

January 5, 2017

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 all Councilmembers were present.

Councilman Lister made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2016 Regular Meeting as presented, seconded by Councilman Porter, passing unanimously.

Swearing in of New Denton Town Council Member

Mr. Walter Keith Johnson was sworn into office to serve a five-year term on the Denton Town Council by Mayor Abigail McNinch.

2017 Annual Election of Officers

Office of Mayor

Councilman Porter made a motion to appoint Abigail McNinch to serve as Mayor of the Denton Town Council for 2017, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Office of Vice Mayor

Councilman Lister made a motion to appoint Dennis D. Porter to serve as Vice Mayor of the Denton Town Council for 2017, seconded by Councilman Branson, passing unanimously.

Office of Mayor Pro-Tem

Councilman Lister made a motion to appoint Lester L. Branson to serve as Mayor Pro-Tem of the Denton Town Council for 2017, seconded by Councilman Porter, passing unanimously.

With the installation of officers now complete for 2017, Mayor McNinch presided over the remainder of the meeting.

Public Hearing

No public hearings.

Petitions, Remonstrance's and Communication

Swearing in Officer Joseph Eddy

Mayor McNinch swore in Officer Joseph Eddy, of the Denton Police Dept.

Swearing in Officer Ciaran Mayo

Mayor McNinch swore in Academy Graduate, Officer Ciaran Mayo of the Denton Police Dept.

Proclamation – Black Anchor Tattoo-

Mayor McNinch presented a proclamation to Black Anchor Tattoo in recognition for their Tattooing to Save Babies Event held this past September. Congratulating them on having raised over \$90,000 in the past 8 years for the March of Dimes through this annual event. Co-owner Mr. Ken Motter was present to accept the proclamation.

Proclamation – Gregory Cruikshank Eagle Scout Award

Mayor McNinch read a proclamation to congratulate Gregory Cruikshank for earning his Eagle Scout Award by creating a Bocce Ball Court at North Caroline High School. The proclamation will be presented at the upcoming Eagle Scout Award Ceremony to be held on January 14, 2017 at the Denton Library.

2016 Financial Report Presentation

Mr. Rob Churchman, of Cherry Bekaert, provided an overview of the Town of Denton's June 30, 2016 Annual Audit and Financial Report, as per auditing required communications. Mr. Churchman shared that they determined a reporting error from the prior year that had to be corrected, as it relates to an under reporting of a sewer depreciation expense, indicating that it does not have any effect on the Town's Fund Balance. There were no other issues to report.

Caroline County Chamber of Commerce Businesses of the Year Recognition

Mayor McNinch recognized and congratulated a number of Denton businesses that will be receiving "Business of the Year Awards" from the Caroline County Chamber of Commerce on January 26, 2017.

Ordinances and Resolutions

None

Reports of Officers, Board and Committees

Mr. Don Mulrine, Town Administrator, provided an update on the proposed change to the median on Legion Road, as previously requested by the County. State Highway Administration has approved the request to remove some of the median, to assist with emergency vehicles exiting from the Plaza to Legion Rd. Mr. Mulrine mentioned the cost is estimated to be \$16,000. He shared that Denton Plaza is willing to contribute \$10,000 toward the cost, and asked if the Council would like to see if Caroline County will provide any financial assistance.

Councilman Lister made a motion to submit a request to the County seeking financial assistance for this project, seconded by Councilman Porter, passing unanimously.

Mr. Mulrine shared Dept. of General Services letter of thanks to the Town for helping with the funeral of General Fretterd.

Mayor McNinch announced the State Legislation Session begins on Wednesday.

Mayor McNinch introduced Mr. Bunky Luffman, the new intergovernmental affairs, liaison between state and local government agencies. Mr. Luffman provided a synopsis of his background and the purpose for his roll in helping government agencies.

Unfinished Business

Agenda #1- Crouse Park – Fiber Optic Installation

Mr. Mulrine provided information and shared an estimate received from Joseph R. Smith Inc., for installing fiber lines to connect the Town Office, Police Department, Choptank Ave. Public Works Office, and Crouse Park Visitor Center.

Councilman Porter made a motion to approve the estimate as presented, seconded by Councilman Lister, passing unanimously.

