

June 5, 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 Don Reynolds of Calvary Baptist Church.

Mayor McNinch thanked everyone for coming and asked that the record reflect that Councilman Johnson was absent and that all the other Councilmembers were present.

Councilman Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2025 Regular Meeting and the May 19, 2025 Working Session as presented, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Public Hearing

Ordinance #759 – Zoning Ordinance and Official Zoning Maps

Mayor McNinch opened a public hearing at 6:03 PM to receive public comments on Ordinance #759 - An Ordinance of the Town of Denton repealing and reenacting Chapter 128 titled, Zoning, in its entirety, and adopting new Official Zoning Maps for the Town of Denton.

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:

Councilman Taylor thanked Donna Todd and her staff, Peter Johnston and the Planning Commission Members for all their hard work over the past year and a half re-writing the Zoning Ordinance.

Mayor McNinch also thanked Councilman Taylor for being the liaison on the Planning Commission and keeping the Council updated on the process.

Mayor McNinch asked for comments from the Public:

Councilman Lister mentioned for the record that the Town received two letters from the public in support of the adoption of Ordinance #759.

Mark Chandler, Superintendent of Public Works, shared that there were no public comments received online, and mentioned that Travis Hughes, Chief Bacorn and Connie Connolly are all listening online.

With no further comments, Mayor McNinch closed this public hearing at 6:04 PM.

Petitions, Remonstrance's, and Communication

Proclamation – Caroline Pride Event – 5th Anniversary

Mayor McNinch read a Proclamation to recognize Saturday June 7, 2025 as Pride Day in Denton, MD. The proclamation was presented to Angel Perez and Kristie Thompson.

Ordinances and Resolutions

Ordinance No. 759 – Zoning Ordinance & Official Zoning Maps

An Ordinance of the Town of Denton repealing and reenacting Chapter 128 titled, Zoning, in its entirety, and adopting new Official Zoning Maps for the Town of Denton.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve the adoption of Ordinance #759, seconded by Councilman Taylor.

In discussion, Mr. Peter Johnston the Town Planner, provided a summary of the Ordinance and a few minor changes since the last discussion.

Mrs. Lyndsay Ryan, Town Attorney, acknowledged that the recent changes are clerical only and safe to move forward.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch called for a vote on the motion on the floor to adopt Ordinance #759.

Motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

Agenda #1 – Public Works Purchase of a New Truck for Water / Wastewater

Mr. Chandler submitted a request seeking to purchase a 2024 Ram 3500 truck with a crane to replace the 2007 truck that has exceeded its lifespan. Mr. Chandler shared that per the purchasing policy, 3 vendors were sought out with only one responding (Fred Frederick in Easton) who we have purchased many work trucks from in years past. The purchase amount of \$107,885.60 was approved in the FY2025 budget, to be divided up between the Water and Sewer Budget.

Councilman Lister made a motion to purchase the truck, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Agenda #2 – MOU – Fiber Arts Center – 9 N 4th Street

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Town and the Fiber Arts Center was submitted for consideration. Mrs. Ryan provided a synopsis of the agreement.

Councilman Lister made a motion for the Mayor to execute the agreement, seconded by Councilman Taylor, passing unanimously.

Agenda #3 - Denton Project LLC – Extension of Water & Sewer Allocations

Mr. George Bailey was present and submitted a letter requesting an extension for 44 total water and sewer allocations associated with Denton Project LLC, presently set to expire on 7/6/2025. Mr. Bailey provided an update on the plans to develop 19 single family homes and 16 townhouses, with the anticipation of bringing the development into the Planning Commission in the fall and plans to start the roads and infrastructure in the spring of 2026.

Discussion was held on the current allocation requirements, and the ability to be able to seek extensions.

Donna Todd, Director of Planning & Codes, clarified that for the project to receive final Planning Commission approval, the project must have already received the water and sewer allocation approval from the Council.

Lyndsey Ryan, Town Attorney, added that currently an allocation is good for three years, and the law allows for a one year extension upon good cause shown. The Town Council may extend this time period; however, in no event shall any extension be granted for more than one additional year from the date of the expiration of the original allocation approval. To go beyond a one year extension will require a text amendment to the law, and they may need to consider when a project is approved when the EDU's are considered vested and do not expire.

