

July 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 Dan Gedman of St. Luke's Methodist Church.

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

Councilman Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2025 Regular Meeting, and the June 16, 2025 Working Session as presented, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Public Hearing

None.

Petitions, Remonstrance's, and Communication

Citation – MML Employee of the Year

At the June 2025 Maryland Municipal League (MML) Convention, Karen L. Monteith, Clerk-Treasurer/ Director of Finance, was recognized by MML and the Lt. Governor of Maryland as the Maryland Municipal League 2025 Employee of the Year.

Councilman Branson read and presented a Denton Town Council Citation to congratulate Mrs. Monteith on receiving the Award, thanking her for her many years of dedicated service to the Town.

Ordinances and Resolutions

None

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

Agenda #1 – FY26 Water & Sewer Fund Budgets

Based on the recommendation of the Denton Utility Commission, the FY2026 Water Fund and Sewer Fund Budgets were presented for consideration of adoption.

Councilman Lister made a motion to adopt the FY2026 Water and Sewer Fund Budgets, seconded by Councilman Johnson.

In discussion, Councilman Lister provided a synopsis of the Utility Commission's recommendations for presenting balanced budgets. Councilman Lister talked about the rate study the Commission is working on and indicated that the trajectory shows both funds are heading in a negative direction. There will be future rate adjustment discussions to come.

Councilman Johnson questioned the difference, and Mr. Scott Getchell, Town Administrator clarified that the reserve was adjusted to balance each budget.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch called for a vote on the motion to adopt the Fiscal Year 2026 Water Fund and Sewer Fund Budgets.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda #2 – 323 Market Lease Agreement

Main Street Sweets has leased the first floor of 323 Market Street since 2023 and is requesting an extension to remain in the unit. The new lease term has been changed to a month to month lease, and the monthly rent will increase to \$200.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve the lease, seconded by Councilman Branson.

In discussion Mrs. Michele Curler, owner/operator of Main Street Sweets, thanked the Council for their continued support in renewing the lease. She also inquired if the Town is interested in selling the property. As a non-profit business, they would be interested in buying the property and investing in the community.

Mayor McNinch said there has not been any formal discussion about selling the property.

Councilman Lister mentioned that last year the Town had considered giving the building to the Downtown Denton Main Street if they were interested, but no action was ever finalized. Councilman Lister suggested Mrs. Curler put together a proposal for the Council to consider.

Mayor McNinch thanked Mrs. Curler for all that she does for the community and asked for a vote on the motion to approve renewing the lease.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda #3 - DDMS - Letter of Agreement with DHCD for FY2026

The Main Street Manager, Ms. Jessica Willoughby, spoke to the Council at the June 16th Working Session regarding a new agreement between the Town, DDMS, and DHCD. The agreement was signed by the Mayor after the meeting and was brought before the Council to ratify the approval.

Councilman Lister made a motion to ratify the Mayor's signature on the Maryland DHCD, Main Street Maryland Program Agreement for Designated Communities. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor, passing unanimously.

Agenda #4 - Sharp Road Park Paved Entrance & Parking

A proposal from David A. Bramble, Inc. to pave the existing gravel entrance to Sharp Road Park located on Lot 2 was submitted for consideration.

Mr. Getchell explained the proposed work includes improvements to parking as well. The project will be fully funded by remaining funds from a FY2022 LPPI Grant, that were approved to be used for the proposed project. The total project cost is \$133,000.00.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve and accept the proposal from David A. Bramble, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Agenda #5 - Community Grants

Previously, the Council directed staff to create a Community Grants Program to assist non-profit organizations who exist within the Town of Denton.

A proposed policy, application, and agreement was submitted for consideration.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve the grant application package, seconded by Councilman Taylor.

In discussion, Mr. Getchell provided additional details about the program and using the Loan Review Committee members to review applications and make recommendations for Council to provide the final approval.

Discussion included eligibility being limited to non-profit organizations that provide direct support and benefit the residents of the Town and the Denton Community.

The program budget is \$25,000, in which applicants can apply for up to \$5,000. Funds from the prior year were carried over as part of the balance forward.

The following items were discussed: Making sure any potential conflicts of interest are disclosed; whether to establish an application period; a review period; and how often can an organization apply.

Mayor McNinch shared concerns about rolling applications submitted each year. This may limit another organization from being able to apply and she would rather have a deadline for submission to establish having all applications submitted and reviewed at the same time.