Agenda #2 – Strategic Demolition and Smart Growth FY2017 Grant Award

Mr. Mulrine shared the Town has been awarded \$250,000 in Grant Funds from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). These funds will be used to continue the joint efforts with Tuckahoe Habitat for Humanity to purchase and demolish blighted properties in Town. Habitat for Humanity will come in and construct homes for low to moderate income (LMI) families as part of their national program.

Mr. William Clemens, Director of Tuckahoe Habitat for Humanity, was present and thanked the Town for their continued support, and provided an update on projects completed and in progress.

This was informational only, no action required.

Agenda #3 - Waste Water Treatment Plant Loan

Mayor McNinch announced that USDA funded the Preliminary Planning Grant for the proposed improvements to the WWTP. The preliminary planning has been completed and, as a result, USDA has offered the Town a loan for the project in the amount of \$1,836,000, at a rate of 1.375% for 40 years.

Councilman Branson made a motion to discuss and approve the proposed Waste Water Treatment Plant Loan, seconded by Councilman Lister.

In discussion, Mr. Murine provided additional information about the project and announced the Mayor previously signed paperwork to lock in the lower interest rate before 12/30/16. USDA indicated that on 1/1/17 the interest rate would increase to 2%. Mr. Mulrine shared that the Town did not qualify for USDA Grant Funding, only approved for a loan.

Additional discussion was held regarding the affect this loan would have on sewer rates; the need to explore to see if the State has any grant funds available toward this project. Mr. Mulrine has reached out to have MCET update the rate study. It was suggested to revive the Utility Commission.

Mayor McNinch asked for a vote on the motion to discuss and approved the proposed loan.

The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Agenda #1 – Vehicle Purchase

An estimate to purchase a truck to be used by the Town Administrator was presented to the Council.

Councilman Branson made a motion to approve the purchase, seconded by Councilman Porter.

In discussion: Mr. Mulrine provided additional information, and explained that a truck will be beneficial for the Town Administrator, by providing the ability to carry barricades and equipment for when responding to emergency calls after hours. Mr. Mulrine stated that, as per the adopted Public Works FY17 Capital Budget, \$10,000 will come from Water Fund and \$10,000 from Sewer Fund. Mr. Mulrine suggested the remaining funds to come from the Planning and Codes Department Budget.

The Mayor called for a vote on the motion to approve the purchase.

The motion passed unanimously.

Miscellaneous

Councilman Lister made a motion to reestablish the Utility Commission, seconded by Councilman Porter, passing unanimously. Staff will publish notice seeking members.

Councilman Branson inquired if any word has been received from the State on the assessment changes.

Mr. Mulrine mentioned that everything looks good.

Councilman Lister inquired on the status of accepting credit cards, staff was directed to make this a priority.

Mayor McNinch asked for an update on the new website, staff shared that the newest draft is being reviewed.

Mayor McNinch announced the opening of Pizza Empire.

Mayor McNinch and Council Members will be attending the legislative reception on Jan. 11th.

Mayor McNinch and Council Members will be attending the ESAM dinner on Jan. 17th.

Councilman Porter commented and thanked everyone for assisting with filling the downtown store fronts. It's nice to have the blocks almost full.

Councilman Branson asked if there was anything planned for the lot on 5th Ave next to the Pharmacy. Mr. Mulrine stated nothing has been submitted, just the request for clearing.

Councilman Porter accepted the 1st Place Trophy for the DVFD participation in the Denton Holiday Parade.

Lt. George Bacorn presented the Council with the first Challenge Coins from the Police Dept.

Martin Luther King March will begin at Lockerman Middle School at 9:00AM on Jan. 16, 2017.

Corporal Hall and Patrolman Mayo will be participating in the Martin Luther King Basketball Tournament to be held in Easton on Jan. 16, 2017.

Mrs. Joanne Farina, business owner on S. Third St., approached the Council and shared her appreciation for Mr. Mulrine's dedication in working on the relationship with the downtown business owners and helping to fill the vacancies. She also mentioned, with the influx of businesses and apartments, there are some parking issues; residents taking up parking spaces all day long. Asked the Council to keep this in mind as they continue to approve apartments, and not having enough parking available for visitors.

Mayor McNinch thanked Mrs. Farina for attending and sharing with the Council.

With no further discussion, Mayor McNinch adjourned the meeting at 8:19 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Karen L. Monteith,
Clerk - Treasurer*