

Town of Onancock

Town Council Meeting

Monday, May 19, 2025

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 Lisa Fiege, Omar Grubb, Cindy Holdren, Joy Marino via Zoom, Sarah Nock, Maphis Oswald and Mayor Fletcher Fosque were present. Town Manager Matt Spuck and Town Clerk Debbie Caton were also present.

2) Pledge of Allegiance

3) Vote on meeting minutes from April 14, 2025 - Councilmember Fiege moved to approve the meeting minutes from April 14, 2025. Councilmember Oswald seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

4) Vote on meeting minutes from April 28, 2025 – Councilmember Oswald moved to approve the meeting minutes from April 28, 2025. Councilmember Fiege seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

Councilmember Fiege moved to add a closed session for personnel and real property matters to the agenda. Councilmember Holdren seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

5) Joint Public Hearing – Special Use Permit (SUP) – Farmer’s Market – The public hearing opened at 7:03 PM. The roll was called to open the Planning Commission meeting. Commissioners Jeff Adler, Jim Labadie, John McGowan, Cindy Holdren, Paul Weitzel and Chairperson Kasey Grier were present. The following public comments were recorded.

- a. Beth Temple – Ms. Temple supports the SUP as written for the location of the Farmer’s Market in the Queen Street parking lot.
- b. Lise Geduldig – Ms. Geduldig expressed concern for the Onancock Farmer’s Market lease which has a proposed term of 20 years. Also, there are inadequate insurance provisions that does not account for fire or spill where civil penalty could amount to \$50,000. The proposal is missing two important pieces. The first is anything having to do with a change in circumstances along with reporting obligations. The Town of Onancock carries significant custodial and fiduciary obligations that are not fulfilled by the proposal in its current form. – See full statement attached.

The public hearing closed at 7:07 PM.

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Commissioner Labadie moved to approve the special use permit as submitted with the following conditions. The open-air farmers and artisans' market operating Saturday morning 6:30 AM to 1:00 PM from May through November, overseen by a paid market manager and assisted by volunteers. The market will be limited to the designated area marked on the map included in the application. The vendors will use a designated trash receptacle for the refuse and will leave the lot as they found it. Management will instruct vendors who do not keep their vehicles with them to park on Ames Street rather than in the lot. The special use permit is valid if the open-air market is overseen by the 501c3 registered as Onancock Farmer's and Artisan's Market, Inc. and the organization is in good standing with the IRS and State Corporation Commission. Commissioner Weitzel seconded the motion.

Chairperson Grier expressed concerns that a government agency should not lease assets for the period of twenty years.

The planning commission voted 6-0 to recommend approval of the SUP.

The Planning Commission adjourned at 7:13 PM.

Councilmember Holdren moved to accept the Planning Commission's motion with the conditions in the lease that the SUP is valid up to twenty years. Councilmember Fiege seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilmember Fiege -aye
Councilmember Grubb - aye
Councilmember Holdren -aye
Councilmember Marino - aye
Councilmember Nock – aye
Councilmember Oswald - nay

The motion carries with a 5-1 vote.

- 6) Public Presentation**
 - a. None scheduled.**

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7) Council Action

a. Resolution for 2026 Budget, 2025 Tax Rates, 2026-2030 Capital

Improvements Plan Town Manager Spuck explained the first pass of the budget was presented on March 24, 2025. A special meeting was held April 14, 2025, where budget adjustments were made. A public hearing was held on April 28, 2025, to review the budget and the tax rates. Councilmember Fiege read the resolution (see full resolution in the town council packet) and moved to accept the resolution. Councilmember Nock seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

Councilmember Fiege – aye
Councilmember Grubb -aye
Councilmember Holdren - aye
Councilmember Marino -aye
Councilmember Nock – aye
Councilmember Oswald – aye

The motion carries with a 6-0 vote.

- b. Appoint a commissioner to fill an opening on the Planning Commission- Councilmember Fiege moved to appoint Greg Temple to the Planning Commission effective immediately. Council member Holdren seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

Councilmember Holdren suggested to schedule a Special Meeting in June to discuss ongoing projects and other matters on Monday, June 9, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

8) Council Discussion:

- a. Lease of Queen Street Land to Onancock Farmer's Market – The lease will be discussed in more detail at the Public Hearing.
- b. Option to fund a project at HOS – Town Manager Spuck explained he was asked to produce options for how the town could help or at least raise the funds for the repairs at the Historic Onancock School (HOS).
- i. Councilmember Oswald commented the school's lease states they are responsible for the repairs on the building.
 - ii. Councilmember Fiege suggested the possibility of a hybrid solution.

