

Town of Onancock
Town Council Meeting Special Meeting
Tuesday, October 15, 2024
7:00 PM

1) Call to order and roll call: Mayor Fosque called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and roll was called. Councilmembers Cindy Holdren, Sarah Nock, Maphis Oswald, Paul Weitzel and Mayor Fosque were present. Councilmember Marino was present via Zoom. Town Manager Matt Spuck and Town Clerk Debbie Caton were also present. A quorum was established.

2) Pledge of Allegiance

Councilmember Weitzel moved to change the regular Town Council meeting from Monday, November 25, 2024, to Monday, November 18, 2024. Councilmember Oswald seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

Councilmember Holdren – aye
Councilmember Marino – aye
Councilmember Nock – aye
Councilmember Oswald – aye
Councilmember Weitzel – aye

The motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

3) Approve Minutes.

a. None scheduled.

4) Public Hearings

a. None scheduled.

5) Public Presentation

a. **Eastern Shore Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ESCADV) – Kasey Walter** – Ms. Walter is the new executive director of ESCADV. ESCADV is the only domestic violence shelter on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. They serve both men and women who are survivors of domestic or sexual violence. ESCADV serves 75-100 men, women, and children per year. The organization is nonprofit; therefore, they operate on grants and contributions from the public. Volunteerism is a huge need. Donations of clothing, bedding and personal hygiene products are also needed. The current services provided cost around \$1,200,000 per year. The services included are counseling, therapy, parenting classes and budgeting classes.

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6) Council Action

- a. Special Use Permit** – Councilmember Holdren moved to adopt the ordinance with changes. Councilmember Oswald seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

Councilmember Holdren – aye
Councilmember Marino – aye
Councilmember Nock – aye
Councilmember Oswald – aye
Councilmember Weitzel – aye

The motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

7) Council discussion:

- a. One way – Liberty St. Extension** – Four to six residents signed a petition asking for a one-way street with 15 MPH speed limit on Liberty Street.
- b. FOS Loan – building evaluation** – Town Manager Spuck was asked at the last meeting to obtain three engineering firms to give a quote on evaluating the building and to prioritize the work that needs to be done. FOS has received quotes for the windows, HVAC, and upgraded electrical. The question on the table is whether town council will approve a loan to make these repairs. After council discussion, Town Manager Spuck will ask for a complete building assessment from roof to basement.
- c. Fence Decision – Oak Tree** – Councilmember Oswald moved to approve the fence quote from Accomack Fence. Councilmember Weitzel seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

Councilmember Holdren – aye
Councilmember Marino – aye
Councilmember Nock – aye
Councilmember Oswald – aye
Councilmember Weitzel – aye

The motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

- d. Gift of decorative trees.** – Town Manager Spuck explained a resident would like to donate up to \$5,000 for at least two sidewalk trees. The owner of 40 Market Street would like a voice in selecting the placement in front of her building. Mayor Fosque suggested the parking lot committee weigh in on the tree placement and design. Councilmember Nock suggested the Tree Board be a part of the conversation too.

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8) **Committee Reports**
a. **None scheduled.**

9) **Public Comment**

- **Rosemary Paparo** – Ms. Paparo worked in the real estate industry for over 50 years where she has reviewed hundreds of engineering reports on buildings. When you hire an engineering firm, the firm should look at the envelope of the building, the outside of the building, the mechanicals, the plumbing and the electrical. The firm should report the condition of the structure and the useful life of the building components. Ms. Paparo thinks these two factors are critical. She thinks the money is well spent for a thorough report considering the dollar amount for a loan in the immediate years and the future.
- **Mark Sinclair** – Mr. Sinclair is an avid supporter of the Farmer’s Market. He is confused as to why there is a plan for the Queen Street parking lot and the winter farmer’s market structure is not part of it. Mayor Fosque confirmed the winter farmer’s market is part of the plan. Mr. Sinclair thinks the engineering firm that is hired to evaluate HOS should have a timeline for when the evaluation is completed. He is concerned this is adding a lot of time to the process. The dirt in front of the pavilion has been graded and now the pavilion is starting to look like the tremendous asset that is it going to be for the community.
- **Geoff Daking** – Mr. Daking suggested a speed bump for the Liberty Street extension. Mr. Daking does not think the proposal from the Becker Morgan Group will be beneficial because FOS may not be able to provide accurate drawings and “as built.”
- **Patsy Felthousen** - Several structural evaluations have been commissioned and completed by FOS. In 2008, FOS hired the Becker Morgan Group to create a schematic design for the school. The school does have detailed drawings. The renderings are detailed and beautiful. In 2011, FOS rehired the Becker Morgan Group to do a structural engineering evaluation of the school. This study is meticulously detailed. The bottom line in 2011 was \$4,500,000. In 2014, the Community Partners firm was hired to create an operational proposal for the school. This report was incredibly detailed, and they repeatedly referenced the 2011 Becker Morgan report. The bottom line in 2014 was \$5,000,000. Most recently, Bancroft Construction was retained to complete an engineering survey. The bottom line was \$5,500,000. All reports indicate at least \$5,000,000 in work needs to be done. This number has not changed in 17 years. We have a beautiful opportunity here to finally recognize the cost of the HOS for the taxpaying residents of Onancock. The cost has never changed. Now is the time

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to discuss if the citizens of Onancock want a tax burden of \$5,000,000 - \$7,000,000 to repair the old school. This decision will take time and several discussions.

