

Town of Onancock
Town Council – Emergency Meeting
May 14, 2020
12:00 p.m.

Call to Order and Roll Call:

Mayor Fosque called the meeting the order at 12:00 p.m. and roll was called. Mayor Fletcher Fosque and Councilmembers Robert Bloxom, Joy Marino, Catherine Krause, Ray Burger and Maphis Oswald were present. All members were present, and a quorum was established.

Mayor Fosque explained that this meeting was being held electronically due to the COVID-19 pandemic; whereas having a public meeting could put council and the public at risk for contracting the virus.

Public Business:

- a. Consider the Implementation of Governor Northam’s Phase One Reopening for the Town of Onancock – Mayor Fletcher Fosque: Mayor Fosque explained that on Wednesday, May 13th, Accomack County voted to petition Governor Northam to be allowed to opt out of moving forward with Phase One of the Virginia Forward Plan which was to begin on May 15th. If the Town of Onancock wanted to be included in the Governor’s Order to allow Accomack County to opt out, then Onancock would also need to petition the Governor since Accomack’s request did not include any of the incorporated towns.

Interim Town Manager, Lisa Fiege, read Accomack County’s letter to Governor Ralph Northam. Mrs. Fiege also read the ESVA Chamber of Commerce letter aloud asking that Onancock not petition the Governor to opt out of Phase One. Mrs. Fiege also heard from the Corner Bakery, Marker 29, C.D. Marsh Jewelers and Blarney Stone Pub asking that Onancock continue forward with Phase One and not petition the Governor to be allowed to opt out. Mrs. Fiege shared the current number of COVID-19 cases in Accomack County (593 cases, 26 hospitalizations, 8 deaths). Mrs. Fiege also mentioned that the testing that was done at Tyson and Perdue was not part of the numbers on the Department of Health’s website yet.

Council discussion followed. Some members expressed concern that with the continual rise of COVID-19 cases in Accomack County that it is too soon to move into Phase One. Other members felt that the businesses will take the necessary precautions to keep their employees and customers safe.

Mayor Fosque explained to council that they need to act to remain closed along with Accomack County.

Councilmember Oswald made a motion to remain closed until May 28, 2020. Councilmember Marino seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Robert Bloxom	YES NO	Joy Marino	YES NO
Catherine Krause	YES NO	Ray Burger	YES NO
Maphis Oswald	YES NO		

The motion failed three to two.

Mayor Fosque opened the floor to public comment.

Mr. Gary Cochran, The Charlotte Hotel, asked council if they would approve him putting outdoor seating in the alley behind his restaurant. Councilmember Oswald asked if they were doing take-out orders.

Mr. Cochran said that they were and that the community support has been over-whelming. The Charlotte Hotel is doing about 80% of the same business as before but the cost of the meals has drastically decreased.

Councilmember Bloxom mentioned that ABC Virginia appears to be granting permission to those restaurants without outdoor seating the opportunity to allow customers to consume alcohol in other places such as parking lots. Councilmember Bloxom stated that council needs to review this further.

Mr. T. Lee Byrd, Ames Street, stated that council made the right call during this tough time.

Adjourn:

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

The meeting adjourned at 12:28 p.m.



Fletcher Fosque, Mayor



Lisa Fiege, Interim Town Manager