

Town of Onancock
Town Council
June 22, 2015
7:00 PM

Call to Order and Roll Call:

Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM and roll was called. Mayor Russell Jones and Councilmembers T. Lee Byrd, Catherine Krause, John Morgan, Joshua Bundick and Fletcher Fosque were present. Councilmember Sandra Fox was absent. A majority of members were present and a quorum was established.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Consideration and Approval of the Meeting Minutes from May 28th, 2015:

Mayor Jones explained that the minutes from the May 28th, 2015 meeting were not completed to date.

FY 16 Budget – Resolution to approve the FY 16 Budget, tax rates and increased sewer rates:

Mayor Jones explained that this will be the fourth time the proposed FY 16 Budget has been heard publicly.

Town Manager Lawton explained that there have been no changes to the original proposed FY 16 Budget that was presented to Council a few months ago. Mr. Lawton also explained that the proposed new sewer rates will go into effect July 1st but that those meters that get billed in July will be billed according to the current rate structure since their consumption was during the current fiscal year.

Mayor Jones explained that even with the proposed increase in the Town's sewer rates, the Town of Onancock is still one-third of the cost of sewer fees in the Town of Cape Charles.

Mayor Jones asked if there were any questions regarding this issue from either Council or from the public.

With none, Councilmember Bundick made a motion to approve the following Resolution: The foregoing Resolution R-01-2015 was approved at a Regular Meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Onancock, Virginia, conducted on June 22, 2015, upon the following recorded voice vote:

Councilmember Byrd seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

T. Lee Byrd	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Fletcher Fosque	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Sandra Fox	Absent	Joshua Bundick	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
John Morgan	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Catherine Krause	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

Public Business:

- a. Sewer Agreement with Accomack County: Mr. Lawton shared that the Town sent one area of concern regarding the proposed Agreement back to Accomack County; it was regarding the County's desire to have the Town conduct an analysis of sewer expenditures every ten years. The Town was not expecting them to amend the Agreement. The Town just wanted to make the County aware of its concerns. Mr. Lawton shared that the County had not realized that

language was in the document, they actually had wanted it to be every five years. Accomack County is making the necessary amendments. The County feels that the change is small enough not to warrant it going back in front of each respective board. Mr. Lawton expressed his desire to have a signing ceremony with Accomack County over this Agreement being finalized.

Mr. Lawton also shared that that the Town would be financially responsible for the analysis of the sewer expenditures.

Councilmember Bundick asked Mr. Lawton what the projected cost of the expenditure study will be so that in the future Council could budget for it.

Mr. Lawton feels that the study will probably cost the Town around \$5,000.

Mayor Jones asked Council to verbally approve the change in the Agreement from ten years to five years. All members in attendance were in agreement.

- b. Supplemental Appropriation, for Police Grant: Mr. Lawton explained that the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) gives the Town Police Department monies for scheduled highway safety traffic stops along Town roads. These grant monies pay the over-time for the Officers that participate in these stops. These over-time monies were not budgeted. Mr. Lawton shared that the funds have already been received from DMV. Mr. Lawton recommended that Council approve this Supplemental Budget request.

Councilmember Krause made a motion to budget and appropriate a supplement of \$765.30 to revenue line 103221.0401 (Law Enforcement Funds) and expenditure line 105524.1200 (Overtime) for funds received by the Department of Motor Vehicles for the Highway Safety Program. Councilmember Bundick seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Public Comment:

Richard Pearsall, 3 Market Street, shared a concern that was brought to his attention by local Watermen. The Town of Onancock is not honoring annual slip fees this year for them. Mr. Pearsall shared that the Town Code does not appear to reflect the grant proposal that was drafted for the Town to get Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) monies. Mr. Pearsall explained that the Town was coached by Mr. Preston Smith in how to word the grant proposal so that the Town would be sure to get those dollars awarded to it. In the proposal the Town stated that it would guarantee three berths for the Watermen. Mr. Pearsall is asking the Town to do its due diligence to verify what the 2011 Agreement with the Boating Infrastructure Grant states for guaranteed berths for the Watermen.

Mayor Jones asked Mr. Pearsall if he has a definition for what constitutes a Waterman. Mr. Pearsall stated that he did not.

