

Town of Onancock
Town Council Meeting
October 28, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order and Roll Call:

Vice-Mayor Bloxom called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and roll was called. Vice-Mayor Robert Bloxom and Councilmembers Joy Marino, Catherine Krause, Ray Burger, Maphis Oswald and Matt Spuck were present. Mayor Fletcher Fosque 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 the September 23, 2019:

Vice-Mayor Bloxom asked if there were any changes, corrections or additions to the meeting minutes as submitted. Councilmember Spuck mentioned that the itemized listing of prioritized streets was not part of the meeting minutes. Councilmember Spuck wanted to make sure they were on Town Manager Mr. William Kerbin's list. Vice-Mayor Bloxom suggested that Mr. Kerbin to add the streets to his action items report.

Councilmember Oswald made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as submitted. Councilmember Spuck seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Public Business:

- a. Public Hearing – Request for an Amendment to Special Use Permit 01-17: New Property Owner, Suzanne Johnson/Pickles Properties, LCC – Town Manager, William Kerbin: Vice-Mayor Bloxom opened the public hearing at 7:03 p.m. Mr. Kerbin reviewed the special use permit request. The previous owners of 49 King Street were granted a special use permit for two separate rental apartments upstairs. The new owners are requesting permission to have three studio apartments for rent upstairs. Town Attorney, John Custis, said that council would need to approve an amendment to the existing special use permit.

Council discussion followed. Some items discussed were possible zoning restrictions, parking and ingress/egress.

The public hearing closed at 7:08 p.m.

Councilmember Spuck made a motion to approve Amendment to SUP 01:19. Councilmember Oswald seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

- b. Discussion on the Potential Purchase of 9 Watson Street – Town Manager William Kerbin: Mr. Kerbin explained that at the last meeting more information was requested for discussion on this topic. Mr. Kerbin suggested that the purchase of the property be funded through the council contingency line item and that the cost for demolition come from the buildings and grounds department's repair and maintenance line item.

Council discussion followed.

Councilmember Marino made a motion that the Town of Onancock make an offer to acquire the property located at 9 Watson Street for an amount of \$2,000 and subsequently make plans to demolish the structure located on this property and haul the debris away.

Vice-Mayor Bloxom asked a clarification question regarding the timing of the demolition. Councilmember Oswald stated that it would take place in this fiscal year.

Councilmember Marino amended her motion to include \$4,200 for the demolition costs. Councilmember Krause seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

- c. Boat Ramp Policy – Town Manager William Kerbin: Mr. Kerbin explained that the current sign states that ramp access is free for town residents. It is confusing since it is free for town residents with a valid decal which is not free.

Council discussion followed.

Councilmember Oswald made a motion that the Town of Onancock continue to allow residents to use the boat ramp for free with a town boat trailer sticker on their trailer and to continue to allow nonresidents to use the boat ramp with either a \$5 launch fee or with a \$30 annual nonresident sticker and to instruct the Town Manager to change the current sign to reflect this policy. Councilmember Krause seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

- d. Tree Board Update – Mr. William Burnham, Tree Board Chair: Mr. Bill Burnham highlighted for council the Tree Board's accomplishments throughout the year. Mr. Burnham also took a moment to express the board's sadness over losing such a pivotal member of the board, Mrs. Ann Nock. Mr. Burnham also discussed plans including the planting of the Willow Oak which will be dedicated to Mrs. Ann Nock's memory.

Council discussion followed which centered around the potential cost of maintaining all of the trees in town. Vice-Mayor Bloxom asked Mr. Burnham to put together some numbers for the coming budget proposal for FY21.

- e. Request for an Additional Day Off for Town Staff (Monday, December 23, 2019) – Vice-Mayor Robert Bloxom: Vice-Mayor Bloxom explained that Mr. Kerbin presented this idea to him a few weeks ago. Vice-Mayor Bloxom stated that he was in favor of granting Monday, December 23rd as an additional day off for town staff. Vice-Mayor Bloxom further explained that state employees get two additional holidays than the Onancock staff gets.

Council discussion followed. Some members raised concerns about being closed when the private sector would be open; the fact that town staff was already given a cost-of-living adjustment above and beyond other localities; and, the possibility of adding two floating holidays to the personnel manual.

Councilmember Krause suggested that this matter be discussed further in the Personnel Committee. All members were in agreement.

Public Comment:

Mrs. Brandi Childress, Candidate for Accomack County Treasurer, thanked council for allowing her to speak. Mrs. Childress shared with council her credentials with her goals if elected to the Accomack County Treasurer's position.

Ms. Miriam 'Tina' Riggs, Candidate for Accomack County Board of Supervisors, shared her experience with council along with potential projects of interest that would involve the town.

