

# **Town of Onancock Town Council Meeting September 22, 2025 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. Councilmembers Lisa Fiege, Omar Grubb, Cindy Holdren, Joy Marino, Sarah Nock, Ashley Pettit, and Mayor Fletcher Fosque were present. Town Manager Matt Spuck and Town Clerk Debbie Caton and Deputy Clerk Hannah Ayres were also present.

## **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**Councilmember Fiege moved to amend the meeting agenda by adding the Personnel Committee report to Committee Reports and adding a Closed Session to the end of the regular meeting. Councilmember Marino seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote.**

**Councilmember Marino moved to amend the meeting agenda. “Consider motion for boundary line adjustment” has been moved to Council discussion. Councilmember Grubb seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-1 vote with Councilmember Nock voting nay. Mayor Fosque will change the order of the public hearings.**

- 3. Consider the meeting minutes from August 25, 2025** – Councilmember Fiege moved to approve the meeting minutes. Councilmember Marino seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

## **4. Public Hearing**

- a. Public Hearing – Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA)** – The public hearing opened at 7:06 PM. The purpose of tonight’s hearing is to receive public comment of the Onancock Town Council’s intent to approve a boundary line adjustment. In accordance with Virginia Code §15.2-3107, which governs adjustments of boundary lines between a town and a county by agreement, and Virginia Code §2.2-3707, which requires a proper public notice and open meetings, notice of this hearing was published in the Eastern Shore Post on September 5 and September 12, 2025. The property in question is located

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west of Hill Street, south of Liberty Street, and extends to Tower Road. The proposed adjustment is intended to clarify jurisdiction, align service delivery, and ensure accurate representation for the affected properties. The purpose of tonight's hearing is to hear directly from you, the public. When you come forward to speak, please state your name and address for the record, and keep your comments focused on the matter at hand. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes so that everyone can participate.

The following public comments were recorded:

- i. Mark Sinclair – Mr. Sinclair does not support the BLA.
- ii. Bonnie Savage – Ms. Savage does not support the BLA.
- iii. Dan Fitzpatrick – Mr. Fitzpatrick does not support the BLA.
- iv. Bonnie Warren – Ms. Warren does not support the BLA. (Full statement is attached.)
- v. Grayson Williams – Mr. Williams did not receive any notification about the BLA until the public hearing was advertised in the Eastern Shore Post. Mr. Williams does not support the BLA.
- vi. Pam Fitzpatrick – Ms. Fitzpatrick does not support the BLA. (Full statement is attached.)
- vii. Diana Harrison – Ms. Harrison does not support the BLA. (Full statement it attached.)
- viii. Jay Miller – Mr. Miller thinks the BLA should move forward to allow for our Planning Commission and our Town Council to make decisions about the development. This is currently out of the town's hands and Accomack County can build high density town homes as it is currently zoned this way.
- ix. Nancy Hoskinson – Ms. Hoskinson does not support the BLA.
- x. Don Ruthig – Mr. Ruthig thinks the proposal for the BLA was not put together with too much thought.
- xi. Joe Hill – Mr. Hill asked, "why does the town need to annex this property?" He has concerns about traffic control.

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The public hearing closed at 7:34 PM.

Councilmember Nock requested clarification on the current zoning for the land in question and what the options would be if the adjustment were to proceed.

Town Manager Spuck responded Accomack County has the land zoned “village development” which would allow for high density housing. Currently, Onancock does not allow for high density housing.

Councilmember Grubb does not think it is fair that the current homeowners are forced into this property line adjustment.

Councilmember Holdren explained the differences between R1 A-C zoning within town limits.

Councilmember Marino would like to delay the vote for clarification purposes. Councilmember Marino has concerns with the high-density zoning status.

**b. Public Hearing – Change in the Budget of more than 1% of expenditures for School capital improvement.**

– The public hearing opened at 7:48 PM.