Council agreed to continue to discuss potential funding streams in a future meeting.

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9) Committee Reports:

- a. **Planning Commission (Cindy Holdren)** – Councilmember Holdren reported the Planning Commission met in May and adopted the by-laws. They also discussed the comprehensive plan process and assigned tasks required to move forward with the plan.
- b. **Economic Development Authority (EDA) (Lisa Fiege)** – Councilmember Fiege reported the EDA has a scheduled meeting Wednesday, June 18, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

10) Community Reports:

- a. **Onancock Main Street (OMS) (Lisa Fiege)** – Councilmember Fiege reported that Maggie Grant, Program Director attended a meeting in Gloucester, VA along with several other Virginia Main Street affiliates. OMS is meeting with downtown businesses to introduce or reintroduce them to the OMS mission by inviting them to a networking event at the Blarney Stone. OMS is restructuring their social media to strategically promote the Town of Onancock. OMS is working with the Eastern Shore Tourism to help direct riders and their guest during the Tour De Shore ride. The two uptown muralists are under contract to begin the mural project. Both murals should be complete by the middle of November.
- b. **Historic Onancock School (HOS) (Sarah Nock)** – Councilmember Nock reported the work on the pavilion is close to completion. The Field Day Fiesta event held on Saturday, May 3, 2025, had over sixty people in attendance. The Blooms and Brushes walking tour is being held Saturday, May 31, 2025 featuring local artist. The gallery will be featured at the Wine Wednesday reception on Wednesday, June 4, 2025. The annual ice cream social is scheduled for Thursday, July 3, 2025.

11) Public Comments

- a. **Margie Labadie** – Mrs. Labadie, Vice President of Friends of Onancock School (FOS), asked for Town Council's support for a plan to help FOS. – See full statement attached.
- b. **Kasey Grier** – Ms. Grier stated she review the FY 2026 budget and attended the budget hearing but finds several mysteries in the budget. Ms. Grier stated the town council should not move forward with support of HOS until there is a budget of the repairs and/or upgrades without a full engineering report. She also stated the EDA needs to meet more than once a quarter.

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- c. **John Morrison** – Mr. Morrison stated the gravel being dropped from Chaney Enterprises' trucks should be their responsibility to clean up. He stated it is not only an eye sore, but it is turning into a safety issue.
- d. **Rosemary Paparo** – Ms. Paparo echoes Ms. Grier's comments regarding HOS and requiring a full engineering report before deciding to help assist with any financial support. All repairs should be bid out to professional contractors.
- e. **Tiara Tracy** – Ms. Tracy has concerns about the times for mosquito spraying and how effective the spraying is for the town. She asked who is monitoring the weather and wind. She thinks more education for the town and for the residents would be beneficial.
- f. **Beth Temple** – Ms. Temple would like to add the Samuel Outlaw Blacksmith building repairs to the agenda at the Special Meeting scheduled for June 9, 2025.
- g. **Clinton Strand** – Mr. Strand asked when the repairs to the basketball court in the Northeast district will begin. He also stated the grass at the Armory is extremely high and the Samuel Outlaw Blacksmith building needs repairs.
- h. **Dana Simson** – Ms. Simson stated the gravel trucks from Chaney Enterprises travel at an excessive speed. Ms. Simson has concerns about the mosquito spraying and how it impacts the natural predators. Ms. Simson stated the concept of HOS is fantastic but funding the repairs is a conundrum and the concept at the school could be moved to one of the empty buildings on Market Street.
- i. **Priscilla Hart** – Ms. Hart thinks different ideas for the HOS should be considered. Ms. Hart has questions about the budget item for credit card fees. Ms. Hart would like more support for the Onancock Volunteer Fire Department.
- j. **Greg Felthousen** – Mr. Felthousen is happy that certain commenters came forward about the real concerns residents have about our community. He is hopeful this type of dialogue will continue. Mr. Felthousen would like to see a plan from FOS with how they plan to fund the repairs at the school.
- k. **Mark Sinclair** – Mr. Sinclair thinks we should use the engineering report already paid for by HOS as opposed to paying for another one at the cost of around \$50,000.
- l. **Judith Grier** – Ms. Grier wanted to bring attention to traffic on North Street and the lack of enforcement. The distracted drivers make it dangerous for everyone. – See full statement attached.

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- m. **Paul Weitzel** - Mr. Weitzel thanked everyone for the discussion about the placement and topic of the uptown murals. He asked town council to use its moral persuasion with OMS for the placement of the murals.