Mr. Lawton shared that there is a meeting scheduled with Mr. Preston Smith with the Virginia Department of Health and that he would discuss this issue with him at that time.

Planning Commission:

No meeting.

Marketing Committee:

Mr. Lawton shared that the committee discussed holding another town event such as Harborfest. The event would be a community wide event sometime in the Fall. Mr. Lawton asked Council and the attendees to come forth with any suggestions for an event. Mr. Lawton also stressed that a town event would require assistance from volunteers.

Personnel Committee:

No report.

Waterfront Committee:

No report.

Christmas Committee:

Councilmember Krause explained that new funds have been identified for the next fiscal year budget and that the committee was taking its time to put together a plan that could be unfolded in stages due to limited funds. The committee has no formal plans yet but are focused on setting goals for which items should be purchased and when. Councilmember Krause shared that the committee hopes to have new decorations in place by 2017.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jones addressed a concern that had been discussed recently regarding electronic media. A reference had been made to the Town of Cape Charles doing a better job of reaching potential visitors than the Town of Onancock. Mayor Jones stated that the Town of Cape Charles does have some things that Onancock does not such as a beach but they also have a number of empty store fronts. Mayor Jones explained that an "apples to apples" comparison between the two Towns is not an appropriate practice. Mayor Jones believes that the Town of Onancock has a lot to offer tourists.

Town Manager Report:

1. Mr. Lawton wanted to make council aware that the Town has been approached by a firm out Chicago to control any leases on the Town's Water Tower. Currently, the Town has two companies that lease space on the water tower, Eastern Shore Communications and AT&T. The company would take over the management of those leases and any future leases. The Town would be compensated 60% for any new leases on the tower and the initial compensation for this deal would bring in \$278,000. That would be a substantial cash infusion into the general revenue which could assist the Town for capital improvement projects. Mr. Lawton shared that he has attempted to contact other firms in the same field for a comparison on rates but none have responded. The contract with AT&T allows them to reevaluate their rent and lower it as they see fit, which has happened once already and they can opt out earlier than the lease term. Eastern Shore Communication pays no rent to the Town based on their contract, currently their compensation to the Town is two free connections.

Mayor Jones explained that \$287,000 additional in the general revenue fund could go a long way with helping the Town secure matching grant funding for capital improvement projects.

2. Mr. Lawton thanked the Town Staff especially the Police Department for their efforts with the collapsed building on King Street. Police Chief Eric Williams did an exceptional job ensuring public safety during the event.

3. Mr. Lawton shared that the Town received a warning letter from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for slightly higher levels of ammonia in the Town's water supply. Town staff was aware of this issue. The plant was not operating efficiently but the repairs have been made since that sample went out.
4. Mr. Lawton shared that the estimate for the Town Gazebo repairs came in higher than expected. The material cost is high for cedar shakers.
5. Mr. Lawton shared that the delinquent collection efforts are still in full swing. The Town will be sending out a postcard to delinquent residents for vehicle decals and personal property taxes.

Mr. Lawton explained that the Town Attorney, John Cusits, gave the Town a detailing on how to touch base with ABC regarding restaurants with ABC liquor licenses in Town that have delinquencies with the Town.

Mr. Cusits is also continuing with his collection efforts for the Town's back real estate taxes.

6. Mr. Lawton shared that the concrete has been poured for the Wharf Gas Tank and it will need to rest for seven days before the tank can be installed. The Town is hoping that the tank will be onsite shortly.

Mayor and Town Council Comments:

Councilmember Bundick wanted to publicly thank Mr. Craig Savage for all of his years of service as the Town's mailman. Mr. Savage recently passed away.

Councilmember Bundick also asked Mr. Lawton if he was able to locate the Virginia Code specific to vehicle decals.

Mr. Lawton stated that he has been looking into whether or not it is lawful to place the vehicle decal fee directly on the Town's tax bill. Mr. Lawton shared that he believes it is worth looking into and that he knows that some other towns are contemplating adding the vehicle decal fee directly to the Town's tax bills as well. Mr. Lawton shared that part of the challenge is that the Town does not generate its own tax bills and that the County Treasurer would need to be on board with the Town's policy change.

Adjourn:

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

The meeting ended at 8:06 PM.


Russell Jones, Mayor


Lisa Weeks, Deputy Clerk