

Town of Onancock
Town Council Meeting
January 22, 2018
7:00 PM

Call to Order and Roll Call:

Mayor Jones called meeting to order at 7:00 PM and roll was called. Mayor Russell Jones and Councilmembers Robert Bloxom, Catherine Krause, T. Lee Byrd, Ray Burger, 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 the Regular Town Council Minutes from the November 27, 2017 meeting and the Special Meeting on December 19, 2017:

Mayor Jones asked if there were any changes, corrections or additions to the meeting minutes that were submitted.

With none, Councilmember Bundick made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Councilmember Bloxom seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Public Business:

- a. Public Hearing, Special Use Permit – Ms. Suzanne Fall, 7 Kerr Street: Mr. Kerbin explained that Ms. Suzanne Fall of 7 Kerr Street has requested a special use permit to operate a homestay at that location. Mayor Jones opened the public hearing at 7:02 PM.

Councilmember Byrd stated that this application is similar to the others council has already approved. Councilmember Bundick asked if this was a new use for that property. Mr. Kerbin confirmed.

Mr. Kevin Taylor, Kerr Street, shared that he lives next door to this property and is concerned with the parking plan since both properties share a drive-way. Mr. Taylor explained that the drive-way is narrow and sharing it with 7 Kerr Street is already cumbersome. Mr. Taylor mentioned that he has children and he is also concerned about the individuals that will rent the house. Mayor Jones asked if there are currently separate parking areas for both properties. Mr. Taylor shared that Ms. Fall has built a two-car parking area and has discussed fencing it. Mr. Taylor mentioned that the drive-way his part of his property although they have an easement. Mayor Jones asked if Mr. Taylor has discussed his concerns with Ms. Fall. Mr. Taylor stated that he has not. Councilmember Byrd asked if Mr. Taylor knew of the easement when he purchased the property. Mr. Taylor confirmed that he did. Mr. Taylor stressed that while there is parking at her property the new layout has become burdensome for his family. Councilmember Byrd asked if the Taylors were currently happy with the drive-way arrangement. Mr. Taylor stated that he was but that he is concerned about the future if this special use permit is approved without a parking plan. Councilmember Byrd asked if there was a parking layout that would satisfy Mr. Taylor. Mr. Taylor explained that while parking is an issue he is also concerned about strangers renting the house and the possible harmful interaction his children may have with those renters.

Mr. Kerbin recommended the approval of the special use permit but suggested that council ask for a site plan for the parking issue at this property.

Councilmember Krause asked if there is currently anyone living at that location. Mr. Taylor said there was not.

Councilmember Fosque mentioned that the town council does not have a lot of authority over easements and parking issues. Councilmember Fosque has asked that the applicant respond to this concern prior to council's approval.

Councilmember Fosque, Byrd and Krause shared that they were not prepared to approve the permit this evening.

Councilmember Byrd asked if Mr. Taylor would have to back out of the drive-way no matter the parking arrangement. Mr. Taylor said that he would. Councilmember Fosque explained that the use of the property for the purposes of a homestay will not cause the parking issues.

Mr. Taylor asked how many guests are allowed at the homestays. Councilmember Bundick shared that the number of guests is determined by the number of rooms available.

Mayor Jones suggested that council table this discussion until Mr. Taylor's parking concerns are addressed. Mayor Jones closed the public hearing at 7:14 PM.

Town Council decided to not take action on the special use permit request this evening.

- b. Motion to Approve Town Council Meetings for Calendar Year 2018 - Town Manager William Kerbin: Mr. Kerbin reviewed the proposed meeting schedule for calendar year 2018 with council. There are two dates that the fourth Monday of the month will be during a holiday; May and December. Mr. Kerbin proposes that those meetings be scheduled for the third Monday of the month for May and December. Mayor Jones shared that the town has also adopted a policy of having the following Thursday of the month be the alternate date if the originally scheduled council meeting has any conflicts. Mayor Jones explained that this will need to be added to the motion to adopt the calendar year meeting schedule. Councilmember Fosque shared that council is currently in violation of the town's bi-laws since it is supposed to meet twice a month. Mr. Kerbin confirmed that it is and that he will work to bring updated language to council for approval.

