

March 1, 2018

Regular Meeting

Mayor McNinch called the Regular Meeting of the Denton Town Council to order at 7:00 PM on this date, leading everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor McNinch thanked everyone for coming and asked that the record reflect that Councilwoman Wilson was absent, and that the other Council Members were present.

Councilman Branson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented for the January 4, 2018 Regular Meeting, the January 22, 2018 Working Session and the February 1, 2018 Regular Meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Lister, passing unanimously.

Public Hearing

None

Petitions, Remonstrance's, and Communication

Proclamation – Jeff Wright & Paula Wright

Mayor McNinch read and presented a Proclamation to Mr. Jeff Wright to congratulate him on his recent retirement and recognized him for his many years owning and operating Wright Real Estate. Wright Real Estate has been in business for 72 years.

Mayor McNinch read and presented a Proclamation to Mrs. Paula Wright, recognizing her for her 13 years at Wright Real Estate.

The Mayor and Council thanked Mr. & Mrs. Wright for all they have done for the community.

Proclamation – Jan Baker

Mayor McNinch read a Proclamation to thank a local artist, Mrs. Jan Baker, for the donation of her art work “One Last Pint” to the Wharves of Choptank Visitor and Heritage Center.

Mrs. Baker has 2 additional pieces of art on loan at the Visitor Center. The Mayor encouraged the public to stop by and see the paintings, and to stop by Mrs. Baker’s Shop on N. 4th St.

Tobacco Enforcement Leadership Meeting

Mayor McNinch shared an invitation from the Caroline County Health Department, in regard to a meeting scheduled for March 15th to discuss underage tobacco, nicotine, e-cigarette use, national, state and local tobacco sales laws, and where Caroline County MD is in the quest to keep our kids tobacco-free.

Mayor McNinch is planning to attend.

Ordinances and Resolutions

Ordinance - Trash Collection Amendments

Discussion on proposed legislation to amend the Town’s Residential Trash Collection Program was deferred and held under New Business #3.

Reports of Officers, Boards, and Committees

None

Unfinished Business

Agenda #1- Strategic Plan

Mayor McNinch provided a synopsis of the Town’s Strategic Plan and discussion was held on amendments to the plan. Staff will update the plan to include the resurfacing

of the parking lot at Crouse Park; cuts for the Council Benefits; add the Hotdesks that will be opening soon in the Microenterprise Center.

Agenda #2 – Town Hall Roof

Mr. Don Mulrine, Town Administrator, provided additional information to answer questions and to clarify the warranty for the quote approved last month, to replace the roof on the Town Hall. This item was for discussion only.

New Business

Agenda #1 – Denton Police Dept. K9

Chief Cox provided information and asked for consideration to purchase a new K9 for the department for \$10,100. Officer Eddy has been receiving donations to cover the cost.

Councilman Lister made a motion to authorize the Chief to move forward with purchasing a new K9 with the donated funds. Seconded by Councilman Johnson, the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda #2 – Tennis Court Refurbishment

The Denton Public Works submitted a request seeking approval to refurbish the tennis courts at the Fourth Street Park; proposing to use American Tennis Courts Inc. at a price of \$15,690.00 to repair cracks and recoat both courts and to get both nets replaced and new posts for \$1,100.00. This is a sole source price through the National Cooperative Purchasing Alliance contract for a total of \$16,790.00, to be funded using Capital Improvement Funds.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve the bid for \$16,790, seconded by Councilman Branson.

In discussion, Mr. Mulrine provided additional information, sharing the courts will be resurfaced in early May, which will not affect the Recreation and Parks Program, and that they will also be using CIP funds for upgrading the electric to bring the tennis court lights up to code.

With no further discussion, the Mayor called for a vote on the motion to approve the upgrades to the Fourth Street Tennis Courts.

The motion passed 4-0.

Agenda #3 – Solid Waste Trash and Recycling

Mr. Mulrine and Mr. Phil Clark, Superintendent of the Public Works Department, presented a draft Request for Proposals for Solid Waste and Recycling Service for the Town, along with legislation to amend the Town's Residential Trash Collection Program. The current contract is up for renewal July 1st.

Discussion was held regarding putting the trash collection services out to bid and working towards implementing a recycling program and changing the number of trash receptacles. Staff will finalize the Bid Packet and continue to work on drafting an Ordinance for consideration to update the Town Code with changes pertaining to garbage collection.

