

September 21, 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 Branson, and Councilman Taylor. Councilman Johnson arrived at 6:12 PM.

Staff in attendance included: Scott Getchell, Mark Chandler, Donna Todd, Sgt. Jerry Stivers and Karen Monteith.

Discussion was held on the following items:

Knotts Walsh Garden Update

On behalf of the Caroline County Historical Society, Terry Fearins provided an update and Conceptual Plan for the Knotts Walsh Garden Project. Ms. Fearins shared that after applying for the Town's \$5,000 Community Grant funds and the \$7,000 in grant funds received from Preservation Maryland, they are short funding of \$6,120 to complete this phase. She asked if the Town may be able to provide additional funding to finish the development cost.

Mr. Rick Schwab, CCHS President and board member Mrs. Cathy Schwab, were also in attendance and participated in the discussion.

Discussion was held on the project beyond the preliminary design phase, what is the estimated cost to complete the gardens, and what are the plans for raising funds for future phases. There was also discussion on the Town's Community Grant Program, when new applications will be accepted, and if CCHS can reapply for funds in the next open period.

Mayor McNinch thanked the members of the CCHS for coming.

New Street Names

Mr. Getchell, Town Administrator, shared a preliminary site plan from JPA Venture, with a proposed new road name that will be coming before the Council for consideration. Sharing that Resolution #749, previously enacted in 2011, adopted a policy with respect to the naming of streets and alleys in Town, and that future names may be chosen from an approved list of streets and alley names provided by the Caroline Historical Society.

Mr. Getchell asked the Council for feedback in determining if new street names should have historical significance as suggested in the Policy, or can other options be considered.

It was the consensus of the board that the Town should allow for other street name options to be presented for consideration.

Special Collection Fees

Councilman Johnson shared that Maryland Environmental Service has implemented a \$30 mattress disposal fee, and discussion was held on the Town's current Special Collection Program and fees for bulk collection items.

It was the consensus of the board to leave the fees as they are for now and to re-evaluate if the Town sees additional costs.

General Fund Budget Amendment

The Fiscal Year 2026 General Fund Budget Amendment was presented and discussed. The Budget amendment Resolution will be on the October agenda for consideration of adoption.

Miscellaneous

Councilman Lister asked about the cost for running a new water main to the visitor center and sprinklers.

Mr. Getchell shared that the cost to run the water line came in at \$912K, and there would be additional costs for the sprinkler system equipment and hook up, state permitting process, all of which far exceeded the remaining \$149K in ARPA Funds available for this project. It was also found that the Fire Marshall did not require sprinklers when the building was built.

Discussion was held on sprinklers, the need for a handicap ramp, since the lift is not always dependable; and focusing on future waterfront development, extending water to west Denton, and potential ways to use the ARPA funds before the end of December.

Councilman Johnson added that when this was previously presented, the Council supported holding off on extending the water line due to the cost and to evaluate the need.

Staff will continue to look at other alternatives and explore funding options.

Councilman Lister inquired about the Police Dept. and Garcia Law.

Mr. Getchell mentioned that discussion on police pay is scheduled for the October working session.

Councilman Johnson asked to schedule to hold discussion on Administrative Investigations - both in county/out of county for the October working session.

Mayor McNinch shared that the recent ESAM Meeting was contentious and highly adversarial and asked to have a letter written to notify ESAM of the Town's departure.

Mr. Getchell will draft a letter for the next meeting.

With no further business to discuss, Mayor McNinch adjourned the Working Session at 6:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Karen L. Monteith,
Clerk-Treasurer*