Councilmember Bloxom made a motion to approve the calendar year 2018 meeting schedule with the amendment of Thursday for an alternate date. Councilmember Byrd seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

- c. Motion to Appoint Mr. Larry Frey to the Onancock Planning Commission - Town Manager William Kerbin: Mr. Kerbin deferred to the Planning Commission Chair, Councilmember Fosque. Councilmember Fosque explained that there are currently two vacancies on the Planning Commission and Mr. Frey is the only one to step forward to volunteer his time. Councilmember Fosque stated that he believes that Mr. Frey will be a good addition to the commission.

Councilmember Fosque made a motion to approve Mr. Lawrence Frey's appointment to the Onancock Planning Commission. Councilmember Krause seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

- d. 2017 State of the Town Report - Town Manager William Kerbin: Mr. Kerbin shared the State of the Town report with council. Mr. Kerbin feels that the town has accomplished several goals during 2017 which were noteworthy. Mr. Kerbin read the report aloud.

Councilmember Byrd asked if Mr. Kerbin feels that Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital will increase their water volume over time. Councilmember Krause asked Mr. Kerbin if he knew if the hospital was at full capacity. Mr. Kerbin shared that he was unsure at the moment but that he would check in with the hospital administrator and get back to council.

- e. Review of 2017 Goals and Objectives – Town Manager William Kerbin: Mr. Kerbin shared the 2017 goals and objectives status report that was provided to council in their agenda packet. Mr. Kerbin read the list aloud.
- f. 2018 Goals and Objectives – Town Manager William Kerbin: Mr. Kerbin shared with council the department goals for 2018.

One of the larger goals is to update the Town Code which Mr. Kerbin feels will be a multi-year project. Mr. Kerbin has spoken with Mrs. Elaine Meil with the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission about the update. Mrs. Meil has recommended that a town committee be formed specifically for the purposes of facilitating the update. Councilmember Fosque shared that this needs to be done, there are ordinances that have been passed that no one can find. Mayor Jones explained that Mr. Kerbin is the fourth town manager who has attempted to take on this project.

Councilmember Fosque suggested that the goals be reviewed further in the upcoming budget workshop. Councilmember Bundick suggested that the department heads come to the budget workshop as well to discuss their budgets.

- g. Review of Proposed Budget Planning and Adoption Schedule – Town Manager William Kerbin: Mr. Kerbin reviewed the proposed schedule for the FY19 budget process. Mr. Kerbin shared that he plans on scheduling a budget workshop session in February separate from the regular Town Council meeting. Mr. Kerbin shared that he hopes to have the budget adopted in the April Town Council meeting.

Mayor Jones explained that no action is taken during budget workshop but that all are welcome to join so that the public can see how the process works.

Councilmember Krause expressed concern about the wharf being behind in their revenues. Councilmember Bloxom reminded Councilmember Krause that the wharf still has three months to go in this fiscal year and that those revenues shortfalls should be corrected when the wharf opens back up for the 2018 boating season.

Councilmember Bloxom thanked Mr. Barry Weeks and Mrs. Lisa Fiege for their hard work getting the internal income statement spreadsheet ready for council's review.

- h. Main Street Program – Mrs. Janet Fosque: Mrs. Janet Fosque, Mrs. Barbara Johnsen; Mrs. Karin Rush-Monroe and Councilmember Krause shared a Main Street presentation with Town Council. It was explained that the Main Street program aims to revitalize historic downtowns through preservation-based, community-driven, grassroots strategies which have developed by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development in 1985. Main Street is strategy centered with the implementation process based on Four Points: Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion & Organization. The presenters stressed that Onancock was still in the beginning stages of possibly adopting this program. They shared that thanks to a previous administration the Town of Onancock already has “Affiliate Status”. Other towns on the Eastern Shore of Virginia also have affiliate status; Cape Charles, Chincoteague and Exmore. They concluded the presentation with the following statement: “The vision has to be a community vision, It’s not the town council’s vision. It’s not the business owner’s vision. It’s the Communities’ Vision. That is the only way it can work.”