Ideally it should be set up, so the committee provides a list of recommended awards for the Council to approve all at one time. If there is funding left over, then the Town could reopen a second period for submitting applications.

Mr. Getchell clarified that the Council would like to amend the Grant Policy to establish an application period for submissions; establish a review period for the Committee; and once complete the Committee will provide a list of recommended awards to the Council for final approval. And he confirmed the intent is to only award funding for organizations providing a service or direct benefit within the Town of Denton.

Councilman Lister amended his motion to adopt the changes as discussed, seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Lister made a motion to offer up to \$40,000 this year, using \$15,000 of the prior year carry over along with the \$25,000 allocated for FY2026. The motion was seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.

Reports of Officers, Boards, and Committees

Councilman Taylor shared that there was no Planning Commission meeting this past month, nothing to report.

Councilman Taylor attended the Maryland Municipal League Summer Conference along with the Mayor, Mr. Getchell, and Chief Bacorn. He stated that the Town was very well represented.

Councilman Taylor provided the following summary of the conference:

Chief Bacorn presided over the Police Executive Committee Top Cop Award Breakfast and introduced the Governor. Next year, Chief will be chairing the committee and as a result of the appointment, Chief will also get to serve on the MML Executive Committee.

Mr. Getchell was a presenter at one of the sessions on social media and did a fabulous job.

Mayor McNinch was a presenter alongside Caroline County Commissioner Travis Breeding, at a session on county and town relationships in which they both did a great job.

Mayor McNinch was elected to the MML Executive Board, and she will be serving as co-vice chair of the legislative committee.

Mrs. Monteith winning the MML Municipal League Employee of the Year was the highlight.

Councilman Taylor congratulated and thanked everyone for the positive experience at this year's conference and for representing Denton well.

Mayor McNinch also thanked Councilman Taylor for attending and being a part of the conference.

Councilman Lister provided an update on the June Utility Commission meeting with their primary focus on the rate structure that Waterworth will be presenting to the Council at the next working session.

Councilman Lister asked for an update on the Talkie Lease, and Mr. Getchell shared that they were not ready to move forward yet, but they will be responsible for paying the first month's rent.

Mayor McNinch asked for an update on Summerfest.

Staff shared that the Summerfest Committee, which consists of the Caroline County Recreation and Parks and Town Staff, have been busy with the planning for this year's event which will be held on the third weekend in August. All entertainment has been booked, fireworks are scheduled, and we are seeking some additional sponsorship.

Mayor McNinch mentioned with some of the businesses leaving the Town may want to consider initiating discussion with DDMS of CCEDC.

Mayor McNinch shared that she received notice from the State Department of Housing and Community Development that Betty's Boutique was awarded funding for renovations for expanding operations.

Councilman Lister shared that the Third Thursday event was successful in helping the Market Street Public House get their liquor license service area extension.

Councilman Johnson shared that the County has finally removed the residency requirements for holding a liquor license which will open the ability for other business to come the area.

Councilman Lister thanked the Town and Staff for their support over this past week following the passing of his grandmother and former Clerk Treasurer Mary Turkington.

Executive Session

Mayor McNinch asked for consideration to hold an Executive Session as Per the Open Meetings Act, Maryland Code Annotated, General Provisions Article, § 3-305 (b) (2014) (1) discuss: (i) Personnel & (ii) Personnel Matters.

At 6:56 PM Councilman Lister made a motion that was seconded by Councilman Taylor to open an Executive Session to discuss Personnel & Personnel Matters, passing unanimously.

The Executive Session was held in the Council Executive Office on the 2nd Floor of the Town Office Building.

Present

Councilmembers in attendance included: Mayor McNinch, Councilmen Lister, Johnson, Branson, and Taylor.

Legal Counsel in attendance was Lyndsey Ryan.

Staff – Karen Monteith was asked to step in for a few minutes near the end of the session.

Discussion

Discussion was held to discuss personnel performance and salary.

The Council approved a salary increase for the Town Administrator.

At 7:18 PM, with no further discussion, Councilman Johnson made a motion to close the Executive Session, seconded by Councilman Lister, passing unanimously.

The Executive Session was closed, and the Council relocated to the Council Meeting Room to resume their Regular Monthly Meeting.

Regular Meeting Resumed

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch asked for a motion to adjourn the regular meeting.

At 7:22 PM Councilman Johnson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman Taylor, passing unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

*Karen L. Monteith,
Clerk - Treasurer*