The purpose of tonight’s hearing is to receive public comment on a proposed amendment to the Town’s budget. Under Virginia Code §15.2-2507

(“Amendment of Budget”), any locality seeking to amend its budget so that the total expenditures exceed the current approved budget by more than one percent must first publish notice and hold a public hearing. In accordance with that requirement, notice of this hearing was advertised in The Eastern Shore Post on September 5 and September 12, 2025, and we are here tonight to hear from the public. The matter before us involves the Town-owned school building, which is currently leased to a nonprofit organization. Under the terms of the lease, the nonprofit is responsible for “caring for and maintaining” the facilities. There is, however, a difference of opinion: some believe that maintenance under the lease extends to capital improvements and major repairs. In contrast, other believe that as the building remains a Town-owned asset, the Town itself should invest in significant capital improvements to preserve and protect it. The estimated cost of the most

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pressing repairs- primarily the roof and the HVAC system-is approximately **\$800,000**. This potential expenditure would increase the current budget by more than one percent, triggering the requirement for tonight's public hearing. No decision will be made this evening. The purpose of tonight's hearing is to receive public input so that Council can carefully weigh the options. When you come forward to speak, please state your name and address for the record, and keep your comments focused on the subject at hand. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes to allow everyone the opportunity to be heard. The following public comments were recorded.

- i. Rosemary Paparo - Ms. Paparo thinks the Town should cancel the current or renegotiate the current lease with Friends of Onancock (FOS) board. The town must then perform any capital repairs or improvements itself. The town can not give FOS \$800,000. The Northeast District is still waiting for the basketball court and other basic maintenance needs are neglected.
- ii. Phillip Ciaffa – Mr. Ciaffa voiced his opposition to allocating money of this amount without commensurate comprehensive audit and submission of plans for the projected funds. The public is owed some accountability for the expenditure of that kind of money.
- iii. Priscilla Hart – Ms. Hart sent an email to the Town Council which she read into record. (The full statement is attached.)
- iv. Rick King – Mr. King, Board of Directors (FOS), Mr. King explained the differences between a lessee and lessor as it pertains to lease agreements.
- v. Mary Burnham – Ms. Burnham is in favor of the town allocating funds for capital repairs to HOS. She is also in favor of the HOS paying rent within its means and income to help cover these costs. (The full statement is attached.)
- vi. Cheryl Cashman – Ms. Cashman reminded the Town Council that when the lease agreement was put in place several years ago, the citizens were assured it would not cost residents any money.

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- vii. John Orth – Mr. Orth asked if there is any discussion to raise the rents at HOS to help with the \$800,000 capital improvements. The revenue stream from the Performance Pavilion has yet to materialize. Mr. Orth suggested the cost of the repairs be split between the town and HOS.
- viii. Dana Simson – Ms. Simson thinks everyone should be aware of the decisions being made by Town Council that affect everyone. She is confused by why significant amounts of money are spent for some areas in town but not other areas like the Northeast District. There need to be can more consideration on expenditures and how they bring a return to all the taxpayers of Onancock.
- ix. Bobbie Lohr – Ms. Lohr finds it interesting that the Town Council wants to use the reserves to assist with the capital repairs at HOS. She finds it odd because during the winter she witnessed the Department of Public Works (DPW) struggle with a significant water repair and lack of a GIS system to locate the water mains and pipes.
- x. Dorice Matthews - Ms. Matthews would like to see more decorations and such in the Northeast district. The district does see the same benefits as other districts even though they pay taxes too.

The public hearing closed at 8:17 PM.

#### **5. Public Presentation**

- a. **Samual D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop** – Gerald Boyd, Curator gave a presentation of the Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop. Mr. Boyd has been the curator for eleven years and during this time the Samuel D. Outlaw Blacksmith Shop is now listed on National Historic Register, The Virginia Register of Historic Places and partners with the National Park Service and recognized by the National Civil Rights Network. The lunch box event held in August was successful. Mr. Boyd discussed potential repairs and upkeep needed to maintain the building.

