Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. It would be 4.5 miles of elevated rail.

She stated this will promote and strengthen regional growth and connect people to opportunities.

Update on KOP Rail Line

#### **PUBLIC SAFETY:**

Resolution No. 18-124 Disabled Parking

Motion to approve or deny Resolution No. 18-124 regarding requests for disabled parking spaces.

Request for Disabled Parking at: 1730 DeKalb Street.

Chief Talbot noted this is warranted due to a medical condition that impacts mobility.

**All in favor. Motion carries.**

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to approve Resolution 18-124: Disabled Parking.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Intent to Award Towing Contract for Three Years

Intent to award towing contract for three years.

Chief Talbot explained that each Towing Company works on an alternate monthly schedule. He suggested the contract be awarded to Morello and EVB Towing.

He also suggested an increase in rates above what is shown because Norristown currently has the lowest.

**All in favor. Motion carries.**

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Heather Lewis to Intent to award Towing Contract for three years.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

### **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:**

Public Works Report

Mr. Odenigbo provided information regarding Parks: Trimming limbs, mulching, perimeters, painting of the American Monument.

Potholes: Excess of 5,000. A crew has been patching potholes and compressions.

McCann Park - paving inhouse.

Utilities that are working in Norristown: Negotiated with PECO - must provide 2 inches of overlay and do sidewalks after work is complete. Have had 4.3 miles of streets paved by the utilities.

Stormwater issues in community. Good maintenance program needs to be implemented.

Education needed regarding dumping trash. Look into what is working in other cities?

In Mascaro contract - things they're not picking up. Change solid waste collection Ordinance.

Planning & Development Report

Director Musonye provided details of her report.



Economic Development Activities - monthly session:  
Zone Designation

County campus expansion

Blight Study

Independent Documentary Film - interesting movies on YouTube about Norristown.

"10,000 Friends of PA"

DCR - grant application aide.

Submitted report to DC&D.

Escrow accounts completed.

Met with NMWA (Norristown Municipal Waste Authority) - the sewer plant is now more visible.  
Need to soften the view. Looking for funds.

Office of the Administrator Reports

Summer Program information is available. Payment plans available.

Free Concerts begin on May 17, 2018.  
Signage will change in front of Municipal Hall.

Making final tweaks on Food Vendor Ordinance.

Conducting interviews for Code Manager. Recreation Manager is advertised.

Finance Director advertisement closed.

Heard from Deputy Director regarding Land Development for the State Hospital.

Summer Program info is available.  
Pmt plans available.

Concerts begin on 5-17  
Signage will change in front of Munic Hall.

Food vendor Ord final tweaks.

Conducting interviews for Code Mgr. Recreation Mgr. advertised.  
Reached out to Plymouth.

Finance Director advertisement closed.

Heard from Deputy Director regarding Land Develop for State Hosp.

Non-presenting Department Reports

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**All in favor. Motion carries.**

There was a motion by Olivia Brady with a second by Valerie Scott-Cooper to Motion to adjourn the Council Workshop of April 17, 2018.. A Roll Call Vote resulted in:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo