

February 5, 2026

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 took a moment to wish Donna Todd, Director of Planning & Codes a Happy Birthday and thanked her for all that she does for the Town.

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

Mayor McNinch announced that the February Working Session was canceled due to the weather.

Councilman Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2026 Regular Meeting, seconded by Councilman Branson.

Prior to voting, Councilman Taylor asked for a correction to the minutes, under the Office of Mayor Pro-Tem it reflects Mayor Lister continued presiding over the meeting, and that should be corrected to show Mayor McNinch.

Councilman Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2026 as amended, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Public Hearing

Ordinance #765 – 9 N 4th St. Conveyance

Mayor McNinch opened a public hearing at 6:02 PM to receive public comments on Ordinance #765 - An Ordinance of the Town of Denton authorizing the conveyance of property located at 9 N Fourth Street, Denton, Maryland, and identified in the Tax Records of Caroline County as Parcel 823 of Tax Map 0103.

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: there were none.

With no further comments, ~~Vice Mayor Lister~~ Mayor McNinch closed this public hearing at 6:02 PM.

Petitions, Remonstrance's, and Communication

2025 Financial Report Presentation

Mr. Roy Geiser of UHY LLP, Town Auditor, presented the Town's June 30, 2025 Annual Audited Financial Report and Audit Communications as per auditing required communications. Mr. Geiser stated it was a clean audit, providing an unmodified and clean opinion, with no recommendations, nor issues to report.

Denton Dolphins Girls Flag Football Organization Update

Kiana Hill with the Denton Dolphins Girls Flag Football Organization and Tomia Thomas, a team member, were in attendance and shared information about their program and what has been happening since they started.

Ms. Hill expressed the organization's gratitude to the Town for helping them get rolling. She shared that they held their first camp in August and since have traveled to other areas, including Pennsylvania to play. The team also competed in the Turkey Bowl and received runner-up. The Baltimore Ravens invited them to their Thanksgiving Day game to celebrate the start of the girl's flag football team, and shared that this sport will be a part of the 2028 Olympics. They have about 25 girls and they are growing.

Tomia shared how playing for the Denton Dolphins has lots of rewards: teaching sisterhood, love, and helping boost their self-esteem, and that they are not by themselves, they have a whole community supporting them.

Mayor McNinch said this is wonderful to hear and thanked them for coming in and sharing their story.

At 6:25 PM, Reverend Fisher gave an invocation.

Ordinances and Resolutions

Ordinance #765 – 9 N 4th Street Conveyance

An Ordinance of the Town of Denton authorizing the conveyance of property located at 9 N Fourth Street, Denton, Maryland, and identified in the Tax Records of Caroline County as Parcel 823 of Tax Map 0103.

Councilman Lister made a motion to adopt Ordinance #765, seconded by Councilman Johnson.

In discussion, Mrs. Lyndsey Ryan, Town Attorney, provided a synopsis of the Ordinance and the intent of the Town to convey 9 N Fourth Street to the Fiber Arts Center of the Eastern Shore.

With no further questions, Mayor McNinch asked for a vote on the motion to adopt Ordinance #765.

The motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance #766 – Speed Monitoring Violations and Penalties

An Ordinance of the Town of Denton to amend the Denton Town Code, Chapter 120 Article X §120-46 Violations and Penalties to adopt civil penalties for citations received by a speed monitoring system to comply with Maryland Code Transportation Article §21-809. And to amend § 120-47 C. Payment of civil penalties.

Councilman Branson made a motion to introduce, seconded by Councilman Taylor.

In discussion, Mrs. Ryan provided a summary of the Ordinance.

Councilman Lister questioned what the process is to get rid of speed cameras, that he does not support having them, and that he does not support the government increasing fees just because they have a budget problem.

Chief Bacorn shared that the Town can stop the program.

Councilman Johnson shared that he was inclined to support Councilman Lister, and he shared information on the increase in fines, which are issued as civil violations, and he shared some of his issues with the program. Councilman Johnson said that he supports the camera on Sharp Rd. by the elementary school but does not feel the cameras on Camp Road benefit Lockerman School.

Mrs. Ryan shared the ordinance brings the Town into compliance with the transportation article; it does not require the Town to enter a contract for the cameras, and that in addition to this the Town has a contractual issue with the current camera provider that we would need to look into. Mrs. Ryan stated that by introducing and approving the Ordinance it gives the authority to apply the applicable fees that the Town is required to apply under the transportation article if using the cameras.

Additional discussion was held with the Attorney, and staff pertaining to the program, contract obligations, safety for the community and the effect to the Town's budget, and alternative options to the cameras.

Councilman Branson made a motion to withdrawal his earlier motion to introduce Ordinance #766, seconded by Councilman Taylor.

Discussion on speed monitoring programs will continue at the next working session.

Unfinished Business

No unfinished business was discussed.

New Business

Agenda #1 – Community Grant Application - His Hope Ministries

At 6:51 PM, Councilman Johnson left the room due to a potential conflict for this application.

Mr. Getchell shared that six Community Grant Application were received for the first round, all but one met all the qualifications.

Mr. Getchell, Town Administrator, presented His Hope Ministries Community Grant Application seeking funds in the amount of \$5,000, to begin a weekly (Fridays) emergency food bag program designed to help our neighbors that are facing unexpected emergencies.

Stefanie Johnson, Executive Director for His Hope Ministries, talked about the HHM program and their plans on how to spend the funds.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve funding the grant for His Hope Ministries. The motion was seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Councilman Johnson reentered the room at 6:53 PM.

Agenda #2 –Community Grant Application – Choptank Community Health

Mr. Getchell presented Choptank Community Health's Community Grant Application seeking funds in the amount of \$4,760. They plan to use the funds for an Open Airways for Schools Program. This program teaches children asthma self-care management. It will also train one staff member who will train someone from each elementary school in Caroline County, so the program can be shared with all students.

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

In discussion, Chrissy Bartz, representing Choptank Community Health, joined the meeting virtually and thanked the Council for their support.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch called for a vote on the motion to approve the grant.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda #3 - Community Grant Application – Caroline County Council of Arts

Mr. Getchell presented the Caroline County Council of Arts Community Grant Application seeking funds in the amount of \$5,000, to use the funds for Harlem Renaissance themed events in 2026.

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

In discussion, George Karos, Executive Director of the Arts Council, and Debbie Bennett, Board member, both spoke in support of their application and thanked the Council for their support.

Councilman Johnson asked if the funds would be used toward the purchase and/or serving of alcohol.

Mrs. Bennett stated that they are not planning to have alcohol at any of the events they will be using these funds toward.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch called for a vote on the motion to approve the grant.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda #4 - Community Grant Application – Aarons Place Inc.

Mr. Getchell presented Aarons Place Inc. Community Grant Application seeking funds in the amount of \$5,000, to use the funds for workshops on life skills, mental health education, parenting support classes, and health and wellness education. Funds may also cover some costs for upcoming events.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve funding the grant, seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.

Agenda #5 – Community Grant Application – Caroline County Historical Society

Mr. Getchell presented the Caroline County Historical Society Community Grant Application seeking funds in the amount of \$5,000, to use the funds for preliminary planning of their Knotts Walsh Garden project. The project is located at 12 N 2nd St. The idea is to transform the back garden into a usable public space.

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

In discussion, Terry Fearins spoke on behalf of the grant for the Historical Society and shared additional information about their long-term vision for the garden and their hope to do something for the anniversary of JOK's passing in July.

Debbie Bennett, a member of the Bird Club, spoke in support of the project.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch called for a vote on the motion to approve the grant.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda #6 - Community Grant Application – DC Center

Mr. Getchell presented the DC Center Community Grant Application seeking funds in the amount of \$5,000. They plan to use the funds for Automated External Defibrillators (AED's) for their center, necessary training for the staff, and installation and maintenance of the 3 units. Mr. Getchell shared that upon review the application was missing several items and did not meet all of the qualifications for the grant. Mr. Getchell has talked with the applicant and encouraged the DC Center to re-apply the next round.

No action was taken.

Mayor McNinch congratulated all the applicants and expressed how good it is to be able to reinvest in the community.

Councilman Johnson encouraged the Denton Dolphins to consider applying for the Community Grant in the future.

Agenda #7 - Water and Sewer Allocation

Donna Todd, Director of Planning and Codes, shared that Denton Dev LLC is requesting approval for two (2) ERUs (Equivalent Residential Units) for the Popeye's restaurant to be located at 100 Denton Plaza. Prior allocation approval expired December 5, 2025.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve the allocation, seconded by Councilman Johnson, passing unanimously.

Agenda #8 - Denton Project LLC – Eden Estates Phase 1 Legal Agreements

George Bailey, on behalf of Denton Project LLC, submitted a request seeking approval for several legal agreements required for Phase 1 of the proposed single-family development, Eden Estates.

Mrs. Ryan provided a synopsis on each of the proposed legal agreements: including the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions for Stormwater Management; Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions for Eden Estates Homeowners Association, Inc.; Public Works Agreement; Deed of Forest Conservation Easement; and the Forest Conservation On-Site Maintenance and Management Agreement.

Councilman Lister questioned if the project includes the conduit for fiber, which led to a lengthy discussion as to what the Town would need to have in place to establish regulations that may require all new developments to include fiber.

Councilman Johnson stated that it may be too late for this project.

Mrs. Ryan stated the Town could negotiate with the developer.

Kevin Shearen, with DBS & Associates, stated that they have no issue adding benefits for the community and that usually utility companies will approach the developer and work out arrangements to install conduit while the construction is happening.

Councilman Taylor mentioned that he also thought it was too late to require for this project, but that it is worth exploring if the Town wants to do so in the future.

Councilman Lister made a motion to adopt all five-agreements, seconded by Councilman Taylor, passing unanimously.

Mr. Bailey thanked everyone for all their help.

Additional discussion was held with Stacey Gardner who inquired about what the Town has been doing to address the shortage of affordable housing.

Reports of Officers, Boards, and Committees

Councilman Taylor gave an overview of the recent Planning Commission Meeting which included the Denton Project LLC townhouse phase and the Carline Self Storage concept plan.

Councilman Johnson mentioned that the State's Constant Yield Tax Rate certifications should be out soon.

Councilman Lister shared that the Utility Commission has a board vacancy if anyone knows someone who is interested, to please encourage them to reach out.

Mayor McNinch expressed her sincere appreciation to Mark Chandler, Director of Public Works and his team for working hard to clean the roads following the recent snowstorm.

Mr. Getchell provided a thank card signed by all the Town Staff to the Council to thank them for the extra holidays and bonus pay.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch adjourned the meeting at 7:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Karen L. Monteith,
Clerk – Treasurer*