

**Town of Onancock
Town Council Meeting
Monday February 27, 2023
7:00 PM**

1) Call to order and Roll Call:

Mayor Fletcher Fosque called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and roll was called. Mayor Fletcher Fosque and Councilmembers Brandon Brockmeier, Ray Burger, Cindy Holdren, Sarah Nock and Maphis Oswald were present. Councilmember Marino was not present. A quorum was established. Town Manager Matt Spuck and Town Clerk Debbie Caton were also present.

The roll was called for Planning Commission. Chairperson Schreiber and Commissioners Bill Bagwell, Brandon Brockmeier, T. Lee Byrd, and Larry Frey were present. Commissioner Tunstall was not present. A quorum was established.

2) The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3) Approve minutes from January 23, 2023 meeting - Councilmember Oswald moved to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Councilmember Brockmeier seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

4) Approve minutes from the Special Meeting from January 18, 2023 - Councilmember Oswald moved to approve the minutes as presented. Councilmember Holdren seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a 5-0 vote.

5) Public Hearings - Public hearing opened at 7:04 PM by Chairperson Schreiber.

- a) Proposed ordinance change: 14-57 Property Maintenance (joint hearing with Planning Commission)** – Town Manager Spuck explained the new ordinance was updated to help deal with complaints from residents. The current ordinance lists definitions of violations but did not expand on how enforcement would be implemented and how to levy fines. The new ordinance has clear consequences and will allow the zoning administrator to follow the necessary guidelines for enforcement.

Public comments:

- A resident from the audience asked what this means in relation to abandoned dwellings that are deteriorating? And will the new ordinance apply to occupied or unoccupied homes? Town Manager Spuck responded that currently there are 21 abandoned substandard homes which will be the first to receive notices.
- A resident from the audience asked what enforcement capacity does the Town have for homeowners that do not respond? Town Manager Spuck responded that there will be a fine of \$100/day and not to exceed \$1,000 total added to the real estate bill, if not paid.

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The Public hearing closed at 7:08 PM.

Chairperson Schreiber recommended the new ordinance to Town Council for approval. The recommendation passed with 5-0 vote.

Councilmember Oswald moved to accept 14-57 Property Maintenance as written. Councilmember Burger seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

Planning Commission meeting closed at 7:12 PM.

- b) Special Use Permit – Short Term Rental: 51 North St** – Because of an advertising error in the Eastern Shore Post this application is tabled until the March 27, 2023 meeting.
- c) Special Use Permit – Short Term Rental: 9 Liberty St** – Public Hearing opened at 7:13 PM – The application meets the intent of short-term rentals. The property is a duplex, and the homeowners will live downstairs and rent the upstairs. Mayor Fosque read a letter from Dick and Jean Freeman expressing their concerns about the rental. The public hearing closed at 7:15 PM.
Public Comments: Mr. Freeman withdrew his opposition after learning the Davis’ will live downstairs.
Councilmember Oswald moved to approve the application. Councilmember Burger seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

6) Public Presentation:

a) Onancock Volunteer Fire Department (OVFD)– Annual Presentation - Joe Pechacek, Fire Chief of the OVFD presented the annual presentation to Town Council. He reported the following statistics:

- OVFD responded to 284 fire calls.
- OVFD responded to 1040 ambulance calls.
- The response time is an average of 10-1/2 minutes.
- Motor crashes account for 70% of the calls.
- A 5-member team responds to most calls.

The focus for 2023 is volunteer recruitment and retention. An addition or renovation to the building is also needed to help with “bunk-in” for storms and overnight calls.

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b) Historic Onancock School – Annual Presentation – Joani Donohoe, Executive Director of the HOS presented the 2022 annual report. A highlight of the presentation is as follows:

- 2022 is the 15th year of the lease with FOS and the Town of Onancock.
- FOS continues to use the premises for community purposes as a non-profit community and cultural campus utilizing indoor and outdoor space.
- FOS has used its best efforts to rehabilitate and develop the property in accordance with the current lease.
- 2022 started slow with lingering concerns about the pandemic. The first community event was held in April 2022. Rents rebounded in the fall and rental space is at full capacity with a wait list.

d) Onancock Main Street – Grant Match Request – Janet Fosque, President of OMS requested matching funds for the following Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) and Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Improvement Grants. Both grants match total would be \$57,500.

Councilmember Nock moved to accept the proposal to provide the funds for the matching grant. Councilmember Holdren seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

Councilmember Brockmeier – yes
Councilmember Burger – yes
Councilmember Holdren – yes
Councilmember Nock – yes
Councilmember Oswald – no

The motion passed with 4-1 vote.

7) Council Action

a) Procurement Policy – Town Manager Spuck reviewed the updated and lawyer approved procurement policy. Councilmember Holdren moved to adopt the procurement policy as written. Councilmember Brockmeier seconded the motion.

Council discussion: Councilmember Holdren asked if the procurement policy meets the federal guidelines because of ARPA funds. Town Manager Spuck responded the guidelines were reviewed by the lawyer and the suggestion was to add them as an addendum to the procurement policy.

