

TOWN HALL

Restoring Integrity at the Denton Community Market

A community conversation about accountability, fairness, and the future of our market.

This meeting is being recorded and live-streamed,
and may be distributed as necessary.



INTRODUCTIONS

Meet Your Organizers

Small business owners in Denton, whom were previous DCM vendors

We'd like 3-5 minutes of your time each to share our journeys with the market and it's impact on our businesses, why we organized and what our campaign has been about since it's inception in Jan 2026.



Dave Weaver
Goldenroot Gingerbeer

10 years with DCM



Katie Slusarski
Millennial Dogs

3 years at DCM



Megan Carter
Megan's Lane

10 years with DCM



Kathryn (Katy) Portillo
Susie's Snacks

11 years with DCM



Morgan Loftin
Pinned Ptera

5 years with DCM



Welcome & Opening



Morgan Loftin
(Pinned Ptera)

Opening Host

- Welcome to our town hall. Thank you for being here, listening to your community, and contributing your voice.
- We are a small group of vendors who were either banned and blocked from the market, or opted not to return.
- We are here to present truth, validate the experience of many vendors and patrons of the market who have been hurt, and work together for resolution. We may have different experiences, but our goal should be united, with respectful and kind discourse.



Handing Over To Our Founders



Kati Trice

Founded DCM in 2009 — held the first public meeting at City Hall to gauge community support.
<https://wedentondoit.com/archives/2011/8/9/interview-with-denton-community-market.html>



Vicki Oppenheim

Founding board member and co-coordinator who helped build DCM from zero into one of the largest markets in North Texas.

CONTEXT

DCM by the Numbers

What this market was — and what's at stake.



THE ARC



Sources: Denton Record-Chronicle, DCM Form 990 filings, North Texan / UNT, City of Denton HOT records.

WHAT WE'RE ASKING FOR

Five Petition Points

Each point will be introduced, then addressed by some community speakers with direct experience.

- 1 **Clear & Consistent Policies**
- 2 **Fair Conflict Resolution**
- 3 **Greater Board Transparency**
- 4 **Financial Stewardship**
- 5 **Inclusion, Respect & Denton Values**

1

PETITION POINT 1

Clear & Consistent Policies

WHAT WE'VE DOCUMENTED

- The board has operated out of compliance with its own bylaws since 2023 — no required vice president, treasurer, or farmer representative.
- The executive director position has been vacant since 2020, despite being required by the bylaws.
- No independent board of trustees exists to provide oversight, as the bylaws require.
- Vendors have been banned over minor or disputed incidents with no consistent written standard applied.
- Over 20 vendors have been removed from the market in recent years under criteria applied to other vendors and not others, which includes increasingly alarming criteria. Vendors had effectively been censored who don't align with policy, including use of AI that violates the founding mission.
- The founding bylaws are changed, with no intent to distribute or update vendors or community patrons with this information.

SPEAKER



Brigid Brammer, Brigid Brammer Bags

Brigid has been a vendor of the Denton Community Market since it's 1st season, for at least 16 years. She is the longest attending documented vendor of the market on record.

<https://brigidbrammerbags.com/>



GOVERNANCE

Bylaws vs. Reality

*DCM's own nonprofit bylaws require a specific governance structure. Here is what they say — and what is actually happening.
Comments from Megan Carter, below:*

WHAT THE BYLAWS SAY

An Executive Director runs daily operations.

Board includes a Vice President, Treasurer, and a farmer vendor.

A Board of Trustees of community members provides oversight.

Vendors and farmers are represented in market governance.

Decisions are made through proper board meetings.

WHAT IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING

Vacant since 2020 — board president handles operations unpaid.

All three positions are currently missing (since 2023).

No board of trustees currently exists.

Board is majority-vendor, profiting from rules they themselves set.

Reports describe votes called via group chat with little notice.

Source: Denton Record-Chronicle reporting, Sept. 29 2025 — DCM bylaws as documented in the same article.

2

PETITION POINT 2

Fair Conflict Resolution

WHAT WE'VE DOCUMENTED

- Vendors who have been banned report no formal hearing, no appeal process, and no opportunity to respond before losing their booth. Several received no email or notice, and found themselves blocked on social media and their emails ignored.
- Previous staff's (Andi Torres) spouse Cassandra Torres circulated a petition seeking board reform in 2023 — cease-and-desist letters from the market's attorney followed shortly after, as well as calls to their employer at Petco. She also threatened to call police if Cass did not stop.
- Another former board member reports the board president also contacted their federal employer directly in an effort to have them silenced professionally.
- Critics who raised concerns on social media report being blocked from the market's official accounts, and comments being turned off on topics like AI, or misinformed ADA polices for service animals. The DCM also stopped posting about Pride events, after social media critics opposed their authenticity.
- There is currently no neutral party vendors can appeal to when a dispute arises with market leadership.