Mrs. Cherie Tapman, C.D. Marsh Jewelers, shared that she is not completely sold on this idea. She mentioned that the Town of Parksley was also looking into this program but has backed off due to the rules the town would have to abide. Mrs. Tapman stressed that revitalization is a great idea but why not use the town’s resources to work on filling the ten empty store fronts downtown. Mrs. Tapman stressed that before she would give her consent to move forward, as a business owner, with this project would only be after the proposed new requirements for the businesses is laid out. Mrs. Fosque explained that the goals for this program will be identified by the group as a whole. Mrs. Tapman thanked the Onancock Police Department for all their hard work stressing that the town needs all five police officers.

Councilmember Krause shared that this program is set up with the community vision of the town. Explaining that some towns with this program use it solely for their residents and not for tourism. Onancock’s goals will depend on the community vision.

Mrs. Rush-Monroe shared that the most common theme of the Main Street program is economic development.

Mrs. Ann Nock, Market Street, commended the group on their efforts with this program.

Ms. Shirley Zamora, North Street, shared that she was once the Mayor of Onancock and that during her time as the mayor the town spent two years working to get downtown to become a Main Street area. Ms. Zamora expressed her concern that there appeared to be no institutional memory, stating that individuals such as Councilmember Fosque should remember the original efforts to become a Main Street town. Ms. Zamora shared that in order for the town to become a Main Street town it had to have blight and that the day before the Main Street people were to come to town to review Onancock Mr. Vincent Erato tore the building down and the town was no longer eligible. Ms. Zamora continued stating that it concerns her that this is being treated like a new idea when several years ago the town had meetings and visioning sessions specifically for this program. Ms. Zamora did acknowledge that several of the current Town Council members are new to the area. Ms. Zamora asked that Town Manager Kerbin look for the notebooks that should be filed at Town Hall regarding this program.

Mrs. Fosque thanked Ms. Zamora for her past efforts with this program. Mrs. Fosque did mention that the program has been through several revisions over the years, some of these items and concerns raised this evening are not something they have come across when reviewing this program.

Mrs. Karen Emerson, Kerr Street, expressed her excitement that this project was moving forward. Mrs. Emerson shared that she has lived in a Main Street town and has seen the benefits first hand.

Public Comment:

Ms. Celeste Pepitone-Nahas, Mighty Earth, shared that she is working for a non-profit called Mighty Earth which is a nation-wide initiative. The initiative is targeting Tyson Foods, requesting that they use sustainable practices. Ms. Pepitone-Nahas explained that they are not looking to hurt Tyson Foods just get them to agree to and implement a strategy to limit pollution and adopt a sustainable practices plan. Ms. Pepitone-Nahas stressed that on the Eastern Shore of Virginia the residents rely on a single-source aquifer which needs to be protected. Ms. Peptione-Nahas invited everyone to a meeting at the Naomi Makemie Church Wednesday, January 24, 2018 at 7:00 PM.

Mr. Haydon Rochester, King Street, thanked council for their past support of the Orchestra of the Eastern Shore and asks that they continue to fund the Local Challenge Grant initiative.

Mrs. Nancy James, Blarney Stone Pub, announced that the 5th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade will be held Sunday, March 11, 2018 at 2:00 PM. Mrs. James asked council to continue to support the Parade and asked for volunteers. Mrs. James shared that this is the largest event on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Mayor Jones suggested that Mrs. James work with Ms. Kerry Allison at the Eastern Shore Tourism Commission so that they can help get the word out. Mrs. James also announced that the 2nd Annual Celtic Festival will also be taking place that Sunday.

Mrs. Fosque, Market Street, thanked the town staff for their work on repairing the front of Town Hall.

Mr. Jeffrey Barrett, North Street, suggested that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) consider widening the roads on North Street. He mentioned that during the blizzard several cars were virtually on top of each other when passing. Mr. Barrett also suggested that town plows widen the road; that side streets be plowed; and that the town should possibly follow after the VDOT plows to assist with the snow removal.