Councilmember Fiege moved that the Town Council appropriate \$10,000 from the Town's unassigned reserve funds to the Budling and Streets budget, line item 10-

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6400-8210 (Blacksmith Shop), for the purpose of meeting unbudgeted expenses.” 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 Pettit – aye

The motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

## **6. Council Action**

- a. Funding for body camera replacement.** – Town Manager Spuck explained Chief Williams is requesting money for new body cameras as the existing body cameras are starting to fail. Chief Williams gave a presentation on the desired cameras and discussed the quote from Motorola.

Councilmember Holdren moved that the Town Council appropriate \$23,000 from the Town’s unassigned reserve funds to the Police Department budget, line item 10-5524-6016 (Police Supplies), for the purpose of meeting unbudgeted expenses.” 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 Pettit – aye

The motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

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- b. Discuss OBCA's offer to renovate the Onancock Wharf Sign.** – Bill Burnham, President presented a plan to update the Wharf Sign by replacing the lattice work. OBCA will fund the material and labor required to complete this project.

#### **7. Council Discussion:**

- a. Consider motion for boundary line adjustment.** – Town Council discussion ensued. No vote was taken in consideration on the BLA.

#### **8. Committee Reports**

- a. Planning Commission (Cindy Holdren)** – Councilmember Holdren reported the Planning Commission met on Monday, September 8, 2025. There were several presentations from community groups and their input on the comprehensive plan. A public hearing was held regarding the proposal to develop the property referred to as the Eller Property. This property is 29 acres on Fairgrounds Road behind the old Fosque dental office. There will be a vote at the next meeting on the zoning application scheduled for Monday, October 6, 2025.
- b. Economic Development Authority (Lisa Fiege)** – Councilmember Fiege reported the next meeting is Wednesday, October 1, 2025.
- c. Personnel Committee (Lisa Fiege)** – Councilmember Fiege reported the Personnel Committee met in September. The job descriptions are being updated. A new metrics for the Town Manager's evaluation was also discussed.

#### **9. Community Reports**

- a. Onancock Main Street (Lisa Fiege)** – Councilmember Fiege reported that OMS held a "Retail Matters" seminar with local businesses, community partners inside and outside of town. The event was a success. Two new murals were commissioned and installed at Woody's Autocare and Market Street Grill.

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**b. Historic Onancock School (Sarah Nock)** – Councilmember Nock reported the Performance Pavilion opened on Friday, September 19, 2025, with performances by Johnny Mo and The Fil Rhythm Band with 400 people in attendance. The following upcoming events are scheduled:

1. Wine Wednesday, October 1, 2025.
2. Eastern Shore Car Cruisers Car Show – Saturday, October 11, 2025
3. Craft Show – Saturday, November 1, 2025
4. Champagne and Oyster Fundraiser - Saturday, November 15, 2025.
5. Artisan's Guild Tour – Friday, November 28 and Saturday, November 29, 2025.

**c. Sail 250 (Lisa Fiege/Debbie Caton)** – Councilmember Fiege reported the committee is working on a schedule of events for the weekend to include live music, ship tours and fireworks. The VTC grant is open until October 23, 2025, for up to \$10,000 and the committee will apply for the grant. We are exploring marketing packages to include social media, print ads and billboards.

## **10. Public Comments**

- a.** Priscilla Hart – Ms. Hart was surprised to hear the EDA will not be loaning but granting the money to the HOS. She did hear a complete agreement of EDA members in favor of this decision. She asked for clarity on this subject.
- b.** Bonnie Warren – Ms. Warren does not understand the BLA line and how it pertains to the properties on Tower Road.
- c.** Jim McGowan – Mr. McGowan clarified that the proposed BLA property is currently zoned R20 in Accomack County which is 20,000 square foot lots which are a little less than ½ acre.
- d.** Joe Delany – Mr. Delany asked for the timeline for a meeting with the stakeholders about the Queen Street parking lot.

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**11. Mayor's Report** – Mayor Fosque will attend the VML conference along with Councilmember Fiege in early October. Mayor Fosque reminded the audience about projects that have been completed in the Northeast District.

