

Town of Onancock  
Town Council Meeting  
February 24, 2020  
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order and Roll Call:

Mayor Fosque called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and roll was called. Mayor Fletcher Fosque and Councilmembers Robert Bloxom, Joy Marino, Catherine Krause, Ray Burger, Maphis Oswald and Matt Spuck were present. All members were present, and a quorum was established.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Consideration and Approval of the Meeting Minutes from the January 27, 2020 Regular Town Council Meeting and the February 3, 2020 Special Meeting:

Mayor Fosque asked if there were any changes, corrections, or additions to the minutes as submitted.

Councilmember Spuck stated that on page three of the January 27, 2020 there is a typo. It should read WWTP but it says WWTO.

*Councilmember Bloxom made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Councilmember Marino seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.*

Public Business:

- a. Historic Onancock School Update – Ms. Joani Donohoe, Executive Director: Ms. Donohoe gave council an overall update of the Historic Onancock School. Some items she shared with council were the number of people who have visited the school, the Friends of Onancock School Board’s strategic plan, the facility upgrades and the recent of addition of the LOVE sign. Ms. Donohoe also explained to council that they are working towards being ADA compliant; she asked council to budget a \$10,000 donation in the next year’s fiscal budget to help them accomplish this goal.

Council thanked Ms. Donohoe for her report.

- b. Discussion of Potential Dog Park in Town – Mayor Fletcher Fosque: Mayor Fosque asked council if they were interested in asking the Town Manager to pursue researching a dog park in town. A location will need to be selected, the Historic Onancock School has offered some space there, but it would be town operated. The Town Manager could work on securing grants to help fund this project. Mayor Fosque shared that the largest cost would be the fencing.

Council discussion followed. Councilmember Oswald, Bloxom, Marino and Spuck all indicated they interested in making this a reality.

- c. Main Street Designation Resolution – Councilmember Catherine Krause: Councilmember Krause explained that the Resolution and the Statement of Support from council are required components of the Main Street Designation application which is due in March. Councilmember Krause thanked council for this fiscal year’s Main Street appropriation of \$15,000 and asked that council consider keeping that level of funding for the next three years. Part of the application is to show financial support from the locality.

Council discussion followed. Some items discussed were the concern about multi-year funding and the future commitment of public funds as well as the potential of enforcing rules in the historic district.

*Councilmember Krause made a motion to sign the resolution of support of the Main Street designation application and the corresponding letter that outlines the details. Councilmember Bloxom seconded the motion.*

Council discussion continued and was centered around Councilmember Spuck's concern about the letter of commitment.

*Councilmember Krause withdrew her original motion and amended it to say; that she moves to adopt the resolution of support for Main Street. Councilmember Bloxom seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.*

- d. Discussion of Town Elections – Mayor Fletcher Fosque: Mayor Fosque asked council if they would like to move the town election date to coincide with the general election. Mayor Fosque shared that it costs the town approximately \$1,100 to hold a stand-alone election at Town Hall.

Council discussion followed. It was decided to keep with the town's current election schedule.

- e. Consideration of the Town of Onancock Joining the Hampton Roads Sanitation District Commission Service Area – Mayor Fletcher Fosque: Councilmember Bloxom shared that based on the engineering study that was completed by Davis, Bowen & Friedel in January of this year, it is in the town's best interest to go with the Hampton Roads Sanitation District's (HRSD) plan for the regional sewer project which would mean that the town would turn the wastewater treatment plant over to HRSD. Councilmember Bloxom explained that the Onancock sewer debt must be paid in full before the town can allow any other entity to take it over. Everyone is well aware of this situation and several groups are working on measures to pay the debt off.

Council discussion followed. Some items discussed were next steps, negotiations, and debt relief.

Mr. Steve Johnsen, Ames Street, shared that the next step is for the Circuit Courts to allow Accomack and Northampton Counties into the Hampton Roads Sanitation District service area. Accomack County Circuit Court is due to rule on this matter on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

*Councilmember Bloxom made a motion that the town move forward with contract negotiations with the Hampton Roads Sanitation District. Councilmember Oswald seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.*

Public Comment:

Mr. Haydon Rochester, King Street, thanked Mr. Bill Kerbin for his service as Town Manager. Mr. Rochester also asked council to continue their support for the ESVA Orchestra and the Local Challenge Grant which gives the Orchestra \$1,000 annually (\$500 from the town and \$500 from the State). Mr. Rochester asked that council consider giving the Orchestra an additional \$250 this coming fiscal year.