12) Mayor's Report – Mayor Fosque reminded everyone of the Music on the Lawn event being hosted at Ker Place on Friday, May 23, 2025. He also stated Town Clerk, Debbie Caton will be attending a press release in Norfolk with Governor Youngkin announcing the one year kick off to VA Sail 250 being held in Onancock June 12th – June 14th, 2026.

13) Town Manager's Report

- a. **Financial** – see full report in the Town Council packet.
- b. **Manager's Report** – Town Manager Spuck gave updates on the following projects:
 - The 3-Hour Parking signs have arrived and will be installed hopefully this week.
 - A volunteer with FOS called DEQ for a field measurement to verify that a deck being installed would be outside the RPA. DEQ measured and the survey was accurate. The deck will be installed outside the RPA.
 - The open job positions were filled. Morgan Rose was hired to fill the vacancy in the Department of Public Works and Hannah Ayres was hired to fill the Administrative Assistant position.
 - Ready, Set, Go grant provides free engineering for eight crosswalks from Hill Street to downtown. Town Manager Spuck is actively working on this project.

14) Town Councilmember comments –

- a. **Councilmember Fiege** – Councilmember Fiege stated that she was sorry to hear Councilmember Oswald had decided to step down from the Town Council.
- b. **Councilmember Grubb** – no comments.
- c. **Councilmember Holdren** – no comments.
- d. **Councilmember Marino** – Councilmember Marino stated she too will miss Councilmember Oswald. Councilmember Marino expressed concern over the mosquito spraying and asked for Town Council to put that as a discussion item on a future agenda. She also echoed Mr. Strand's concern about the Northeast Park basketball court.
- e. **Councilmember Nock** – Councilmember Nock noted several yards have not been mowed and are overgrown. Councilmember Nock also echoed John Morrison's concerns about the gravel from Chaney Enterprises.

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- f. **Councilmember Oswald** – Councilmember Oswald resigned as a town council member and vice-mayor. Her full resignation letter is attached.

- 15) Closed Session** – Councilmember Fiege moved to enter closed session to discuss personnel matters as allowed by Virginia Code Section 2.237—11(A) (1) and real estate matters as allowed by Virginia Code Section 2.237—11 (A) (3). Councilmember Holdren seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote. Closed session started at 9:09 PM.

Councilmember Fiege moved to exit closed session of this regular meeting of the Onancock Town Council and certify by roll call vote that the item discussed in Closed Session align with the purpose stated in the motion made in Open Session. Councilmember Holdren seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

- Councilmember Fiege – aye
- Councilmember Grubb – aye
- Councilmember Holdren - aye
- Councilmember Marino – aye
- Councilmember Nock – aye
- Mayor Fosque – aye

Closed session adjourned at 9:50 PM.

- 16) Adjourn** – Councilmember Holdren moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Fiege seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 PM.



Fletcher Fosque, Mayor



Debbie Caton, Town Clerk

Lise Geduldig
6 Queen Street
Onancock, VA 23417
May 19, 2025

Onancock Town Council
Attn: Honorable Mayor and Council Members
Town Hall
15 North Street
Onancock, VA 23417

Subject: Special Use Permit – Queen Street Parking Lot

Dear Mayor Fosque and Members of the Town Council,

The “Commercial Land Use Agreement” contained in the Town Council packet has several deficiencies to be addressed before it receives final approval.

Lease term of 20 years - No provisions authorizing the Lessor to terminate the lease for cause or for any reason, placing undue burden on the Town of Onancock, nearby property owners, and Onancock taxpayers.

Inadequate insurance provisions — Paragraph 6c does not account for the possibility of a fire or spill, where the total civil penalty could amount to \$50,000, not including any additional repairs or disposal that may be required.

Missing change in circumstances — The Lease does not properly or adequately anticipate a change in circumstances where the Lessor may wish to repurpose or temporarily suspend occupancy of the Queen Street Lot, nor does it set forth procedures that will be followed in those circumstances. It assumes that current tax and economic policy will continue for a generation.

Missing reporting obligations — Despite repeated claims that the Lessee’s presence is an ‘economic driver’ for Onancock, generating thousands of visitors who support local

commerce, there are no reporting obligations on the use of the property. Without basic reporting it will be impossible to objectively measure economic impact.

