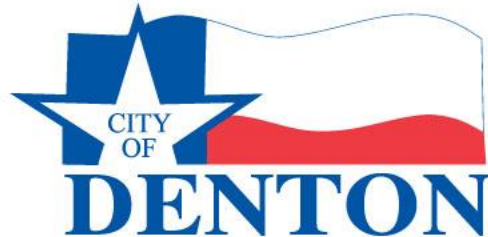


City of Denton Flag Policy Discussion

June 15, 2021
City Council Meeting



Background

- On June 8, Council Member Armintor presented a one-minute pitch to display the PRIDE flag and Juneteenth flag at City facilities during the month of June.
- During that discussion, staff understood the consensus of the direction of Council was to have a work session to discuss flag policy options for flying non-government-related flags at City buildings, including the LGBTQ Pride Month flag and a Juneteenth flag.
- Staff has compiled preliminary information, research, and options on the following slides.

Options

- Staff will provide additional information and considerations for the following options:
 - 1. Council-Initiated:** Council initiates the flying of symbolic flags through resolution.
 - 2. Establish a Policy, By Request:** Create a policy to accept requests from a person or group to be considered, providing parameters and a process for review and approval.
 - 3. Take No Action on Flags. Continue Current Recognition Practices:** Only display U.S., State and City-related flags. Continue to provide recognition upon request through proclamations or other means.

Option 1 : Council-Initiated

What does this look like?

- Council driven for which flags should be flown at City facilities.
- Based upon Council direction, staff drafts a Resolution for Council to consider for approval and action detailing which flags are to be flown.
- *Note: If Council wishes to fly the PRIDE and/or Juneteenth flag, then staff can be directed to prepare a resolution for a future Council meeting.*

Considerations:

- Council could handle on a case-by-case basis, amending the resolution when Council wants to add or remove certain flags
 - If a resolution were established, a Council Member wishing to amend or revise the resolution would need to schedule a one-minute pitch for staff to prepare an amended resolution for consideration.
- Could be considered an act of “government speech”; most defensible option
- City would purchase and own the flags as a City-initiated process

Option 2 : Establish a Policy, By Request

What does this look like?

- A person or a group could make a request to fly a flag based upon an established policy and process.

Considerations:

- Need to create a policy for how to handle such requests, such as addressing process, stipulations to qualify for consideration, approval process and authority, locations and time limits for display, flag raising ceremony, etc.
- A policy would need to be created first; if not, granting a request from a person or group for a flag to be flown might create risk for denying any future requests or placing future restrictions.
- Staff estimates 15-25 hours to develop policy and present to Council later in the summer.

Option 3: Take No Action on Flags. Continue Current Recognition Practices:

What does this look like?

- Current practice of only United States, Texas, and City-related flags are displayed at municipal facilities.
- Continue to accept proclamation requests for recognition by the Mayor.

Considerations:

- Continues current recognition method with proclamations. Consistent as all individuals or groups are recognized in the same manner with a proclamation.
- Does not require any additional staff time to research, draft, and present a policy.

Preliminary Research

- Staff provided *preliminary* research of other city's policies and compiled them into **Exhibit 3**.
 - **City of Long Beach, CA** – A policy approved by City Council sets forth parameters and allows for an approved list of six special flags to be flown during the year.
 - **Town of South Windsor, CT** – A policy approved by the Town Council sets forth parameters including a process for a Town Council member to request that the full Town Council consider a certain commemorative or organizational flag.
 - **City of Boston, MA** – Established a policy to handle requests, which are routed, reviewed, and approved by a department reporting to the Mayor's office (strong mayor form).
 - **City of Dallas, TX** - On May 12, 2021, City Council adopted a resolution to direct the city manager to fly the Pride Flag with the City of Dallas seal during the month of June 2021 and annually thereafter.

Review

- Staff has outlined 3 potential options:
 - 1. Council-Initiated:** Council initiates the flying of symbolic flags through resolution.
 - 2. Establish a Policy, By Request:** Create a policy to allow requests from a person or group to be considered, providing parameters and process for review and approval.
 - 3. Take No Action on Flags. Continue Current Recognition Practices:** Only display U.S., State and City-related flags. Continue to provide recognition upon request through proclamations or other means.