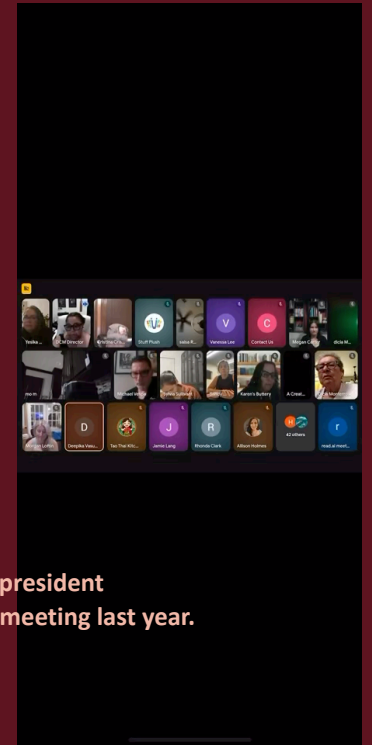
SPEAKER(S)



Michelle Smith
Veteran's Liberty Ranch
Banned Rancher

<https://www.veteranslibertyranch.com/>

Written account, read by Megan Carter



The video clip attached is the current board president speaking to vendors during a virtual vendor meeting last year.



PETITION POINT 3

Greater Transparency in the Board

WHAT WE'VE DOCUMENTED

- A majority of board members are vendors who benefit from control of the market while simultaneously setting the rules for everyone else.
- Board decisions have reportedly been made via group chat, called with no advance notice and little chance for discussion.
- There has been no meaningful board turnover or open election process in recent years.
- Minutes and key decisions have not been consistently shared with the vendors and coordinators they directly affect. There has been only 1 virtual meeting annually since 2023 (minimum per bylaws), and last years meeting was threatening to vendors with legal action unless we censor ourselves. The market's own bylaws require a board of trustees made up of community members — this body does not currently exist.

4

PETITION POINT 4

Financial Stewardship

WHAT WE'VE DOCUMENTED

- In September 2025, Denton City Council denied DCM's request for \$80,200 in Hotel Occupancy Tax funds — money the market had received every year since 2015. The president stated those funds were received illegally and we never qualified for them in previous years in our last vendor meeting.
- 2024 was the first year DCM ran a deficit — expenses grew 59% while revenue grew only 26%, ending the year at a net loss of \$28,485.
- Marketing-related spending reached \$87,139 in 2024 — over a third of all expenses — with no public disclosure of who was paid.
- Merchant and bank fees jumped 543% in a single year (\$4,518 → \$29,073), with no corresponding growth in transaction volume to explain it.
- Standard 501(c)(3) governance policies — conflict of interest, whistleblower, document retention — are all reported as 'not in place.'
- → Morgan will now walk through the full Form 990 analysis in detail.



Detailed financial presentation to follow

SPEAKER(S)



Morgan Loftin

Pinned Ptera, my findings after comparing public 990s.

5

PETITION POINT 5

Inclusion, Respect & Modeling Denton Values

WHAT WE'VE DOCUMENTED

- A former Market Operations Coordinator reports being misgendered and having their deadname knowingly used in a market-wide email after their resignation.
- Board leadership reportedly made repeated comments that it was 'inappropriate' for a same-sex couple to hold hands at the market.
- The market's own vendor code of conduct requires anti-bullying, diversity, and professionalism standards — applied inconsistently to leadership versus vendors.
- Vendors who raised concerns about inclusion and conduct describe being dismissed, demeaned, or pushed out.
- Denton has a long history of standing up for its community — this market should reflect those same values.

SPEAKER(S)



Andi Torres, previous Market Coordinator

Voices from the Record

Paraphrased from the Denton Record-Chronicle's investigation (Sept. 29, 2025) and related public reporting.

“

Several former board and staff members described mismanagement — many requested anonymity due to fear of retaliation.

— Denton Record-Chronicle reporting

“

Staff has been fired, vendors have left, and longtime patrons are boycotting.

— Founding steering committee member

“

Significantly fewer farmers, less live music, less foot traffic — even on nice-weather days.

— Kati Trice, DCM founder, on returning to the market

“

What I'm calling out is the pattern of weak governance, lack of transparency, and exclusion of vendors from real decision-making.

— Former DCM staff member

Q&A and Community Commentary



Runs until 7:45 PM

- Let's unite together for common goal of change in policies and change in leadership response to our community
- Time will be managed to ensure as many voices as possible are heard
- Please keep questions and comments focused and respectful



A Reminder on Decorum

- This meeting is recorded and live-streamed
- We are here to build a record and a path forward — Speak to the issues factually; respect every person in the room

Vote of No Confidence



Motion Procedure

- Is there an individual willing to start a motion of no confidence of the current board?
- Is there an individual willing to second this this motion?

Why This Matters

Your ballot becomes part of the formal record presented to the board, the city, and the county as we push for structural reform.



Ballot Box — For Active Vendors

If you are an active Denton Community Market vendor and no longer have confidence in this board, write the following on a card and place it in the box:



Your name



Your email



Your business name



Your signature



Thank You for Coming

We will be following up directly with both the board and all vendors in the days ahead.

This community built the Denton Community Market.
Together, we will push for change.