Mr. Bill Burnham, Burnham Guides, updated council the Harbor Challenge event that was held in September. The event raised \$1,700 which was donated to the Onancock Volunteer Fire Department. Councilmember Oswald asked how the town could provide better support for the event in the future. Mr. Burnham suggested that the town help with expanded promotional outreach and port-a-johns, to name a few.

Mr. Rick Turner, Onancock Street, asked what the town is doing about the homes that are boarded up and abandoned. Mr. Turner asked if the Town Code spoke to any of these issues. Mr. Kerbin reviewed his process for addressing code violations within the town. Mr. Turner then asked if there was a code addressing multi-family dwellings. Mr. Kerbin explained that most of the town is zoned residential one which means single family homes. Vice-Mayor Bloxom explained that neighbor complaints are the best way to handle situations such as these.

Mr. Alan Silverman, Former Onancock Resident, urged council to review the Dayton ordinance which has more aggressive rules governing derelict properties.

Mr. Duke Shannahan, King Street, expressed his excitement that our local state representatives will be putting a five-million-dollar appropriation in the Governor's budget this year which will be used to payoff Onancock's sewer debt.

Planning Commission Report:

Vice-Mayor Bloxom shared that they met on October 15th and reviewed the input from the public session that was held in September at the Historic Onancock High School. The public session was designed to gather input from residents about what they like/dislike about the town as well as what potential projects they would like to see the town do in the future. From that session, the commission decided what aspects need to be a part of the comprehensive plan update.

Waterfront Committee Report:

Vice-Mayor Bloxom shared Mr. T. Lee Byrd's report with council. Items discussed were the November 1st closing date of the Harbormaster Shack; possible discounts to increase reservations; the need for new assistants in the 2020 boating season; and, the possible rental of the Davis Oil lot for overflow parking.

Personnel Committee:

No meeting.

Sewer Transmission Line Steering Committee Report:

Vice-Mayor Bloxom explained that the committee has met three times and that there are three subcommittees also working on the separate aspects of this potential project. Vice-Mayor Bloxom also reviewed the last public information session that was held at the Eastern Shore Community College

which included members from both Accomack & Northampton County's Board of Supervisors as well as council members from other interested localities.

Council discussion followed. Vice-Mayor Bloxom closed by stating that the committee hopes to finish their review by the end of January 2020.

Mayor's Report:

No report.

Town Manager's Report:

Mr. Kerbin read his report aloud.

- Northeast Section Revitalization Project: The planning grant has been submitted for the Northeast Section Revitalization Project. We should receive notice if the town has been awarded in mid to late November.
- Taxes: Staff will send out tax statements around November 1.
- Holiday Preparations and Christmas Parade: Public works staff with the assistance of the Holiday Committee has begun preparations for putting up Christmas decorations. Staff will also begin preparations for the upcoming Christmas parade scheduled for December 15.
- Police Department Halloween Night Event: The police department will again be hosting activities Halloween night including handing out candy and performing skits for the kids.
- Town Code Review Update: Staff has reviewed and made changes to the Town Code. The Town Attorney is currently conducting his review and will have recommended changes prepared by January 1, 2020. These changes will then go to Municode for proofs and these changes should be finalized by February 29, 2020. The code will then go to Council for review. Mr. Kerbin is estimating a 60-day review period.
- ICMA Conference: Mr. Kerbin attended the ICMA Conference in Nashville last week.
- VDOT Transfer of Streets: Mr. Kerbin is awaiting cost estimates for needed repairs for East and Waples Streets in order to turn these streets over to VDOT. Mr. Kerbin is also awaiting a survey for Lee Street which can also be turned over to VDOT this year. Mr. Kerbin will also be meeting with VDOT to verify the exact streets that can be transferred over.

Financial Report:

Mr. Kerbin asked if there were any questions.

Vice-Mayor Bloxom asked about why there was a change to the police salary appropriations. Mrs. Fiege explained that with the hire of the new officer we needed to increase his initial salary since he would not need to be trained.

Follow-up on Council Action Items:

Mr. Kerbin asked if there were any questions.

Vice Mayor Bloxom asked that the street prioritizations be added to the action items for the next council meeting.

Council Comments:

Councilmember Oswald asked for a follow up on how the town reviews and addresses zoning issues in problem areas. Councilmember Oswald also shared that the Parksley Railroad Festival was a lot of fun and she thanked those that volunteered to help with the festival.

Councilmember Burger asked if the cell tower was operational. Mr. Kerbin shared that it should be any day.

Councilmember Marino thanked Mr. Turner for his comments. Councilmember Marino agreed that there are several properties in town that need to be addressed. Councilmember Marino also thanked Mr. Burnham for his Tree Board update.

Closed Session, if needed:

None was needed.

Adjourn:

Councilmember Krause made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Marino seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm.



Robert Bloxom, Vice-Mayor



Lisa Fiege, Deputy Clerk