#### **12. Town Manager's Report**

**a. Financial Report** – See Town Council packet for the full financial report.

**b. Manger's Report** – See Town Council packet for full report but Town Manager Spuck gave updates on the following projects:

- i. Reconnect the fire hydrant on King Street – This project will start Wednesday, September 24, 2025. Doorhangers were posted on all the effected properties.
- ii. Street Signs – a few more parts are on order to begin installation.
- iii. Wayfinding Signs – VDOT has provided information about the designation signage.
- iv. Paving – Crockett Street and Parker Street potholes have been patched. The basketball court in the Northeast District has been paved.
- v. Basketball Court – the equipment is scheduled for delivery this week. Upon arrival, DPW will assemble and install.
- vi. Queen Street Parking Lot – the final plans are being printed. A meeting will be scheduled with stakeholders.

**c. Police Report** – the full police report is available in the Town Council packet.

#### **13. Town Councilmember Comments**

**a. Councilmember Fiege** – no comments.

**b. Councilmember Grubb** – no comments.

**c. Councilmember Holdren**

**d. Councilmember Marino** – Councilmember Marino would like to propose an earlier meeting time for all Town Council meetings.

**e. Councilmember Nock** – no comments.

**f. Councilmember Pettit** – no comments.

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- 14. Closed session** – Personnel - Councilmember Fiege moved to enter closed session to discuss the Town Manager's performance evaluation as allowed by State Code Section §2.2-3711A1. Councilmember Holdren seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Closed session started at 9:38 PM.

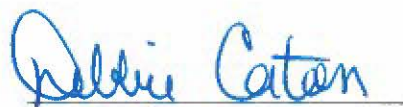
Councilmember Fiege moved to exit closed session of this regular meeting of the Onancock Town Council and certify by roll call vote that the item discussed in Closed Session align with the purpose stated in the motion made in Open Session. Councilmember Marino seconded the motion. A roll call vote was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

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

- 1) Adjourn** – Councilmember Fiege moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Marino seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:52 PM.



Fletcher Fosque, Mayor



Debbie Caton, Town Clerk

Sept-22-2025

Good evening Bonnie Warren

I live at 25133 Tower Road Onancock  
I live with my partner Daniel Killman  
~~affiliated~~

We received a letter on Sept 5 about  
intent to seek a Boundary Line Agreement  
including our property and others.

This would allow more development  
of a large scale, off of liberty, Hill  
and Tower Road. Some property  
owners didn't receive the letter.

Just a suggestion, maybe sending  
certified or at least a return  
address.

On Sept 17 We as a group  
Met with the Board of  
Supervisors Personally the  
Town Meeting Should have been  
First along with being more  
transparent with all parties  
involved

1) Police Protection - No thank you  
Have Accomac Sheriff's Dept.

2.) Limb pick up Sorry but not a

good on either My Neighbors

Constantly pick up sticks. Who

Knows how many they have in

there lifetime.

3. If you a registered Voter  
I Can Vote in the Town Election

Well you got my Attention

yes I havent miss on yet.

I have and Will do my Civic

Duty. Example I Was One  
Town Council in the Town

of Keller. also Mayor For a

Short time before moving to

Onancock.

Boy does the town of

Onancock get lots of

Grants That's Wonderful

Great Job Whoever doing the

Work.

(4)

By putting me and others  
in Onancock you would  
like us to pay (Town  
taxes.)

In my opinion your very  
irresponsible with the  
tax payers money and

grant money. I am not  
sure that a fair trade off,

I will say this matter ~~the~~  
has made me see I have a

give ~~a~~ duty. If you put me  
in the Town of Onancock  
I will Run For

(5)

the<sup>for</sup> next Election

I Am Straight  
For ward, Honest  
and Fully Understand  
the Meaning of  
Conflict of Interest.

Bonnie M Warren

Sept 22 2025

My name is Pam Fitzpatrick. I live at 60 Hill Street, and I'm here joining my neighbors to represent our shared opposition to this proposal.

First, I want to explicitly ensure that Council understands this: the current proposal does not have community support. In fact, owners of 9 of the 21 affected lots submitted letters stating their opposition at last week's Accomack County Board of Supervisors meeting. We're doing so with the backing of the law.