- **Dr. Greg Felthousen** – Dr. Felthousen has the 2011 assessment performed by the Becker Morgan Group which is exceedingly detailed. Dr. Felthousen called the firm to get this copy. The report includes cost analysis, drawings of the present status and the proposed future status and a timeline stating which procedures needed to be done first. Dr. Felthousen asked the town council to strongly consider Becker Morgan.
- **Priscilla Hart** - Ms. Hart read a letter from Dana Simson. – see attached
- **Kasey Grier** - Ms. Grier stated that if she was not selected to sit on the planning commission, she will seek other ways to be involved. Ms. Grier expressed concerns about the way the meetings are recorded. Often, Town Manager Spuck cannot be heard. She suggested a lapel lavalier as he speaks more than anybody during the meetings. She also supports the idea of an informed decision about HOS, which comes with obtaining information from many sources. She thinks this project might be too large and complicated for a local contractor.
- **Mary Clements** – Ms. Clements asked if moving the Winter Farmer’s Market from the original spot, will parking spots be lost in the Queen Street lot. Mayor Fosque responded, “four or five parking spots will be lost.” Ms. Clements reminded the town council of the recent ordinance change for a 3-hour parking limit on the street in the downtown district. With this change and the potential of losing parking spaces in the Queen Street lot, it might make parking difficult for the other side of Market Street.
- **Rick Turner** – Mr. Turner thanked everyone who participated in beautifying Custis Park. If the town council is planning a full-scale analysis of the school and its surroundings, the parking lot should be included. His feeling is that this is an incredible opportunity to have something perfected that other towns would love to have as an asset.
- **Joe Hill** - Mr. Hill thinks Onancock’s biggest asset is that it is a walkable community. He lives on the corner of Liberty Street/Ames Street and the speed limit has been an issue for 20 years. A speed mitigation plan needs to be established.

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10) Town Councilmember comments:

- a. Councilmember Holdren – no comments.
- b. Councilmember Marino asked for the date and time of the next parking lot committee meeting. Mayor Fosque stated a meeting will be scheduled when a full set of drawings is available for review.
- c. Councilmember Nock reminded the audience of early voting of the upcoming election on November 5, 2024 will be Saturday, October 26, 2024, and Saturday, November 2, 2024. Councilmember Nock spoke with Town Manager Spuck about a hurricane preparedness plan for the town. She would like to have this as part of considerations moving forward.
- d. Councilmember Oswald thanked Rosemary Paparo for her public comment. Councilmember Oswald likes the idea of the assessment for HOS being done “blindly.” The firms should determine what upgrades need to be done without prompting from earlier discussions or other proposals. This will give the best overall picture to help make an informed decision.
- e. Councilmember Weitzel thanked the audience for attending the meeting.
- f. Mayor Fosque addressed a letter read by Priscilla Hart on behalf of Dana Simson. In this letter, the phrase “shady” was used in reference to the recent Planning Commission appointment. Mayor Fosque explained the delay in an appointment was because the last scheduled meeting fell on Labor Day; therefore, the meeting was canceled. The Planning Commission met in October and selected a candidate for approval by the Town Council at the regular scheduled meeting.

11) Closed Session

- a. None Scheduled.

- 12) Adjourn** – Councilmember Oswald moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Nock seconded the motion. The motion carried with a 5-0 vote.



Fletcher Fosque, Mayor



Debbie Caton, Town Clerk

Planning

From: Dana Simson dsimson2art@gmail.com
To: Maphis Oswald moswald@onancock.com, Joy Marino jmarino@onancock.com, Paul Weitzel Paul.Weitzel@onancock.com, Cindy Holdren choldren@onancock.com, Sarah Nock snock@onancock.com

Sent: Monday, October 14 at 4:11 PM

Dear Council Members

Please read this and add to minutes as my statement.

We cannot attend this meeting as we are in Richmond.

I am hoping to hear that Kasey Grier has been appointed to the Planning Committee. We would be very fortunate to have such a qualified and industrious person considering Onancock's future as well as prudent, forward thinking steps to get there. Kasey attended the last planning meeting, spoke up on impactful issues and felt mostly ignored. She submitted her application over a month ago, which has never been formally acknowledged. She was the first to apply and the delay in filling these positions on the planning board appears to illustrate a desire find others that will conform to the wishes of a few in power. If she has not been awarded a seat, here is one more example of the shady maneuvering.

*Please add
this to minutes of
Oct 15, 2024 meeting*

I appreciate this question answered clearly.

Have Onancock water rights has been given away as per Matt Spuck's letter to Kaubaugh (a permit flipper not a developer)? NOTE: (written without the Mayor's knowledge as the Fletcher said at an earlier Public Town Council meeting)

Is the sale of Onancock's water still under consideration- yes or no?

Do we have the power to control the use of Onancock's water in terms of this proposed development that is currently for sale to future unknown entities?

It seems like little attention is paid to rules and fairness.

I hope more people in the community will begin to see and speak up for transparyency especially as it pertains to actions taken by the town manager.

thank you

Dana

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