

Town of Onancock
Town Council
February 23, 2015
7:00 PM

Call to Order and Roll Call:

Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and roll was called. Mayor Russell Jones and Councilmembers T. Lee Byrd, Catherine Krause, John Morgan, Sandra Fox, Joshua Bundick and Fletcher Fosque were present. All members were present and a quorum was established.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Consideration and Approval of Minutes from the Regular Meeting on January 26, 2015:

Mayor Jones asked if there were any corrections, changes, or additions to the January 26th, 2015 meeting.

With none, Councilmember Morgan made a motion to approve the January 26th, 2015 meeting minutes as submitted. Councilmember Byrd seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Public Business:

A. Budget Supplement – Appropriation by USDA for Vehicles:

Town Manager Lawton explained to council that they had previously voted to approve an application to Rural Development for the funds to purchase two new vehicles. Part of the money was given to the town as a grant and the other portion of the money was loaned to the town. A new police vehicle was purchased along with a new public works truck. Mr. Lawton explained that council would need to approve a supplemental appropriation to reflect the monies received by Rural Development and the expenditures for the vehicle purchases.

Councilmember Byrd made a motion to approve a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$49,000 for funds received and expended from USDA-RD for two vehicles. Councilmember Fox seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Public Comment:

No Comment.

Planning Commission:

No meeting.

Marketing Committee:

Councilmember Morgan shared that they did meet and that the majority of the meeting was about preparing for the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Councilmember Morgan commended Ms. Nancy James and her volunteers on all their hard work with the parade preparation. Councilmember Morgan asked Ms. James to address council regarding the current parade efforts.

Ms. Nancy James explained that last year's inaugural parade was very successful and that she has faith that this year's parade will be just as good if not better. Ms. James also mentioned what a great group of sponsors she was able obtain to help make the parade a special one. Ms. James explained to council

that the parade starts at 2 PM on Sunday, March 15th, 2015. The previous meeting minutes had a starting time of 1:00 PM which was the initial proposed start time but due to church attendees leaving church around that time it was suggested that the parade start time be moved back an hour. Ms. James also shared that there is a 5K Charity Event on Saturday, March 14th, 2015 which is in conjunction with the parade. Ms. James is excited to have an event that brings so many people into the Town of Onancock and because of that fact Ms. James has been encouraging business in town to open their doors before and after the parade.

Ms. Ann Nock, Market Street, shared her concerns regarding the availability of restroom facilities the parade.

Mr. Lawton and Ms. James explained that the Old Onancock High School restrooms will be open to the public as well as a port-a-potty on the Old Onancock High School lawn.

Personnel Committee:

No meeting.

Waterfront Committee:

Councilmember Byrd explained that there was a meeting that was held last month in spite of his absence and that he would allow the town manager to expand on it during his report.

Mayor's Report:

No report.

Town Manager Report:

1. Mr. Lawton shared the progress of the installation of the gas tanks at the wharf. The town received a letter from the contractor, Mid Atlantic Petroleum, stating that when they tried to pull the building permits from Accomack County there were some road block that had been erected. Accomack County has requested that a structural engineer write a letter stating that the proposed location for the tanks is good. The other issue Accomack County raised some concerns about is whether or not the tank would be located outside of the town's flood plain. Mr. Lawton explained that moving the tank out of the flood plain could prove to be problematic when trying to load fuel into the tank. Mr. Lawton shared that he intends to discuss this issue with Mr. John Custis, Town Attorney, to determine whether the jurisdiction of the flood plain falls with the town or county. Once the tank is filled it will weigh about 15 tons therefore it would not be buoyant. Mr. Lawton stressed that changing the site plan now would be virtually impossible and that the future of the Onancock Harbor depends on this amenity/service.

Councilmember Bundick asked Mr. Lawton to clarify that the town did in fact pass their own flood plain ordinance. Mr. Lawton affirmed that was true. Councilmember Bundick asked if that means that the town has oversight of its own flood plain issues. Mr. Lawton shared that he believes so but is not sure of the specific ins and outs of this issue.

2. The Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) has approved the town for grant money for advertising. The town will need to come up with a plan prior to spending the money and it must target transient boaters so that they are aware of the amenities at the wharf such as the pump out.

3. Mr. Lawton shared that Pine Street Apartments is in the process of applying for tax credits to make upgrades to their apartments. Mr. Lawton explained that the credits will provide funds to existing building upgrades only. Pine Street Apartments has asked the Town of Onancock to write a letter of support for the tax credits.
4. The new town website will go live next week.
5. Mr. Lawton shared that at the next council meeting he would be presenting the proposed FY 2015-16 budget. Mr. Lawton reminded council that there will also need to be a public hearing no later than June before council can adopt the proposed budget. Mr. Lawton also shared that the new budget will incorporate rate increases for water and sewer.
6. Mr. Lawton reiterated that he submitted the proposed economic future of the town to Accomack County as requested but that it would be unlikely to hear back from the county until April or May.
7. Mr. Lawton shared that during this year's legislative session in the Virginia General Assembly some of the local police department funds that were previously cut have been reinstated. Also, House Bill 1721 passed the House and is working its way through the Senate. The bill, if passed, would give an exemption to real estate taxes for those families of soldiers that died while serving.

Mayor and Town Council Comments:

Councilmember Fox shared her concern about an individual who lives at GF Horne. This individual came to the Inn and Garden Café twice during the Valentine's Day dinner that was being served to their guests. The individual was removed from the property twice by Onancock Police Officers.

Councilmember Fox asked if there was anything that could be done to ensure that individuals from GF Horne could not trespass and disturb local businesses customers.

Mayor Jones shared that unfortunately that issue is outside of council's purview and the Police Department cannot get involved unless one of their residents is committing a crime.

Mr. Lawton also explained that GF Horne is providing a service on the Eastern Shore that is not readily available. If they were to close, where would their residents live.

Councilmember Bundick asked Mr. Lawton how the town's utility system fared through the cold temperatures.

Mr. Lawton shared that the system fared well until recently. Several busted water pipes in town. Also, there are a few problems at the plant that have required constant monitoring. The plant staff has been working hard to resolve these issues.

Councilmember Bundick shared that he noticed that at the wharf there did not seem to be any throwable life buoys.

Councilmember Byrd shared that the town does have one but that it was probably put away when the wharf closed for winter.

Councilmember Bundick asked if the town could look into keeping one out year round and possibly getting one for the kayak ramp as well. Councilmember Bundick stressed that as a parent it would be nice to know that if a child did fall in that there would be an apparatus there to assist with retrieving the child from the water.

Mr. Lawton stated that he would look into that.

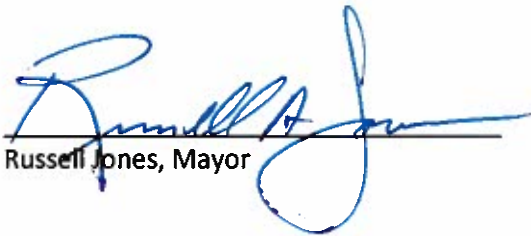
Closed Session, if necessary:

None.

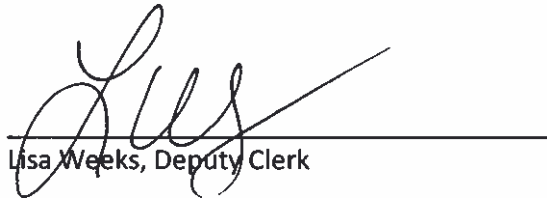
Adjourn:

Councilmember Fosque made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Bundick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimous voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 PM.



Russell Jones, Mayor



Lisa Weeks, Deputy Clerk