Section 15.2-3107 of the Commonwealth Code states if the owners of at least one third of the affected parcels object to the change, they shall be permitted to intervene in the proceedings as prescribed in § 15.2-3108 and show cause why the boundary line should not be changed.

So let's talk about "cause" to reject this proposal based on the limited information that's been shared with us to date.

- On a recent news broadcast, the Town Manager stated that this proposal was prompted by the request of a single property owner. In other words, this plan benefits a single property owner rather than the greater good, and to the detriment of other property owners.

- The letter states that our taxes could increase by 50%, which could undermine the property values.

- And finally, the letter lists benefits that would come from this tax. Let's review those:

- Police service. We already have it. Are you telling me that my neighbors directly across the road at 59 Hill Street, which is not included in town, will have different or "less" police service than me?

- Limb and branch pickup. Not worth hundreds of dollars per year.

- Water and sewer. Here we have a double-bind: We are paying to be included in the system, yet we are not being required to connect now because there is no access, but we are also not promised that we won't be required to link in the future. Significant financial risk for those of us who have drilled wells and installed septic.

- Run for town office. We can already run for county office.

In fact, there's a legal term that we can use to describe these negative impacts-- "particularized harm." We're not lawyers, so we've been using another word: unfairness.

To be clear: None of us oppose the landowner obtaining a redrawn boundary for their property alone, so they can sell or develop their property as they wish. We also understand that the Town wants to prepare for its future. But we think that the only fair way to do that is by bringing us to the table, so we can provide suggestions on how to create a win-win plan. That is not

We ask that you either reject this plan or table your vote and require the Town Manager to meet with affected property owners to answer our questions and arrive at mutually agreeable solutions.

Thank you. I am turning in a list of property owners in opposition to this plan as well as a list of questions that we would like to have answered.

Additional: Only 5 of the 21 affected lots are undeveloped.

Diana Harrison

Thank you to the Board for the opportunity to speak on behalf of my mother Nancy Hoskinson. I want to state that she is against the new BLA as depicted. She is not against a BLA, just the current one. September 5, 2025, Nancy Hoskinson received mail from the Town of Onancock giving her notice of a BLA that would incorporate her property into the town limits. This letter obviously raised several questions due to its shock value and lack of transparency.

Question 1 - What are the benefits she would receive?

police protection, road maintenance and limbs pickup according to the town manager.

Question 2 - What instigated this BLA? 8/25/25 - One property; interview

Question 3 - Why is 19557 Cashville Road specifically part of this BLA when it does not abut the field in question?

Question 4 - Why weren't the other houses on Tower Road included in the BLA, particularly since the one at the end does abut the field?

Question 5 - What is the rush? Why make the affected property owners pay a decade of taxes prior to any action happening with the property in question? (example One new subdivision has been approved in Onancock, north of Kerr Street on Jackson Street.....Although approved in 2007, no new infrastructure, water, sewer or the utilities or roads have been started...." ) Again what is the rush

Questions 3 and 4 have gone unanswered.

Through this decision, you have created a negative impact on a particular group of individuals the following ways:

Placing a sudden increase on the financial burden of individuals who did not have a voice in the matter (at least when the matter was decided)

Creating a "double tax" situation for affected home owners which could be less appealing to potential buyers

The property owners could lose access to county services they now receive if they are now part of the town (IE police) and the town's services may not be up to par with the county services

What can the Town do to make the affected property owners "whole" again because Trust has been lost due to lack of transparency and a variety of ~~answers to the same questions or no, answers at all.~~ Unanswered questions

1. Create a tax moratorium for these owners who would have bought in town if they wanted to live in town
2. Adjust the BLA to only include the field

If these are not an option then I would suggest hiring a mediator to help the town and the affected property owners to reach a compromise. That is certainly less adversarial and less costly than going to court.

Closed Session - approached  
Closed session - for survey budget

7/14

Where is detailed plan for this property?

PLEASE INCLUDE IN MINUTES OF SEPT. 22, 2025 MEETING

Good afternoon,

The EDA is considering an \$800K loan and /or grant to FOS

for repairs to the HOS building. Monies would be taken from our reserve fund. Is Onancock so flush with cash that we can allocate \$800K to one project? No.