Agenda #4 - Knierim Agreement -DPD

Mr. Mulrine shared that Curtis Knierim, a former Police Officer with the Denton Police Dept., has signed a payment agreement to pay the Town back \$4,500.

Following graduation from the Police Academy, Mr. Knierim decided that he no longer wished to be a Police Officer and resigned from the Department. He will reimburse the Town for the Academy Cost.

Agenda #5 - FY 2019 General Fund Budget

Mr. Mulrine mentioned staff is working on the budget and outside agencies and the Police Dept. will submit their request and begin discussions at the next Working Session along with salary proposals. Other departments and the full budget disclosure will be provided within the next month with a goal to have an adopted budget by June.

Per the report from the State Assessment Office the Constant Yield for Fiscal Year 2019 is .7435, which is in line with the current tax rate of \$.75

The Water and Sewer Budgets will be submitted in July.

Miscellaneous

Mayor McNinch provided a history on the State's Highway User Revenues cuts several years ago and how the reduction in funding has affected the Town's roads. Mayor McNinch sits on the Maryland Municipal League Legislative Review Board and shared that MML has made this a top priority and is advocating for the Highway User Revenues to be reinstated.

The House hearing was last Tuesday, and over 100 Elected Officials attended in support of the State reinstating the funding. The Senate Hearing is scheduled for March 7th. Councilwoman Wilson and Mr. Mulrine are planning to attend.

April 3rd – the regional LGIT Renewal Meeting will be held at the Visitor Center.

April 24th – the next Eastern Shore Association of Municipalities will be meeting at the Market Street Pub. This will be the first time the meeting has been held in Denton.

Councilman Johnson recently visited the Charles County Power Plant. He was not able to go inside and tour the plant; however, he has posted a video on his Facebook of what he witnessed as far as sound, size and location being in close proximity to several thousand homes and is encouraging citizens to check out his video.

Mr. Chris Drummond, Town Attorney, shared that he looked up the Charles County Power Plant that is approximately 76 acres and it's assessed value is \$14.7 million dollars.

Mr. Drummond shared additional information he obtained on the Power Plant and talked with Senator Hershey's Office about legislation. They are drafting an amendment to allow the Municipalities the ability to authorize PILOT Agreement for Payment in Lieu of a Tax. At this time the Maryland Property Code only extends tax credit authority to the Counties and not to Municipalities. The proposed legislation if adopted would allow Municipalities to offer tax credit incentives.

Mayor McNinch opened the meeting for public comments:

Mr. James Turnbull of 109 S. 6th St., shared concerns about the increase in crime in Denton since he moved here; talking about FBI ratings, mentioning that Denton is rated second in the County. He expressed the primary concern for governments should be to provide a safe community.

Councilman Lister shared that the Council made a significant commitment three years ago to increase the Police Dept. funding to help with the staffing shortage.

Lt. George Bacorn shared statistics, reflecting that the Part 1 crimes in Denton were less in 2017 than in 2016, indicating the Town is going in the right direction.

Mayor McNinch thanked Mr. Turnbull for his comments.

Mrs. Mary Ellen Turnbull took the opportunity to thank the Police Dept. for all they do and shared that she is concerned about her family and how crimes affect property value; and encouraged the Council to continue to find funding for the Police Department.

Councilman Johnson added that the thefts at Walmart, most of which are petty offenses, affect crimes statistics.

Mrs. Turnbull suggested starting a Neighborhood Crime Watch Program.

Mayor McNinch thanked the Turnbull's for sharing their concerns and expressed that public safety is a priority of the Council.

Mrs. Turnbull mentioned that Ocean Pines has a great Crime Watch Program.

Councilman Johnson shared the Police Dept. has a Tip Line for citizens to call to report suspicious activity and talked about the Citizen's Academy.

Mayor McNinch asked for staff to make sure the Tennis Courts are being unlocked.

Mr. Randy Jenkins, the new Executive Director of Tuckahoe Habitat, introduced himself to the Council.

Mr. Mulrine talked briefly about the Town's Strategic Demolition Grant and working with Habitat.

Mayor McNinch read and presented a Proclamation to Karen Monteith, Clerk-Treasurer, extending the Council's condolences to her and her family, and acknowledging their pledge for the Clark Lee Bateson Memorial Fund.

Karen Monteith thanked the Council for their support.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch adjourned the meeting at 8:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Karen L. Monteith,
Clerk - Treasurer*