Planning Commission Report:

Councilmember Bloxom shared that Mr. Jim McGowan gave a comprehensive plan update at the last meeting. RAFT maps were also reviewed along with potential RAFT language which would need to be added to the town's comprehensive plan. Councilmember Bloxom also shared that the commission discussed the potential rezoning of the property at 58 Market Street from commercial to residential. This item will come before council in the near future.

Waterfront Committee Report:

Councilmember Bloxom deferred to Mr. T. Lee Byrd, Chairman of the Waterfront Committee. Mr. Byrd reviewed the grant process for the Virginia Port Authority which will hopefully be able to help fund the town's ramp repair project this coming fall. The grant funds will be awarded at their board meeting May 19, 2020. Mr. Byrd thanked Clark Nexsen for their assistance with the grant proposal. Mr. Byrd shared that Mr. Craig Tanner, Harbormaster, will be interviewing assistants soon and that applications can be picked up at Town Hall.

Councilmember Burger asked if there will be an asphalt reduction and/or a loss of the number of spaces available for parking when the ramp is repaired. Mr. Byrd said no. Councilmember Oswald asked if there was any signage stating that it's town parking. Mr. Byrd said yes but that the Harbormaster was working on acquiring more.

Personnel Committee Report:

No meeting.

Sewer Transmission Line Steering Committee Report:

None.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Fosque shared that Town Manager Kerbin was leaving his post as of March 20<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Fosque continued stating that former Interim Town Manager, Mr. Bill Whitley, has been hired to help consult council during the hiring process. Applications are being sent directly to him and council will convene a closed session on March 4<sup>th</sup> to review applications with Mr. Whitley.

Town Manager's Report:

Mr. Kerbin read his report aloud.

- Business License Renewals: Business license renewals were mailed out. 2020 business licenses are due by April 30, 2020.
- St. Patrick's Parade: Final preparations are being made for the St. Patrick's parade scheduled for March 15 at 2:00 p.m.
- Tree Grant Proposal: The Town was awarded a grant in the amount of \$4,400 for the Virginia Trees for Clean Water proposal that includes tree plantings for the Outlaw Building property. The tree plantings must be completed by December 31, 2020.
- VPA Grant Application: T. Lee Byrd and Fletcher Fosque provided a presentation to the Virginia Port Authority on February 11, 2020 in Norfolk. The application includes repairs to the wharf ramp and duckbills to reduce flooding in the wharf parking lot.
- Northeast Section Project: All of the requirements for eligibility for a \$40,000 Community Development Block Grant Planning Grant have been completed. The requirements included a public meeting, a window housing survey and an infrastructure assessment. The next step will be

for the Northeast Section management team to develop a list of improvements for the Northeast Section based on information gathered from the public meeting and surveys.

Mr. John Fiege, Meadville Drive, spoke to council on behalf of the St. Patrick's Parade committee, stating that sponsorships are still needed. Mr. Fiege also discussed the festival event which is from noon to 5:00 p.m. on the day of the parade. Mayor Fosque explained that this year North Street from Market to King Streets will be closed off and the town's ABC permit would allow establishments to sell alcohol which can then be consumed on the street.

Councilmember Marino shared that Holy Trinity Church, as a part of their green initiative, have volunteered to help plant the trees at the Samuel Outlaw Blacksmith Shop.

Financial Report:

Mr. Kerbin asked if there were any questions.

Councilmember Spuck pointed out some of the cells are having some formula issues.

Follow-Up on Council Action Items:

Councilmember Marino asked about the recodification efforts. Councilmember Oswald also asked when council would be able to review it. Mr. Kerbin said that he was waiting for Mr. John Custis's, town attorney, review to come back to him.

Council Comments:

Councilmember Bloxom thanked the members for the sewer steering committee for all of their hard work. He also congratulated the Historic Onancock School, stating they look great.

Councilmember Marino thanked the steering committee members as well. She also thanked Mrs. Claire Marie Smith for taking on the St. Patrick's Parade.

Councilmember Krause shared how well the Historic Onancock School has been looking. She thanked council for their continued support of the Onancock Main Street Initiative as well as thanked the members of the steering committee for their hard work.

Councilmember Spuck expressed his interest in a town dog park and also thanked the Historic Onancock School for their great report.

Closed Session, if needed:

None was needed.

Adjourn:

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.



Fletcher Fosque, Mayor



Lisa Fiege, Deputy Clerk