

December 9, 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.

Mayor McNinch thanked everyone for coming and asked that the record reflect that Councilman Johnson was attending online, until he arrives at the Town Hall, and that all the other Councilmembers were present in person.

Councilman Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented for the October 21, 2024 and November 7, 2024 Regular Meetings and the November 18, 2024 Working Session, seconded by Councilman Taylor, passing unanimously.

Public Hearing

Mayor McNinch opened a public hearing at 6:01 PM to receive public comments on Ordinance #757 - An Ordinance of the Town of Denton amending the Denton Code to add provisions to Chapter 92 regulating mobile food service vendors within the Town of Denton to promote public health, safety and welfare.

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:

Ms. Robin Ritter of 11866 Holly Plains Dr., Ridgely and owner of several businesses in Town, thanked the Town Council for creating this legislation and for all their support for local businesses.

With no further comments, Mayor McNinch closed this public hearing at 6:03 PM.

Petitions, Remonstrance's, and Communication**Citation – Eagle Scout**

Mayor McNinch read and presented a Council Citation to Noah Bures of the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 165, congratulating him on earning his Eagle Scout Award. Noah's Eagle Scout Project consisted of replacing and adding fencing, gates, and benches at the Denton Lions Club Park.

Ordinances and Resolutions**Ordinance #757 – Mobile Food Service Vendors**

An Ordinance of the Town of Denton amending the Town of Denton Code to add provisions to Chapter 92 regulating mobile food service vendors within the Town of Denton to promote public health, safety and welfare.

Councilman Lister made a motion to adopt Ordinance #757, seconded by Councilman Taylor.

In discussion, Mrs. Lyndsey Ryan, Town Attorney, provided a synopsis of the Ordinance.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch asked for a vote on the motion to adopt Ordinance #757.

The motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business**Agenda #1 – Board of Appeals Appointment**

Mr. Christopher Neall submitted a letter of interest to serve on the Board of Appeals. There has been a vacancy for the Alternate on the Board of Appeals since January 2023. The unexpired term for the Alternate ends December 31, 2026.

Councilman Branson made a motion to appoint Mr. Neall to serve on the Board of Appeals, seconded by Councilman Lister, passing unanimously.

Agenda #2 – Denton Project LLC – Transfer of Water & Sewer Allocations

Mr. George Bailey submitted a letter on behalf of Denton Project LLC requesting approval to transfer 19 water and sewer allocations from the townhouse subdivision to the single-family subdivision. The Town Council approved 44 water and sewer allocations on 7/7/2022 for the townhouse subdivision that will expire on 7/6/2025.

The Planning Commission reviewed the single-family subdivision on November 26th, and Denton Project LLC received conditional preliminary subdivision approval for Phase I for 18 single-family homes.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve and grant the request, seconded by Councilman Taylor.

Councilman Lister mentioned the Council discussed this request at the November working session and that it makes sense to allow the transfer.

With no additional comments, Mayor McNinch asked for a vote on the motion to approve the allocation transfer request.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda #3 - Visitor Center Sprinkler Proposal

Mr. Scott Getchell, Town Administrator, provided the background on previous discussions on the sprinkler system, and the full installation cost is estimated to be \$350K. Directional drilling will cost less. This new proposal assumes a 10-inch water main will be available for use. Mr. Getchell asked for approval of the Harper & Sons proposal to install a sprinkler system at the Visitor Center, moving forward with allocating to get the infrastructure complete and then work on identifying funding to cover either the directional drilling or running a large enough water main to the center. ARPA funds are being used to cover the total proposal fee of \$149,375.00. Harper & Sons constructed the Visitor Center, and this proposal is a continuation of their contract with the Town.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve allocating the remaining ARPA Funds to cover the proposal, seconded by Councilman Taylor.

Discussion was held in which the Mayor wanted to explain that when the building was built the Town was not required to include the sprinkler system, but it is important to the Council to get it installed as it would be for other non-governmental buildings.

Mr. Getchell added that he will use all the remaining ARPA funds and possibly some of the interest accrued on the funds. The Town has until the end of December to allocate all the ARPA Funds, then until December 2026 to spend it.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch asked for a vote on the motion to approve the Harper & Sons proposal of \$149,375.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda #4 - 2025 Council Meeting Schedule

Mr. Getchell submitted a draft of the 2025 Council Meeting Schedule for consideration.