Councilman Lister made a motion to extend the allocations for 1-year on the 44 units, seconded by Councilman Taylor.

Councilman Lister asked to hold a future conversation on how to handle additional extensions when there are vested EDU'S.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch asked for a vote on the motion to provide a 1-year extension.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda #4 - Letter of Support – Sustainable Communities Grant Program

A request from Staff was reviewed seeking approval for the Mayor's signature for on a letter of support for a grant application being submitted through the Sustainable Communities Grant Program funded by Delmarva Power, pursuing the Community Resiliency Grant to contribute funding for an emergency generator for the Police Department. The grant application is due July 16, 2025 and the application is seeking the maximum award amount of \$15,000.

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

Agenda #5 - Talkie Communications Agreement

Mr. Scott Getchell, Town Administrator, presented a Tower Lease Agreement between the Town and Talkie Communication, seeking to utilize space on the Industrial Park Water Tower tank for the placement and operation of equipment associated with their high-speed fiber optic/wireless internet. The agreement has been reviewed by the Town Attorney. Staff requests the Council consider approving the agreement and signing, if approved.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve signing the agreement, seconded by Councilman Taylor.

Discussion was held in which Councilman Lister shared that the Utility Commission recommends the Agreement.

Mr. Getchell shared that Talkie Communication has been looking to try new equipment on the Town's tower for less than one year.

Mrs. Ryan added that the agreement is only for 120 days and may be extended for another 120 days, but the terms of the agreement could be extended if both parties agree.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch asked for a vote on the motion on the floor to sign the agreement.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda #6 - Corporation Tax Abatements

Mrs. Monteith, Clerk-Treasurer, presented a few corporation tax accounts that are delinquent on the Town's books and considered uncollectable, seeking approval to abate the taxes and late fees. The businesses have either been forfeited, declared bankruptcy, moved out of state or no longer own the business within the Town limits when the assessment was received from the State.

- Atlas Postal & Business Center – Not in Good Standing \$ 21.00
- Endless Summer Tanning MD LLC – Forfeited \$1,658.64
- REDBOX Automated Retail LLC – Forfeited/Bankruptcy \$ 444.37

Councilman Taylor made a motion to abate as requested, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Reports of Officers, Boards, and Committees

Councilman Taylor provided a summary of the May Planning Commission Meeting, and shared they approved the preliminary site plans for the 7-11 to be built on Industrial Parkway.

Councilman Lister provided a summary of the May Utility Commission Meeting, which included the recommendation for the Talkie Agreement just approved. The UC is working on the water and sewer budgets, and they will be starting discussion on rate changes.

Councilman Taylor recently attended the Caroline County Association of Municipalities Meeting in which two County Commissioners were also in attendance, sharing the primary discussion was about budgets and the State's new solar field expansions, and if the County will fight against the State's mandated solar regulations. It is possible the State legislation may hold a special session.

Mayor McNinch announced that she will be attending the Maryland Municipal League Summer Conference. The Mayor will be presenting with County Commission President Travis Breeding in a discussion on improving relationships between Counties and Municipalities.

Mayor McNinch said the Memorial Day Parade went well.

Mayor McNinch announced that the Caroline Pride Day event will be held this coming weekend.

The Third Thursday Event will be held on June 19th, and Councilman Lister shared that the Pub's Liquor Licensed area has been extended, which is good. They have music groups scheduled to perform for each event, showcasing local talent.

Mayor McNinch shared that the recent DDMS Supper at Sunset was a wonderful event.

Councilman Lister shared that the shade sails for the 4th St. Park are in, and the park renovations are almost done. He stated that he is super proud of staff and all their efforts on this project.

Councilman Lister suggested to have Wheeler Park placed on a future agenda for discussion along with the basketball courts at the Police Dept., to maybe consider relocating the basketball courts and tennis courts and creating pocket parks in each neighborhood to be used.

Discussion on the Lockerman Middle School potential relocation was also held.

Mr. Getchell reminded everyone that at 2:00 PM tomorrow, the Visitor Center will be renamed after JOK Walsh and everyone is invited.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch adjourned the meeting at 6:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Karen L. Monteith,
Clerk - Treasurer*