

January 5, 2023

**Regular Meeting**

Mayor McNinch called the Regular Meeting of the Denton Town Council to order at 6:00 PM on this date, leading everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Councilman Johnson held a moment of memorialization for the losses the Caroline County Community has experienced in the past two weeks, with the fatal accident that took the life of Caroline County Corrections Officer, Robbie Wilkerson, the incident in which Caroline County Sheriff Deputy Lucas Nagel took his own life, and the fatal accident that occurred this week resulting in the loss of four lives. Asking everyone to keep their families, each Agency and all first responders in their thoughts and prayers.

Invocation was given by Reverend Dan Gedman of St. Luke's United Methodist Church.

Mayor McNinch thanked everyone for coming and asked that the record reflect that all Councilmembers were present.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2022 Regular Meeting as presented; seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

**Swearing in of New Denton Town Council Member**

Mr. Frank Taylor was sworn into office to serve a five-year term on the Denton Town Council by Mayor Abigail McNinch.

**Swearing in of Denton Police Officer Stivers**

Mayor McNinch administered the Oath of Office, swearing in Denton Police Officer Jerry Stivers and welcomed him to the Department.

**2023 Annual Election of Officers**

**Office of Mayor**

Councilman Lister made a motion to appoint Abigail McNinch to serve as the Mayor of the Denton Town Council for 2023, seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.

**Office of Vice Mayor**

Councilman Johnson made a motion to appoint Dallas Lister to serve as the Vice Mayor of the Denton Town Council for 2023, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

**Office of Mayor Pro-Tem**

Councilman Johnson made a motion to appoint Dr. Lester Branson to serve as the Mayor Pro-Tem of the Denton Town Council for 2023, seconded by Councilman Lister, passing unanimously.

With the installation of officers now complete for 2023, Mayor McNinch continued presiding over the meeting.

**Public Hearings**

**Ordinance #737 – 2010 Comprehensive Plan Amendment**

Mayor McNinch opened a public hearing at 6:12 PM to receive public comments on Ordinance #737 - An Ordinance of the Town of Denton to amend the Town of Denton's 2010 Comprehensive Plan, dated September 13, 2010, to modify the goals and objectives of the Mixed Industrial (MI) District.

*Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the State: there were none  
 Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the County: there were none  
 Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the Council: there were none  
 Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the Public:*

*Mrs. Sarah Dahl of 406 S. Second St. spoke in support of the amendment.  
 There were no comments received online.*

*With no further comments, Mayor McNinch closed this public hearing at 6:13*

*PM.*

**Ordinance #738 – Zoning Text Amendment**

*Mayor McNinch opened a public hearing at 6:14 PM to receive public comments on Ordinance #738 - An Ordinance of the Town of Denton to amend the Official Table of Use Regulations, Appendix VII, in the Denton Town Code Zoning Ordinance and the provisions contained in Chapter 128 of the Denton Town Code with respect to microbrewery, microdistillery, microwinery, coffee roasting, and restaurant use in the Mixed Industrial (MI) District.*

*Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the State: there were none  
 Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the County: there were none  
 Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the Council: there were none  
 Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the Public:*

*Mrs. Stacey Todd of Neal Family Partnership, owners of one of the parcels located in the Mixed Industrial Zone, spoke in support of the amendment.*

*There were no comments received online.*

*With no further comments, Mayor McNinch closed this public hearing at 6:15*

*PM.*

**Ordinance #739 – Ethics Law Amendment**

*Mayor McNinch opened a public hearing at 6:16 PM to receive public comments on Ordinance #739 - An Ordinance revising and amending Chapter 14 of the Denton Town Code pertaining to Ethics Law as required by the Maryland State Ethics Commission to comply with State Ethics Law.*

*Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the State: there were none  
 Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the County: there were none  
 Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the Council:*

*Councilman Johnson commented that the Town is adopting Maryland State Law as required by the State.*

*Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the Public: there were none*

*With no further comments, Mayor McNinch closed this public hearing at 6:16*

*PM.*

**Petitions, Remonstrance's, and Communication**

**Council Citation – Doncella Wilson**

*Mayor McNinch read a Denton Town Council Citation thanking former Councilwoman Doncella Wilson for serving 5 years on the Denton Town Council.*

**30 Years of Service Award – Michael Copper**

*Councilman Branson recognized Michael Copper of the Denton Public Works Department for his dedicated service to the Town and the community for the past 30*

years. Councilman Branson presented Mike with a 30 Years of Service plaque and a Proclamation in celebration of his recent retirement from the Town.

**2022 Outstanding Service Award Presentation – Richard Jordan**

Mayor McNinch presented Richard Jordan, an employee of the Denton Public Works Department with the 2022 Outstanding Service Award. Richard was nominated by his peers to receive the award.

**Citations – Holiday Decorating Contest Winners**

The Denton Town Council held their 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Home for the Holidays decorating contest for Denton residents.

Councilman Johnson presented Town Council Citations and prizes to the following winners of the contest and thanked all the families that took the time to decorate their homes for all to enjoy.

- Santa's Favorite – was presented to Conner Beish and his family, residents of 1207 Foster Holly Court.
- Residents Favorite – was presented to Jason Kesler of 805 Market St.
- Scavenger Hunt Winner – was awarded to Chris Vallee, he was the only person to get all the clues correct.

Mayor McNinch thanked Councilman Johnson for all his work on this contest and for bringing so much joy to the Town.