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Councilmember Holdren amended her motion to add the federal check list as an addendum to the procurement policy. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

b) Appoint Council representative to Planning Commission – Mayor Fosque resigned from the Planning Commission. The ordinance allows for only one member from Town Council to sit on the Planning Commission. Councilmember Nock nominated Brandon Brockmeier as the town council representation to the Planning Commission. Councilmember Burger seconded the nomination. The nomination passed with a 5-0 vote.

8) Council discussion:

a) 2024 Budget – Council Strategic Initiatives – Town Manager Spuck asked the Council members for their “wish list” items that will add value to the budget. He will cost out the list and present it at the budget workshop. A budget workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, March 15, 2023 at 6:00 PM.

9) Public Comments:

a) Susan McGuire – 12 Joynes St – Ms. McGuire reviewed the town comprehensive plan from the fall of 2021 and noted it called for a small picnic pavilion area. In March 2022, the town council approved a performance pavilion but there was no mention of large concerts. She asked the Town Council “that given the lack of information, the current price tag and resident concerns, is it possible to reevaluate, rescind or amend the approval to build the performance pavilion?” Ms. McGuire requested for a written answer to this question.

b) Kasey Grier – 74 Market St. - Her comments are also in reference to the performance pavilion. Ms. Grier suggested that all new development be stopped until it can be considered in relation to the new town master plan. Ms. Grier stated past projects or additions to the property have not been considered in a systematic way. She thinks this is problematic. Ms. Grier suggested the Town Council and Mayor have office hours in the town office.

c) Jeff Albrechtson – 6 Johnson St – Mr. Albrechtson read a rebuttal letter that was printed in the Eastern Shore Post about the Onancock Resident’s Group. (ORG) The original letter was written by Mark Sinclair. Mr. Albrechtson stated the ORG is operating in good faith by meeting and participating in all scheduled meeting times with FOS. Currently, the website is still under development, but any correspondence can be mailed to the PO box.

d) Dr. Felthousen – 5 Ames St. – Dr. Felthousen updated Town Council about the progress from the meetings with FOS. The power point presentation from the last meeting will be posted on the ORG website. The presentation emphasized the town comprehensive plan that passed in October 2021 and within the plan there is only one mention of a small picnic pavilion. A top

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priority in the comprehensive plan was better communication between the town and the residents. Dr. Felthousen will put together a presentation to Town Council for March 2023.

e) Norman Haggie– Mr. Haggie is a member of the ORG. He officially requested to be on the March 2023 agenda for a public presentation.

f) Rosemary Paparo – 9 Holly St – B – Ms. Paparo presented Town Council with the construction budget and a list of proposed concert events. At the March 2022 meeting the Town Council discussed the request from HOS to build the pavilion it was only discussed for 8 minutes. No questions were asked about the intent of the structure.

g) Rick Turner – 3 Onancock St. – Mr. Turner reassured everyone that the grounds will still have enough space to accommodate other activities including the walking trail once the pavilion is built. The property is 14 acres. The financing is 100% on the FOS and there is no commitment from the town. FOS is a volunteer organization and share the same interest of the town.

h) Beth Temple – 76 Market St – If the HOS is in desperate need of repairs, what is the cost to preserve a 100-year-old building? The issue to maintain the building should be a separate issue from building a performance pavilion. The building needs to be maintained and preserved.

10) Committee Reports

- a) Personnel** – Councilmember Holdren reported the committee met in February and reviewed the personnel policy and are working towards a final draft.
- b) Planning Commission** – Councilmember Brockmeier asked Town Manager Spuck for the updates. He reported the Property Maintenance was finalized with recommendation for council approval. The 2023 objectives were discussed for upcoming meetings.
- c) Waterfront** – did not meet in February.

11) Mayor's Report –

- Mayor Fosque reminded everyone the St. Patrick's Day parade is Saturday, March 18, 2023.
- Mayor Fosque will not be in attendance at the March 27, 2023 meeting. Vice-Mayor Oswald will run the meeting.
- Mayor Fosque would like to establish a policy for public comment time limits.

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12) Town Manager's Report –

- FY 2022 audit was completed by Robinson, Farmer, and Cox. The FY2022 financial statements will be available by the end of March.
- The pump station at the end of Hartman Ave is under construction. HRSD is having issues with material lead times which is delaying progress.
- DPW employee – we have received one application, but the salary request is much higher than budgeted.
- The grant application for VTC will be submitted this week.
- The shared pole agreement with ANEC is signed. The work is complete.

13) Town Council Comments –

- Councilmember Brockmeier – no comment
- Councilmember Burger – no comment.
- Councilmember Holdren – suggested the town office post reminders on the water bill that house numbers are required and should be visible per ordinance.
- Councilmember Oswald – suggested a public service announcement in the paper about house numbers being visible on all homes. She also addressed Ms. Grier's public comment about office hours for council member by stating more than two councilmembers cannot meet at any one time. She wanted to let everyone know she is accessible and will talk with any resident as needed.
- Councilmember Nock – reminded everyone the Façade Grant applications are due Saturday, March 18, 2023.

14) Closed Session – not necessary

15) Adjourn - Councilmember Oswald moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Nock seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:31 PM.


Vice- Mayor, Maphis Oswald


Town Clerk, Debbie Caton