

January 4, 2024

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.

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

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

Councilman Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2023 Regular Meeting as presented; seconded by Councilman Lister, passing unanimously.

Swearing In

Mrs. Abigail McNinch was sworn into office to serve a five-year term on the Denton Town Council by Clerk-Treasurer Karen L. Monteith, Notary in and for Caroline County, State of Maryland.

2024 Annual Election of Officers

Office of Mayor

Councilman Johnson made a motion to appoint Dr. Abigail McNinch to serve as the Mayor of the Denton Town Council for 2024, seconded by Councilman Branson, 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 2024, seconded by Councilman Taylor, passing unanimously.

Office of Mayor Pro-Tem

Councilman Lister made a motion to appoint Dr. Lester Branson to serve as the Mayor Pro-Tem of the Denton Town Council for 2024, seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.

With the installation of officers now complete for 2024, Mayor McNinch continued presiding over the meeting.

Public Hearing

None

Petitions, Remonstrance's, and Communication

2023 Financial Report Presentation

Mr. Roy Geiser of UHY LLP, Town Auditor, presented and provided an overview of the Town of Denton's June 30, 2023 Annual Audited Financial Report and Audit Communications as per auditing required communications. Mr. Geiser stated it was a clean audit, providing an unmodified and clean opinion, with no recommendations, nor issues to report.

Chiefs Citation Presentation-DPD

This item was postponed to next month.

Outstanding Employee Service Award Recognition Mrs. Robin Lahnemann

Mayor McNinch presented Robin Lahnemann of the Finance Department with the 2023 Outstanding Service Award. This is an award in which Robin was nominated by her peers and is recognized for providing excellent service to the citizens and business of the Town of Denton, going above and beyond her typical day-to-day responsibilities.

Proclamation – Thelma Coursey Causey – 100th Birthday Celebration

Councilman Branson read a Proclamation to be presented to Ms. Thelma Coursey Causey who will be celebrating her 100th birthday on January 21, 2024. The Council congratulates Ms. Causey on her milestone celebration.

Proclamation – National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day

Mayor McNinch read and presented a Proclamation to recognize January 9, 2024 as National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day in Denton and encourages all citizens to take time to show their support for all Law Enforcement Officers.

Citations – Best of the Best Denton Business Recognition

Councilman Johnson announced that in December APG Media held their Best of the Best Chesapeake Community Choice Awards. The Town Council recognized the following Denton businesses that won the awards by providing Council Citations.

- Keith Bilbrough – Bilbrough’s Electric – Best electrician
- Bullock’s Deli – Best sub/deli/sandwich shop
- Caroline’s in Denton – (multiple awards: Best fine dining, best brunch, best new restaurant, best outdoor/patio/rooftop dining, and best romantic restaurant)
- Charlie Huber of State Farm Insurance – Best insurance agent
- Clayton Farms – Best produce stand
- Conner Plumbing, Heating & Cooling – Best heating/AC service company
- Denton Diner – Best diner
- Dr. Dorothy J. Branson, OD – Best optometrist
- Earth Tones Café – Most Innovative Workplace
- Hertrich Family of Automobile Dealers – Best Service Dept., best new/used car dealer, and best oil change service
- Patti’s Petals Florist, Garden & Gifts – Best florist shop and best gift shop
- Purple Peake CBD – Best CBD store
- Red Light Liquors – Best liquor store
- Robyn Ritter of The Paperwork Pros – Best consulting firm
- Shore United Bank – Best Bank, Mortgage Lending, Company Culture, and Place to Work
- Sugar Coated Nails – Best nail salon
- What’s New Shop – Best bookstore

Councilman Branson took a moment to read and present the Citation to his wife, Dr. Dorothy J. Branson, OD.

Citation – Paula Wright – Main Street

Councilman Lister, read and presented a Town Council Citation to Mrs. Paula Wright, President of the Downtown Denton Main Street Organization, to recognize her for her creativity and dedication to DDMS and for going above and beyond by decorating the Third St. greenspace area this year and hosting by far the best Christkindlmarkt Event.

Ordinances and Resolutions

None

Unfinished Business

None

New Business**Agenda #1 – Lease Amendment – His Hope Ministries - 1000 Market Street**

Councilman Johnson recused himself from all discussion on this item.

Councilman Lister made a motion to accept the Lease Amendment as presented, extending the current lease with His Hope Ministries from March 2024 to March 4, 2028, for the continued use of the dwelling located at 1000 Market St., to serve as the Senior Haven for His Hope Ministries. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor.

In discussion, Mr. Scott Getchell, Town Administrator, provided a synopsis of the use and support of extending for four additional years providing more time for the Town to come up with a plan for the future or the land.

Mrs. Stefanie Johnson, Executive Director of His Hope Ministries, thanked the Town for their continued support for providing temporary housing for qualifying senior citizens to have a safe place to stay while locating permanent housing. Mrs. Johnson introduced Ms. Beth Wall, His Hope Ministries Office & Shelter Manager.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch asked for a vote on the motion to approve the Lease Amendment.

The motion passed with 4 votes, as Councilman Johnson remained recused.

Agenda #2 – Water and Sewer Allocation

A request received from Mr. Matt Riddleberger, GRCC Properties LLC, seeking approval for (1.5) additional ERU's (Equivalent Residential Units) for the Blue Crab Car Wash located at 513 South Fifth Avenue. The additional ERU's are required for the conversion of a handwash bay to an automatic touchless wash bay.

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

Reports of Officers, Boards, and Committees

Councilman Lister inquired about the West Denton Study conducted by the County for the expansion of water and sewer and inquired what the next steps will be.

Mr. Getchell mentioned that Commissioner Travis Breeding is scheduled to attend the January 22, Council Working Session, to discuss the West Denton Study and the Sharp Road Park Proposal.

Mayor McNinch shared that January 10th is Opening Day of the Maryland General Assembly 2024 Legislative Session.

Mayor McNinch announced the Eastern Shore Association of Municipalities Dinner will be held on January 23, 2024; the hot topic all over the shore is the Tax Differential.

Mayor McNinch announced that the Public Policy Department through the University of Maryland is working on a Rate Study for Kent County and surrounding municipalities as a pilot. The data being gathered for the Study may be helpful for other Municipalities going forward, just something to keep an eye on.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch adjourned the meeting at 6:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Karen L. Monteith,
Clerk - Treasurer*