I am opposed to the use of \$800K of our reserve fund for one project.

We have aging infrastructure throughout town, and if we deplete our reserves for one project, HOS, we will face a tax assessment when we have other emerging needs. Every taxpayer will bear the burden of a decision to grant/loan \$800k to FOS. It is just a matter of time.

The town council should be the driving force here in representing their constituents, the taxpayers, and in making sound financial decisions on all property belonging to the town.

It is time for the town to take ownership and control of the

HOS property, and to terminate the existing FOS lease. Renegotiate the lease, raise rents, occupy a portion of the building, and include the HOS property as an integral part of our parks system, for enjoyment of all taxpayers, and the community.

The town owns the building, and the land and the pavilion.

FOS is the lessee with an age-old lease, \$1. per year. FOS charges it's tenants below market rates, another reason that FOS asks the landlord to pay for repairs for which they are responsible.

(over)

We have addressed the repairs needed at HOS, and keep going back and forth about who is responsible to pay for repairs, and what the repairs will cost.

Yet we have only addressed HVAC, and ROOF. Do we have expert opinion about the condition of the building? No. Do we know that after pouring money into these repairs, we won't find mold, structural issues, etc.? No.

I am not opposed to repairing the building, but we need a better plan for the future of HOS. We need a new approach in looking at the HOS. It is valuable real estate and an asset, with or without FOS. What is the long-term plan for the property? Is there a better use of the property?

I respectfully ask the town council to set aside personalities, follow advice of counsel, consider the likely burden on taxpayers, and to focus on the best way to capitalize on the HOS property going forward.

There are many changes taking place in our town at present. There are storefront opportunities available. Our downtown district would benefit if the retail businesses and artists, now at HOS, relocated to Market, North or King Streets.

This is an opportunity to look at the big picture and to plan carefully for use of the HOS and for our town's future.

Priscilla Hart

21 Market Street

\$ 800g

I'm Mary Burnham, 46 Kerr Street, and co-owner of Burnham Guides Paddle & Bike at Onancock Wharf.

I'm in favor of the town allocating funds for capital improvements at Historic Onancock School, specifically heating and roofing. I'm also in favor of the School paying rent, within its means and income to help cover these costs.

In recent years, the School has been portrayed as a liability by some, and I would like you, the town council, to consider it as a valuable, income-producing asset. As a resident and business owner, I ~~also~~ see the positives in preserving this historic property, and here's why:

-The School and its grounds is one of the few waterfront recreation areas on the entire Eastern Shore the public can access for free. There's a Nature Trail, Disc Golf, soccer fields, playground, music pavilion, 14 acres in all, all maintained by FOS at little cost to the Town.

-We send people to HOS from our kayak shop on a daily basis, particularly families with young children as there is very little else for them to do here. Visitors are looking for outdoor recreation.

-I've spent my career as a travel writer and kayak guide, and I can tell you there is a measurable Return on Investment to tourism. In addition, the physical and mental health benefits of having access to recreation for our residents has value that cannot be monetized.

-The School is an enviable asset for a town of our size: An art and cultural center, a new playground, a LOVE sign that puts Onancock on state maps, more than 20 rent-paying tenants and a state-of-the-art music pavilion which drew nearly 400 people to Friday's Grand Opening, featuring Onancock's own exceptionally talented musicians.

-The School offers: Art, History, Music, Family activities, outdoor recreation. For those of us who make our living from tourism, HOS checks all the boxes.

-Friends of Onancock School has a 20-year track record maintaining and improving this town-owned property.

-NOW is the time for the Town to invest in its future, specifically heating and a new roof, which are vital to the viability of this 100-year-old building.

My question to Town Council: If this is not done, what is the plan for the property? Sell it? Let it crumble? As example, we all drive by the abandoned Central High School on Route 13 in Painter. THAT would be the future of HOS.

PLEASE allocate the funds to preserve this valuable asset for our future generations.

And thank you for all that you do for our Town.