Councilman Taylor noted two corrections on the April Working Session should be the 2nd Monday and 3rd Monday in April, instead of 3rd & 4th.

Councilman Taylor made a motion to approve the 2025 Council Meeting Schedule with the corrections mentioned, seconded by Councilman Lister, passing unanimously.

Agenda #5 - 2025 Holiday Schedule

Mr. Getchell submitted a draft of the 2025 Holiday Schedule, proposing to swap Election Day for Columbus Day, and since Christmas and New Years Day both fall on a Thursday in 2025, it was suggested to also close the Fridays after using liberal leave.

Discussion was held on using liberal leave or approving extra paid holidays, scheduling and cost.

Councilman Johnson arrived in person at 6:24PM.

Councilman Taylor made a motion to accept the 2025 Holiday Schedule granting 2 extra holidays for the Fridays after Christmas and New Years, rather than requiring staff to use liberal leave. The motion was seconded by Councilman Branson and passed unanimously.

Agenda #6 - Utility Commission Reappointment

Leroy Woomer's term expires December 31, 2024, and would like to be reappointed to serve another 5-year term.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve Mr. Woomer's reappointment to the Utility Commission, seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.

Agenda #7 - Board of Appeals Reappointment

Troy Livingstone submitted a request seeking reappointment to the Board of Appeals. The current term expires December 31, 2024, and he is seeking reappointment for another three-year term that will expire December 31, 2027.

Councilman Lister made a motion to reappoint Mr. Livingstone to the Board of Appeals, seconded by Councilman Branson. The motion passed 4-1 with Councilman Johnson voting no.

Agenda #8 - Historic & Architectural Review Commission Reappointment

Marc Lacoste submitted a request seeking reappointment to the Historic & Architectural Review Commission for another three-year term. The current term expires December 31, 2024, and he is seeking reappointment for another term that will expire December 31, 2027.

Councilman Branson made a motion to reappoint Mr. Lacoste to the Historic & Architectural Review Commission, seconded by Councilman Taylor.

Discussion was held on getting to know the board members, holding a meet and greet so that way moving forward, the Council and other Board members would get to know each other.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch asked for a vote on the motion to reappoint Mr. Lacoste.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda #9 - Historic & Architectural Review Commission Reappointment

Barbara Martin submitted a request seeking reappointment to the Historic & Architectural Review Commission for another three-year term. The current term expires December 31, 2024, and she is seeking reappointment for another term that will expire December 31, 2027.

Councilman Taylor made a motion for reappointment of Ms. Martin, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Agenda #10 - Letter of Support – Hometown Grant

Town Staff submitted a request seeking a letter of support to apply for the T-Mobile Hometown Grant, seeking \$50,000 in funds for a dog park at Sharp Road Park. The grant is due January 1, 2025.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve for the Mayor to sign a letter of support for the grant, seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.

Mr. Getchell shared that the staff is also seeking letters of support from other agencies.

Reports of Officers, Boards, and Committees

Councilman Taylor provided an overview of the Planning Commission's November meeting, highlighting the Bullock's Plaza II final site plan was approved. The 804 Franklin St. concept plan was reviewed. The Denton Project LLC preliminary was approved. Wendy's preliminary site plan has been submitted; and they are close to being done with all the zoning changes to go with the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Councilman Johnson thanked all Town staff for their assistance in the delivery of 168 meals for the NUTS program on Thanksgiving Day, their help with the Holiday Parade and Christkindl market.

Mayor McNinch mentioned she was talking with Derek Simmons, Superintendent of Caroline County Public Schools, recently, and they are evaluating moving Lockerman Middle School, and she suggested they look at the former Southern States Property.

Councilman Lister announced that DPW has been repainting the fire hydrants, and that the colors coordinate with the size of the supply line and the flow size, which assist the Fire Department when responding to a call.

Discussion was held on painting the curb red to help reestablishing the distance for no parking near the hydrants, and whether a local ordinance is necessary for establishing the distance.

Mr. Mark Chandler, Superintendent of Public Works, announced that the new street sweeper purchased with ARPA Funds has arrived; staff is elated, and that it has lot of functions, and it also sucks up leaves, thanking the Council for their support.

Mr. Santos Mirabile, resident of 101 Sunset, suggested the Council have volunteers submit resumes for commission appointments as a way to get to know new board members.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch adjourned the meeting at 6:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Karen L. Monteith,
Clerk - Treasurer*