

August 4, 2022

Regular Meeting

Mayor McNinch called the Regular Meeting of the Denton Town Council to order at 7:00 PM on this date, leading everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor McNinch thanked everyone for coming and asked that the record reflect that Councilwoman Wilson will be joining the meeting soon virtually and that all the other Councilmembers were present.

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

The July 2022 meeting minutes will be presented next month for consideration.

Public Hearing

Ordinance #735 – Critical Area Amendments

Mayor McNinch opened a public hearing at 7:02 PM to receive public comments on Ordinance #735 - An Ordinance of the Town of Denton amending the Denton Town Code by amending § 128-8 Definitions, amending § 128-36 Supplemental Use Standards, adding § 128-42.4 Water-dependent Facilities, and amending §128-175 GA Growth Allocation Floating Zone with respect to the Critical Area Program in the Town of Denton.

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

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Councilman Johnson commented that the amendment is required by the State.

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

Chief Bacorn announced that Councilwoman Wilson was on virtually now.

With no further comments, Mayor McNinch closed this public hearing at 7:02

PM.

Petitions, Remonstrance's, and Communication

Caroline Summerfest – 2022 Proclamation

Mrs. Sue Simmons, Director of Caroline County Recreation & Parks, read a Proclamation of the Denton Town Council and the Caroline County Commissioners to recognize the 34th annual Caroline Summerfest event that will take place August 19 & 20, 2022 in downtown Denton.

Citation – Sue Simmons Caroline Summerfest

Mayor McNinch read and presented a Council Citation to Mrs. Sue Simmons, recognizing her hard work and dedication to Caroline Summerfest over the past 34 years and to the community, wishing her good luck and enjoyment in her upcoming retirement.

Communication – 3rd Street Basketball Court Noise

Discussion was held regarding an email request received from Mr. Steve Becker, a resident of North 3rd St., requesting the Town install a sound barrier at the 3rd and Lincoln St. basketball court behind the Police Department.

Staff was directed to explore what it may cost for the request and to also include costs to seal cracks, paint and spritz up the court to look nicer for the next budget cycle.

Letter of Support – Shore Rivers Grant Application

Mr. Don Mulrine, Town Administrator, provided a letter of support to go with the grant application Shore Rivers is writing to seek funding for the Poor House Run Stormwater Project.

Councilman Lister made a motion to provide a letter of support, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Ordinances and Resolutions

Ordinance #735 – Critical Area Amendments

An Ordinance of the Town of Denton amending the Denton Town Code by amending § 128-8 Definitions, amending § 128-36 Supplemental Use Standards, adding § 128-42.4 Water-dependent Facilities, and amending §128-175 GA Growth Allocation Floating Zone with respect to the Critical Area Program in the Town of Denton.

Councilman Lister made a motion to adopt Ordinance #735, seconded by Councilman Johnson.

In discussion, Mr. Mulrine provided a synopsis of the Ordinance which meets the State's recommendations and answered questions.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch called for a vote on the motion to adopt Ordinance #735.

The motion passed with 4 votes, with no response from Councilwoman Wilson.

Reports of Officers, Boards, and Committees

Councilman Lister shared an overview of the combined Council and Utility Commission meeting with Easton Utilities as the Town explores opportunities to enhance utilities services for the community. It was a great meeting to discuss infrastructure, logistics and helped to establish benchmarks for working with third-party vendors, building partnerships to offer enhanced fiber and information technology, energy production and natural gas.

Councilman Lister, Mayor McNinch, and Delegate Jeff Ghrist recently met with an investor to look at land available for future development.

Mayor McNinch shared that she had received a call from Commissioners Larry Porter pertaining to a funding opportunity that Economic Development is planning to conduct another study of the West Denton Area. In their conversation, Mayor McNinch shared that there have been several studies completed and has recommended the County use available funding towards an engineering plan, instead of conducting another study. The Mayor will schedule a meeting with the Director of the Caroline County Dept. of Economic Development to assist in developing a plan of action going forward.

Councilman Branson announced that Commissioner Porter had shared with him that the Police Accountability Board Members have been selected. They are still waiting on the Maryland Police Training Commission to finish developing the training for these newly required board members.

Mr. Chris Drummond, Town Attorney, provided an update on the Brodie Bankruptcy property sales.

Councilman Branson added that the Dept. of Social Services can stay in the Carter Building until 2024 when the new building is built.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

Agenda #1 – Sharp Rd. Park Water and Sewer Allocation

As a formality, Staff requested approval for one (1) ERU for the Town of Denton Sharp Road Park bathrooms.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve the allocation, seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.