**Ordinances and Resolutions**

**Ordinance #737 – 2010 Comprehensive Plan Amendment**

An Ordinance of the Town of Denton to amend the Town of Denton's 2010 Comprehensive Plan, dated September 13, 2010, to modify the goals and objectives of the Mixed Industrial (MI) District.

Councilman Branson made a motion to adopt Ordinance #737, seconded by Councilman Taylor.

In discussion, Mr. Chris Drummond, Town Attorney, provided a summary of the Ordinance. Councilman Johnson added that as they move forward, future requests will be handled in the same manner.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch called for a vote on the motion to adopt Ordinance #737.

Motion passed unanimously.

**Ordinance #738 – Zoning Text Amendment**

An Ordinance of the Town of Denton to amend the Official Table of Use Regulations, Appendix VII, in the Denton Town Code Zoning Ordinance and the provisions contained in Chapter 128 of the Denton Town Code with respect to microbrewery, microdistillery, microwinery, coffee roasting, and restaurant use in the Mixed Industrial (MI) District.

Councilman Johnson made a motion to adopt Ordinance #738, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

**Ordinance #739 – Ethics Law Amendment**

An Ordinance revising and amending Chapter 14 of the Denton Town Code pertaining to Ethics Law as required by the Maryland State Ethics Commission to comply with State Ethics Law.

Councilman Lister made a motion to adopt Ordinance #739, seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.

**Ordinance #740 – Revised Purchasing Manual**

*An Ordinance of the Town of Denton adopting a new Purchasing Manual, establishing rules and regulations regarding the purchasing of supplies, materials, equipment, construction of public improvements, contractual services or any other goods or services.*

*Councilman Lister made a motion to introduce Ordinance #740, seconded by Councilman Johnson.*

*In discussion, Mr. Scott Getchell, Town Administrator, provided an overview of the proposed policy and changes from the current policy and answered questions from the Council. Mr. Getchell and Mr. Drummond will make a few language corrections to help provide clarity and transparency of the intent.*

*With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch called for a vote on the motion to introduce Ordinance #740.*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

**Unfinished Business**

**None**

**New Business**

**Agenda #1 – Homeland Security Grants**

*Chief Bacorn presented a proposal seeking approval to use funds that have been pre-approved through the Homeland Security Grant Program for improving the security cameras at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Funds awarded include: \$4,269.08 from the LETPP FY21 Grant and \$4,910.25 from the Homeland Security FY22 Grant. The Grant Funds awarded total \$9,179.33. Chief Bacorn provided a quote from Safe House to perform work and equipment for \$9,061.84.*

*Councilman Johnson made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Councilman Branson.*

*In discussion, Councilman Lister shared that this is a pass-through grant, Town funds will not be used for this purchase.*

*With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch called for a vote on the motion to approve to the Security Camera Upgrades at the Wastewater Treatment Plant using the Grant funds awarded.*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

**Agenda #2 – 9 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street Grant Agreement**

*Mr. Getchell shared that the Town applied for and has been awarded \$200,000 in Grant Funds to assist with renovations to the 9 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street property located in the ArtsWay District. These funds along with funds awarded from MHT, and the funds the Town has from the sale of 7 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St. will assist with renovating the building for future use.*

*Mr. Getchell also shared that the Department of Housing and Community Development has offered to transfer the unexpended funds left over from the Southern States Demolition Grant toward this project.*

*Discussion was held about the project, F.A.C.E.S. interest in the property, and who will be managing the project.*

*Mayor McNinch made a motion to approve signing the Grant Agreement and to accept the offer from DHCD to transfer the demolition grant funds to this project. The motion was seconded by Councilman Branson.*



*Additional discussion was held, in which Councilman Lister expressed that he does not want the Town to absorb the cost for the Project Management.*

*Councilman Johnson requested to have the F.A.C.E.S. Board members come and discuss their interest in the property, and work towards having an agreement with them by April 30<sup>th</sup>, staying within the Grant Timeline for Project Bid commencement date.*

*With most wanting additional information, the motion on the floor was withdrawn by Mayor McNinch and Councilman Branson.*

*Mr. Getchell will gather more information on the project, grant application, and F.A.C.E.S. with regards to the new DHCD Strategic Demolition Grant Award.*

*It was explained that offers from DHCD to transfer the Grant Funds from one project to another are usually time restricted, with very short deadline, before the offer is closed and the funds may be redistributed to another agency or project. It was suggested the Council consider approving the Mayor to sign letter accepting the offer just in case there is a deadline that is outside of the Council meeting schedule. If the Council decides not to go through with the project, they can later notify DHCD prior to receiving the funds.*

*Councilman Lister made a motion to approve the State's offer to transfer the left over funds from the Southern States Demolition Project to this project, authorizing the Mayor to sign a letter, seconded by Councilman Taylor, passing unanimously.*

**Reports of Officers, Boards, and Committees**

*Councilman Lister requested to schedule a meeting with Simple Fiber to get an update on their growth plan for Denton.*

*Mr. Getchell will schedule this meeting for an upcoming Working Session.*

*Mayor McNinch mentioned that the 2023 Legislative Session starts on January 11<sup>th</sup>. The Mayor recently met with Delegate Adams.*

*Councilman Johnson shared that through his job, he met Wes Moore and his Chief of Staff.*

*Discussion was held on the status of the 4<sup>th</sup> St. Park and grants.*

*Mr. Getchell is working on the five-year capital budget.*

*With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch adjourned the meeting at 7:48 PM.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Karen L. Monteith,  
Clerk - Treasurer*