

March 19, 2026

*At 6:00 PM Mayor McNinch called the Working Session of the Denton Town Council to order on this date, leading everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.*

**Attendance:**

*Council members in attendance included: Mayor McNinch, Councilman Lister, Councilman Johnson, Councilman Branson, and Councilman Taylor.*

*Staff in attendance included: Scott Getchell, George Bacorn, Mark Chandler, Donna Todd, Emily Spencer, Robin Lahnemann, Jamie Secrist and Karen Monteith.*

**Discussion was held on the following items:**

**Speed Camera Discussion**

*In February, an Ordinance was brought before the Council for consideration to amend the Town Code to reflect the speed camera citation fees to coincide with the changes the State made during their last legislative session. During the discussion, Councilman Lister opposed having the speed camera program. This item is on the agenda to continue discussions on the future of speed cameras in Denton.*

*Dr. Derek Simmons, Superintendent of Caroline County Public Schools, was in attendance and spoke with the Council about the cameras and the benefits of maintaining safety around Denton Elementary School. Dr. Simmons mentioned that the cameras are a great reminder and they do work in slowing down traffic. He asked if the Town does make the decision to do away with the camera program, that there would be a thoughtful discussion on what safety measures and traffic calming methods can be put into place to help ensure that traffic is kept at a reasonable speed coming by the school and keeping everyone safe. Dr. Simmons mentioned that two times a day there are a lot of walkers that cross the street in the elementary school area, and that he and the security officers believe the cameras do work. To ensure continued safety, he recommended coming up with a thorough thought-out plan to be implemented prior to the removal of the cameras. Dr. Simmons stated that Lockerman Middle School may not benefit as much with where those cameras are located, and that while keeping the students safe is everyone's goal, LMS is currently on schedule to move in August 2029.*

*Councilman Taylor shared that he also believes in safety first. He was interested in what kind of impact would occur if the cameras were eliminated and confirmed that the Town cannot have a different fine schedule, that the increased fines are mandated by the state.*

*Chief Bacorn stated that any speed camera citations that are paid, the funding comes to the Town. Any funding collected over the cost for the vendor; the Town can use those funds toward other needs for the community. If a citation is contested and goes to court, those funds go to the State, not the Town. He shared that funds paid for any traffic citations issued by an officer go directly to the State. The speed cameras on Camp Road were initially done when the Wesleyan School was open. The cameras are within the school zone perimeter allowed for LMS. The cameras have been beneficial in reducing complaints about speeding received from that area. It is not about revenue generation; it is about slowing people down.*

*Councilman Johnson shared concerns about taking speed camera citations to court and not being able to face the accuser. He shared the State's new tiered fines. Councilman Johnson states he is more in favor of having tickets issued by an officer as those tickets result in greater penalties. An officer-issued speeding ticket places points on the driver's license, which could result in losing their license, and speeding of any sort is a jailable offense.*

*Chief Bacorn clarified that an officer reviews speed camera violations and the officer authorizes the ticket to be issued. Citations are only issued from 6AM to 8PM, Monday through Friday and not on holidays, and a vehicle must travel twelve miles over the speed limit to receive a citation.*

*Discussion continued about the pros and cons of traffic calming methods, such as narrowing the streets, speed humps, additional stop signs, and/or having officers present to issue citations.*

*Mr. Getchell shared speed camera history and mentioned that all these possible solutions have an added cost: speed bumps often cause damage to snowplows and emergency responders as well as to emergency equipment; there is a cost for staffing; adding stop signs is not considered traffic calming, in some areas they are actually more dangerous. Mr. Getchell also stated that the Town would need to identify funding to pay for these other methods, while the current method is paying for itself. The State fines went into effect October 2025.*

*Mayor McNinch asked the Chief to see about conducting a traffic study for these areas and to compile a list of repeat offenders, vehicles that have received multiple speed camera citations.*

*Mayor McNinch thanked Dr. Simmons for joining in on the discussion.*

*Dr. Simmons thanked the Town for anything they could do to help to keep the school area safe.*

### **Denton Town Code Chapter 73 – Subdivision Regulations**

*Peter Johnston, Town Planner, presented the amended subdivision regulations and a summary of changes. The changes are a result of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance updates and include resolving any conflicts, ensuring consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, and addressing State legislative mandates.*

*Mr. Johnston shared that the Planning Commission has reviewed and approved forwarding the amended subdivision regulations to the Town Council at the February Planning Commission Meeting for consideration of introduction at the April Town Council Meeting.*

*The Town Attorney, Town Engineer, and Town Staff have reviewed the proposed subdivision regulations.*

*Councilman Lister stated that the Utility Commission has been discussing and looking for a way to figure out how to require fiber infrastructure for new developments.*

*Mr. Johnston stated that 73.8 C (10) includes underground extensions of electric, telephone distribution line and broadband infrastructure. Mr. Johnston will draft a language change to include additional requirements in the specs.*

### **Updated Personnel Manual**

*Since January 2025, Mr. Getchell, Emily Spencer, Robin Lahnemann, and Karen Monteith, have been working with Lexipol, reviewing each section of the manual, bringing it up to date with Federal and State requirements and the draft of the new manual was presented to the Council for discussion.*

*Mr. Getchell provided a summary of significant changes from the existing manual.*

*Discussion was held on several sections of the manual. The Council asked for more time to review and recommended placing this item on the April agenda for continued discussion with consideration for adoption in May.*

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**MML Suggested Resolution**

*Mayor McNinch shared that MML has suggested each municipality in MD adopt a resolution in support of establishing a task force to study how the State's sales tax is distributed.*

*Discussion was held, in which the Council supports the study so long as it includes that it would not result in the State increasing the sales tax.*

*Mr. Getchell will prepare the resolution for the April meeting.*

**Miscellaneous**

*Mayor McNinch shared that the Silver & Starter Home Legislation has died, so that will not be a concern in the coming year.*

*Mayor McNinch received a request from the Caroline County Historical Society asking for a letter of support to see grant funding for JOK's House, and the board had no opposition to the Mayor sending a letter of support.*

*With no further business to discuss, Mayor McNinch adjourned the Working Session at 7:33 PM.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Karen L. Monteith,  
Clerk-Treasurer*