Further, we strongly encourage following recommended best practices for consideration of a Special Use Permit in Virginia, including

1. Imposing reasonable conditions in the permit (restricted hours of operation) with clear documentation and conduct thorough impact studies and incorporating those findings into the approval to demonstrate due diligence by the proposed Lessor.
- 2) Documenting findings that the SUP application is consistent with the comprehensive plan (and zoning ordinance).

The Town of Onancock carries significant custodial and fiduciary obligations that are not fulfilled by the proposal. The businesses, residents and taxpayers deserve more rigorous management and oversight of Town assets.

Sincerely,

Lise Geduldig

Margie Labadie
VP Friends of Onancock School

I would like to ask Town Council to support a plan that helps the Friends of Onancock School continue its mission to connect, inspire and embrace our diverse community through artistic, educational, social & recreational means to sustain our legacy for future generations. You know, as we do, that we must find a solution and work together.

We'd like to know that Town Council is with us in helping to bring forth ideas for our success in the future. We do not wish to be at odds with any Town Council member, let alone any member of the Onancock Community.

We have quite a few new members of our Board of Directors and we'd like to think they have brought a new outlook to our future.

Our Executive Director, Corey Kavulich, is actively making improvements daily to increase communication and make more information available to the public about the activities and amenities at the Historic Onancock School. Our trails, our playground, our disc golf course and more continue to be open daily, for free, to all.

We will be opening the Pavilion this season. It will be a place for all - as are our grounds - and a place for all families and friends. We invite everyone to our events! The sand spurs have been beaten back into submission and so we look forward to having you all out in the sunshine to hear some good music.

Please help support the Historic Onancock School and support our efforts not just with your kind words, but with concrete ideas and the accompanying financial support needed to make our future successful.

Thank you.

I ask this be included in the Minutes of tonight's meeting.

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Mayor Fosque, Council Members, Town Manager Spuck and residents, I am here tonight to bring attention to an issue that has been troubling me for some time and that is traffic issues. Particularly on North Street but certainly not limited to it!

We have owned our home, 28 North Street, since 1997 and have lived here full time since 2005. During the course of these 28 years, we've seen lots of changes in Onancock and in the traffic patterns, driving speed and courtesy of those behind the wheel. These days North Street is not only extremely busy but it is the speed, careless and distracted driving that is making it increasingly dangerous for residents, pedestrians, pets and wildlife. Plus, there appears to be a lack of enforcement that accompanies this danger. I routinely walk around town and have noticed that in certain locations the mechanical speed reading sign for "speed limits" is posted but not on North Street. Additionally, we are the recipients of the daily rush to work and post work "gotta get home" from the Commonwealth. Let's not forget the school bus, farm vehicles and assorted motorcycles! And, when the season picks up, golf carts enter the mix as well.

So, what should we do? For a start, I'd like the town to please start enforcing speed limits that are already on the books and focusing on distracted and careless driving. Going forward I'd like to ask the Town of Onancock to invest in traffic calming devices for North Street. No they aren't popular, but neither is getting hit by a vehicle. Something has got to be done.

Additionally, as I study the traffic in Town, I'd like to also bring to the Council's attention several other areas that should be examined. Crockett St. is also in need to some focus. The egress on to Market Street is routinely approached by vehicles that seem to be unaware that pedestrians are walking on the sidewalk; on several occasions while walking the dog I've nearly been creamed. But the Crockett St. exit onto North (near the Blarney Stone) also needs attention. Drivers routinely pull out too quickly and pedestrians are often at risk as it is difficult for both drivers and walkers to adequately see each other; this includes patrons of the DMV. Perhaps better signage or enforcement?

And, last but not least, u-turns on Riley Street. Again, drivers routinely overshoot the shopping area and make a headfirst onto Riley and back out onto North! There have been some close calls.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I look forward to seeing these issues addressed and please feel free to contact me if you need additional information.

Judith Grier, 28 North Street, Onancock, VA 23417 Phone: 757.787.1590

I can no longer tolerate being associated with an ethically bankrupt administration. Therefore I will officially resign as councilmember/ Vice Mayor, as of Tuesday, May 20th at 11:30 a.m.

That will give me time to turn over to the Town of Onancock all of my council related notes and documents to be shredded or just further ignored. I thank those who voted for me in the latest election and I apologize for not sticking it out to the term

end. But when anyone looks back, wondering what happened to

Onancock in the 20's, they'll find only data to tell the story . *Who*

failed the people of this Town will go nameless, as only vote numbers will show and not the sham.

Hopefully I've sown a few seeds of caution along the way. Last bit of advice, be careful of what grows in your garden. Goodnight and good luck.