

*April 3, 2025*

**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 Terry Nichols, Free Seventh Day Adventist Church.*

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

*Councilman Lister made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 6, 2025 Regular Meeting, March 11, 2025 Planning Commission Joint Working Session, and the March 17, 2025 Working Session as presented, seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.*

**Public Hearing**

**A& E Redesignation**

*Mayor McNinch opened a public hearing at 6:02 PM to receive public comments on the Caroline County Council of Arts application to renew the Arts & Entertainment District in Denton for an additional 10 years.*

*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:*

*Mayor McNinch stated that she is in support of the designation.*

*Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the Public:*

*Victor Reynolds of CASA of Caroline spoke in support of the redesignation of the Arts and Entertainment District, sharing how awesome the Caroline County Council of Arts is for the community.*

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

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

**Proclamation – CASA Child Abuse Prevention/Awareness Month**

*Councilman Johnson read and presented a Proclamation to Victor Reynolds from CASA of Caroline, proclaiming April as Child Abuse Prevention/Awareness Month in Denton, calling upon all citizens and community agencies to increase their participation in preventing child abuse and strengthening the community.*

*Mr. Reynolds thanked the Town Council for their support and announced CASA will be holding their 5<sup>th</sup> annual Pinwheels for Prevention event at the Visitor Center on April 16, 2025, at 3PM.*

**Proclamation – Celebrate Trails Day – April 26, 2025**

*Councilman Branson read a Proclamation recognizing the fourth Saturday of April, as Celebrate Trails Day. This annual spring celebration of America's trails was started by Rails to Trails Conservancy in 2013. The celebration encourages people across the country to get outside and enjoy trails in their communities and explore trail systems in their region.*

*Mayor McNinch added that the American Discovery Trail designation event was held at the Visitor Center yesterday.*

**Ordinances and Resolutions**

**Resolution #901 - Arts & Entertainment District 10 Year Renewal**

*A Resolution of the Town of Denton endorsing an application to the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development for the renewal of the Denton Arts and Entertainment District designation in historic downtown Denton. This designation is renewed by application every 10 years by the Caroline County Council of Arts. There are no changes to the boundary, just reapplying for the designation.*

*Ms. Kendall Teague, President of Caroline County Council of Arts, was present and shared the history of the A&E District, expressing that their main priority is to maintain the existing businesses and to promote future businesses and she thanked the Town Council for their continued support.*

*With no further comments, Mayor McNinch asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #901 endorsing an application to the Maryland Dept. of Business and Economic Development.*

*Councilman Lister made a motion to adopt, seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.*

**Ordinance #758 – FY26 General Fund Appropriations**

*This item was deferred to be discussed with New Business Agenda Item #3.*

**Unfinished Business**

**Agenda #1- Potter House – DHCD Grant Modification**

*Mr. Scott Getchell, Town Administrator, shared that staff submitted a Request for Modification for DHCD Grant #SDF-2023-Denton-00043 in the amount of \$200,000 for the 9 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street project. The request included modifications to the Project Description to allow for broader use of the funding and for the Project Schedule to extend the Completion Date to December 31, 2025. The request was approved with some minor amendments that were presented requesting approval for the Mayor's signature on the amendment.*

*Councilman Lister made a motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the Amendment, seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.*

**New Business**

**Agenda #1 – Downtown Denton Main Street MOU**

*Jessica Willoughby, Director Downtown Main Street, introduced Jill Pugh as the President of Downtown Main Street.*

*Ms. Pugh spoke on behalf of the efforts Mrs. Willoughby commits to the town and asked for consideration to reclass her position to full-time, plus provide a salary increase so she can continue her exceptional work without the constraints of part-time hours.*

*Mrs. Willoughby explained they are asking for the Town to increase the Town's contribution to \$25,000.*

*Mayor McNinch stated for the record that the Downtown Main Street Manager Position is private employment handled by the DDMS organization, clarifying that the person in this position is not an employee of the Town.*

*A new Memorandum of Understanding between the Town and Downtown Denton Main Street (DDMS) was presented for consideration.*

*Discussion was held with Mrs. Lyndsey Ryan, Town Attorney, regarding the MOU and as the Town goes through the budget process considering approving the increase in contribution to DDMS to be contingent on available funding and the final adoption of the FY2026 budget.*

Councilman Johnson made a motion to approve the MOU contingent on the funding being available in the final approved budget. The motion was seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

**Agenda #2 – Denton Volunteer Fire Company Budget Presentation**

Denton VFC President, Todd Berneski, was present and discussed the Fire Department funding and budget requests for this upcoming year. He provided an update on the new pumper truck and the possible need to redesignate funding until the pumper arrived. For FY2026, Mr. Berneski asked for \$90,0000 to go towards debt, and to also draw on the CIP allocation held by the Town to be used toward the new pumper in case it comes in.

*This item was information only.*

**Agenda #3 - FY2026 General Fund and Highway Fund Budget**

The first draft of the FY2026 General Fund Budget and the FY2026 Highway Fund Budgets were presented. Mr. Getchell provided a summary of budgetary needs which will be discussed at the 1:00 PM Working Session scheduled for Monday, April 7th.

**Ordinance #758 - FY2026 General Fund Budget Appropriations**

An Ordinance of the Town of Denton to appropriate funds and estimate income in accordance with the budget being adopted for Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 was presented for consideration of introduction.

Councilman Lister made a motion to introduce Ordinance #758, seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.

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

Councilman Taylor provided updates on the Joint Working Session held with the Planning Commission on the Draft Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Commission has a public hearing scheduled for next week to receive comments on the draft. Then, the next step will be presenting it to the Council for consideration of introduction which is planned for May. Councilman Taylor highlighted that there has been some recent discussion on building height restrictions; this may require an amendment by Ordinance to allow building heights for four-story buildings.

Councilman Taylor provided an update on the Wendy's preliminary site plan and pending signage.

Mayor McNinch provided a summary of the Maryland Mayors Association Conference. She shared that the 2025 Legislative Session ends next week.

Mr. Getchell announced that the Maryland Comptroller is scheduled to visit the Wastewater Treatment Plant on April 22.

Mayor McNinch shared that the Town celebrated the First American Discovery Trail Event yesterday, with Denton being declared as a Trail Town. The event was well attended and the Mayor was grateful for this positive event.

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

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Karen L. Monteith,  
Clerk - Treasurer*