Mrs. Tapman, Marsh's Jeweler, mentioned that if the residents wanted their streets plowed by VDOT then people should not park their cars on the streets.

Planning Commission Report:

Councilmember Fosque mentioned that there was a Planning Commission meeting last Tuesday and that they are still working on updating the Town Plan. Councilmember Fosque stressed that this is a long-process and that he plans on having a meeting every month until its done. Councilmember Fosque also reiterated that the Planning Commission still needs one more member.

Waterfront Committee Report:

Councilmember Byrd shared that there was no January meeting. Mr. Kerbin explained that the floating dock materials are being delivered this week and construction should begin shortly after.

Personnel Committee Report:

No meeting.

Holiday Committee Report:

Mrs. Janet Fosque thanked everyone for their assistance this past holiday season. Mrs. Fosque asked council to continue to fund their line item for at \$5,000 for the coming budget. Mrs. Fosque shared that they will purchase the new decorations this February when they are on sale but defer the invoice until the new fiscal year.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jones suggested that those interested in receiving town email notifications to please call Town Hall and ask to be added to the list. Mayor Jones shared that the town elections are coming up and the deadline to register to run for Town Council is March 6, 2018.

Town Manager's Report:

Mr. Kerbin reminded everyone that the town elections were coming up on May 1, 2018. Mr. Kerbin shared that one of our police officers, Dean Carroll, will be retiring March 1, 2018. The police department is currently looking for his replacement. Mr. Kerbin continued stating that he recently met with a Verizon representative and that they are currently looking for a new site for new cell tower. Mr. Kerbin commended his entire staff for their hard work during 2017.

Council Comments:

Councilmember Fosque shared that he recently attended a VML conference in Charlottesville, Virginia. The conference was to update everyone on changes to the conflict of interest rules as well as the open meetings act. Councilmember Fosque shared with council that when the entire group is emailed councilmembers should not "reply to all", that is considered conducting business. Councilmember Fosque suggested that council take the time to review the Freedom of Information Act handbook.

Councilmember Bundick reminded everyone that Friday, January 26, 2018 is the annual Onancock Volunteer Fire Department banquet. This year it will be held at the Elks Lodge.

Councilmember Krause asked when the online bill issues will be resolved. Mrs. Fiege shared that she is currently looking for a new vendor and hopes to have this resolved within the next two weeks.

Councilmember Bloxom thanked Mr. Barry Weeks and Mrs. Lisa Fiege for their hard work with preparing the internal income statement for council. Councilmember Bloxom also mentioned that the Fire Department recently repainted all of the fire hydrants in town and that they look great. Councilmember Bloxom shared that in light of the Hallwood, Virginia scandal he wanted thank his fellow council members for being easy to work with and reasonable.

Closed Session, if needed:

Councilmember Krause made a motion that Town Council convene a Closed Meeting for the purposes of holding a discussion of the personnel, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended. Councilmember Bloxom seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Closed session began at 8:32 PM.

Councilmember Krause made a motion that Town Council reconvene in Open Meeting, and that a roll call vote be taken and recorded on this motion so that each member who votes in favor shall, thereby, certify compliance with all of the matters identified in Section 2.2-3712(D) of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended.

Robert Bloxom YES/NO
Catherine Krause YES/NO
T. Lee Byrd YES/NO

Ray Burger YES/NO
Joshua Bundick YES/NO
Fletcher Fosque YES/NO

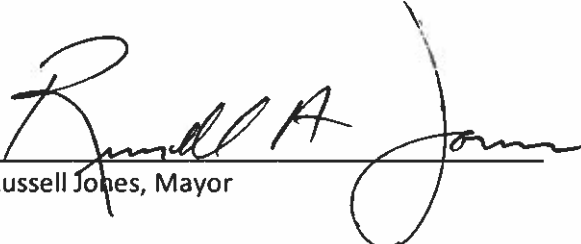
Open session began at 9:08 PM.

Adjourn:

Councilmember Byrd asked to be on next month's agenda so that he can get council's approval on a few Waterfront Committee items.

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:08 PM.



Russell Jones, Mayor



Lisa Fege, Deputy Clerk