Agenda #2 – 85 Engerman Ave. Water and Sewer Allocation

Miracle of Concrete, LLC, submitted a request for approval for one (1) ERU for a new commercial building to be located at the Denton Industrial Park, 85 Engerman Avenue.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve the allocation for Miracle of Concrete, LLC., seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.

Agenda #3 - Town Hall Building Repairs – Insurance Update and Award

Mr. Mulrine presented proposals obtained to repair the Town Hall Building due to damage caused by a vehicle that struck the building on May 23, 2022. Bids were received from Harper & Sons General Contracting for \$11,489 and Willow Construction, LLC for \$16,000. Once the work is complete, LGIT, the Town's insurance company will seek reimbursement from GEICO, the vehicle owner's insurer.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve awarding the repairs to Harper & Sons, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Agenda #4 - C.C. Dept of Emergency Services and Town of Denton MOA

Chief Bacorn presented the LETPP Memorandum of Agreement between the Caroline County Department of Emergency Services and the Town of Denton, to approve grant funds received through FEMA Homeland Security Grant Program to be used towards Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activities.

Councilman Johnson recused himself from the discussion due to a potential conflict of interest with his employer.

Councilman Branson made a motion to approve executing the Memorandum of Agreement, seconded by Mayor McNinch, passing with 4 votes. Councilman Johnson was recused.

Agenda #5 - Denton Volunteer Fire Dept. – Building Repair Updates - Funding Request

At the last meeting, members of the Denton Volunteer Fire Department shared an update on building repairs and funding needs. Staff provided information on the Town's designated funding options to assist with the cost. Members of the Fire Dept. are evaluating and will reach out with an update.

Mr. Mulrine shared that the Town's Grant Consultant has confirmed that the ARPA funds could be designated to be used for the proposed stormwater infrastructure needs.

Agenda #6 - 323 Market St. Lease – HotDesks/Main Street

A draft lease with Denton Main Street for the use of unit 201, 202, and 203 of the Microenterprise building was provided for discussion and consideration.

Councilman Johnson made a motion to accept the lease with a term set for 1-year at \$100 a month, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Agenda #7 - Simple Fiber Agreement

Mr. Mulrine provided an update on the fiber connections happening and requested consideration to approve an Agreement with Simple Fiber to provide a dark fiber connection between the 501 Gay St. Water Tower, the Town Hall and to install a cross connect to continue the fiber link back to the Police Station.

Mr. Drummond reviewed and approved the lease, mentioning his concerns about the Limitation of Liability.

Councilman Johnson made a motion to approve the Internet Lease Agreement with Simple Fiber, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Miscellaneous

Councilman Johnson recently prepared a packet of information to help further explain the Tax Differential for the public. Discussion was held and Councilman Johnson asked members to review his packet and provide him with feedback. He mentioned that the Town of Denton will be up for reassessment in January 2023.

Mayor McNinch announced and made the following statement: Earlier this year, the Town Council made a decision to find a replacement for the current Town Administrator, Mr. Don Mulrine, to allow him the opportunity to continue to serve the Town in a reduced role until his retirement. It should be noted that Don in his capacity as the Town Administrator, has worked hard to make Denton and this community a better place to live, work and play. And we thank him for that. The Council sincerely appreciates his efforts. Though he will play a smaller role in the Town government, Don will remain an invaluable contributor to the Town's success. On July 5th of this year, the Council held an executive session at the Visitor Center where they met with a candidate for Town Administrator, and they found this candidate qualified for this position. For this reason, the Council has agreed to forgo a national search for the next Town Administrator, and instead drafted an agreement and made an offer letter that was presented to the Candidate. Following a reciprocation period, the Candidate has accepted the offer. This agreement was signed by the Candidate, the Mayor and attested by Mrs. Karen Monteith, the Clerk-Treasurer on August 2, 2022. The Denton Town Council is pleased to announce that our former Denton Public Works Director, Mr. Scott Getchell, of Denton, Maryland will return to serve as the next Town Administrator for the Town of Denton, beginning September 7, 2022.

Mayor McNinch thanked Don for his efforts and for being an invaluable contributor to the Town and for his help in getting the Town where it is today.

There was discussion on Aqua Con continuing to explore their expansion in the area.

Mr. Mulrine mentioned that the Caroline County of Association Municipalities meeting is scheduled for next week and currently Mayor McNinch, Councilman Johnson and Councilwoman Wilson are registered to attend.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch adjourned the meeting at 8:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Karen L. Monteith,
Clerk - Treasurer*