

June 21, 2021

Working Session

The Working Session was made available Online using Microsoft Teams, in person attendance was restricted by request only.

At 6:30 PM Vice Mayor Lister called the Working Session of the Denton Town Council to order on this date, leading everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and thanked everyone for joining.

Attendance:

Vice Mayor Lister asked for the record to reflect that Councilman Branson and Johnson were in attendance in person. Councilwoman Wilson was attending virtually, and Mayor McNinch was absent.

Staff in attendance included Mr. Don Mulrine, Town Administrator, Acting Chief of Police George Bacorn, Phil Clark, David Renshaw, and Karen Monteith.

Discussion was held on the following items:

Caroline County Park Planning

Mrs. Kat Stork, of Shore Strategies, and Mrs. Sue Simmons, Caroline County Recreation and Parks Director, spoke with the Council about the Town and County's long-range park and facility planning for public recreation. As the County Parks Board and Staff work on updating their long-term park plan, they are seeking Municipal and Community input on what type of parks does everyone like to visit, what do they want to see happen with parks within the county, and future improvements. Seeking ways to make sure each agency is working together to best utilize funding that comes available for improvements.

The Council shared that they would like to see public meetings being held seeking park input; for everyone to visit each park to identify what needs to be done and share ways to improve every park. Create a park map for the public to see what is available at each of the parks. The importance to have the integrations with the County to get a better plan for everyone, and to consider having one place where residents can go to reserve park space, rather than going to multiple websites. As part of the outreach seeking input, it was suggested to make the park rendering available at Summerfest.

Breedlove Stormwater Concerns

Discussion was held pertaining to a letter received from Mr. Rob Breedlove with concerns about a stormwater issue on S. 2nd. St.

Mr. Mulrine, Mr. Clark, and Mr. Renshaw walked the site of concern, and relayed that it is not a stormwater pond owned or maintained by the Town, it is on private property. They found that the pond drains into the deep ravine that feeds into the Choptank River. They spoke with the Owners who maintain the pond, there were mosquito biscuits in place in the pond, they keep a path mowed to and around the pond and plan on cleaning the area of the overgrown nuisance vegetation that is close to the pond.

Councilman Lister and Councilman Branson both said that if it is not in violation of any Town Ordinances, then all the Town should do is to send a letter of what should be done to maintain it and check on it periodically, otherwise the Town should not get involved.

2021-16

Waste Collection

The Council reviewed a letter received from the owner of Eastern Shore Environmental apologizing and explaining the equipment failures resulting in the recent delays in collecting residential trash.

Discussion was held on the unforeseen circumstances, going with the lower bidders helps the citizens by reducing the cost, Denton is the only Town that does not charge a separate fee for trash collection; loaning the contract monies to buy another truck, or charge the citizens for a different hauler. Several other municipalities are having issues with other contractors either not showing up or charging higher fees. Should the Town consider hiring additional staff and handling the trash services in house.

The Council suggested the Town needs to come up with a back up plan, should there be a delay again due to equipment failure, and to seek a five-year business plan from the Contractor.

Ordinances Pending

Mr. Mulrine mentioned that Public Hearings have been scheduled for Ordinances #718, #719 and #720, which will be held on July 1, 2021, prior to the consideration of adoption. He reminded Council members that they must conduct a site visit for the Bullocks Rezoning Request prior to the hearing.

Mr. Mulrine shared a draft Ordinance pertaining to the Bond Council requirements for the Franklin St. Water Main Project that may be presented in July.

Mr. Renshaw mentioned Planning & Codes has discovered several fences and structures that have been placed in easement areas and or setback areas by prior staff that need to be corrected or there needs to be some agreements worked out. Seeking support from the Council to work with the Attorney to review the drafted agreements to allow the property owners to fully use their property and detailing the rules for access for maintenance and repairs. Also, to establish having the infrastructure removed when any of one of these properties transfers ownership.

The Council supported staff seeking comments from the Town Attorney.

American Recovery Program Funding

Mr. Mulrine shared the Department of Budget and Management Power Point on How To Apply For Funding. Council and Staff discussed the proposed America Recovery Program Funding being awarded to the Town, looking to use the funds on water and sewer infrastructure improvements, installing more shut off valves, installing water and sewer lines for upgrades from those still using well and septic systems, to provide premium pay and improve video recording equipment.

Personnel Manual

Discussion was held pertaining to seeking proposals for outsourcing having the Personnel Manual updated. Larger municipalities have a full-time human resources dept., while small towns, like Denton, have less staff that handle multiple tasks.

Police Department Plan

Acting Chief Bacorn held discussion with Council members on plans for the Police Dept. moving forward.

Sharp Road Park Project

Discussion was held pertaining to the State Funding being awarded and submitting the application to the County expressing the restrooms are the Town's top priority to accomplish with the funding.

2021-17

Meeting Policies – Deadlines

There was brief discussion on the Council's new request for submitting agenda items earlier and a conflict within the Town Code. Staff will pull information together for future discussion.

Planning & Code Sidewalk Amendments

Mr. Renshaw shared legislation being drafted seeking to amend the Town Charter and the Town Code to remove some potential conflicts regarding sidewalk responsibilities, clarifying ownership of sidewalks and addressing many variances.

Council would like to have additional time to review and comment.

Cluster Box – Sidewalk Improvement

Mr. Clark shared three bids received for installing cluster mailboxes and sidewalks improvement. These will be presented for consideration of approval in July.

Chief of Police Contract

Discussion was held on the Chief of Police Contract for filling in the severance package, accrued leave maximum payout and line of duty or off duty death. Staff will finalize the contract for consideration for approval at the July meeting.

Vice Mayor Lister left at 9:06 PM

Visitor Center Window Project

Mr. Mulrine shared a contract draft between the Town and Harper & Sons pertaining to the new windows Mr. JOK Walsh is paying to have installed in the Visitor Center.

Basketball Complaint

Councilman Johnson shared that he told a resident with complaints about the basketball courts to call the Town Office during normal business hours with any concerns.

With no further comments, Mayor Pro Tem Branson adjourned the Working Session at 9:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Karen L. Monteith,
Clerk-Treasurer*