

**Onley Town Council  
Special Meeting  
Minutes of May 16, 2022  
Onley Town Office, 25308 Lankford Highway, Onley VA**

Council Members Present:      Rose Pierson, Vice-Mayor  
   Brian Corbin  
   Billye D. Custis  
   Bill Ferguson  
   Claudia Harmon  
   Woody Zember

Council Absent:                      Matt Hart, Mayor

Staff Present:                         Carl Bundick, Town Attorney  
   Lt. E. J. Long, OPD  
   Jamye Salazar, Clerk/Treasurer

**Call to Order**

Vice-Mayor Pierson called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

**Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance**

The invocation was given by Councilman Ferguson and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilwoman Claudia Harmon.

Ms. Pierson stated that before the agenda is adopted, Mayor Hart has requested that Ms. Salazar read a statement from him. A copy will be attached.

**Adoption of Agenda**

Mr. Corbin asked to add the following items: **6A.** Mosquito Spraying, **6B.** New Building Committee and **6C.** Police Department Update.

**Motion: To adopt the agenda with the addition(s) by Billye D. Custis and seconded by Claudia Harmon.**

**Roll Call Vote:** Corbin- yes; Custis-yes; Ferguson- yes; Harmon – yes; Pierson – did not vote; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

**Proposed 2022-2023 Budget**

In the matter of the real estate tax increase, Ms. Salazar stated that she did research the matter and pulled up the information, but it was not easy to comprehend so with Mayor Hart’s permission, she asked Mr. Bundick to investigate the matter. Mr. Bundick has spoken with Margaret Lindsey from Accomack County and is still waiting on an answer. Ms. Bliss offered a suggestion which Council considered but ultimately did not accept. After much conversation, Council did not change the amount of proposed taxes. Ms. Salazar presented Council with a list from Arlene Evans stating the changes that she (Ms. Evans) feels need to be made to the proposed budget before it is adopted. Ms. Bliss stated that she doesn’t feel that we should consider Ms. Evans’ suggestions since there is no public comment tonight. She also pointed out the cost of making Ms. Salazar a full-time employee. Ms. Custis stated that she feels the budget is the job of the Town Manager and since we do not have one, the mayor should be handling it. Ms. Harmon asked to state that as a member of the Budget Committee, nothing was done with malice or with special interests. Ms. Custis agreed and said that she felt blindsided with the list at the last meeting. Ms. Bliss said that she feels that they worked very hard on the budget adding that it is

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a starting point. She further stated that she feels that it is unfair that Mayor Hart can send a statement to be read in his absence. She added that going forward, she just may start doing the same. She once again mentioned the cost of making Ms. Salazar full-time as well as Mario Hernandez. Council discussed striking Mayor Hart's statement from the minutes. No decision was made.

**Motion: To adopt the 2022-2023 Proposed Budget by Brian Corbin and seconded by Woody Zember.**

Ms. Bliss asked that Mr. Corbin consider adopting with the addition of the ARPA funds. Ms. Salazar stated that adding in the ARPA funds would be a \$160,000.00 difference and we will need to amend the budget to add that. Ms. Bliss would like to see something verifying the statement that Ms. Evan's made at the last meeting about spending the ARPA funds. Council once again discussed the possibility of amending the budget to add the ARPA funds and any other amendments that may be necessary. Ms. Salazar reminded Council that she is concerned that the amount of real estate taxes may need amending as well, adding that the budget can be amended at any time, if necessary. Ms. Bliss once again mentioned the cost of making Ms. Salazar full-time stating that she believes it to be about \$14,000.00. Mr. Corbin stated that he feels we need to approve this budget so we can move forward and make amendments later. Ms. Custis asked Mr. Bundick what the ramifications of Council are accepting the budget as it is. She added that she wishes he would speak up more and let us know if we are doing something wrong. Mr. Bundick does not believe there are any ramifications since this budget has been properly advertised. Ms. Bliss said that she feels that it seems sneaky and underhanded to approve a budget knowing that it will have to be changed. Mr. Bundick reiterated that he believes everything has been done properly. Ms. Custis stated that she had no idea that Ms. Salazar was going to go full-time, and she feels that we should hold off on doing that and change the motion to a later time. Ms. Salazar stated that she can stay on as a part-time employee, but she needs to work less hours than she has been working. Ms. Custis asked Ms. Bliss if she is okay with the budget if Ms. Salazar is willing to stay part-time and that amount doesn't need to be added. Ms. Bliss said she is and asked Ms. Salazar how much of her job consist of town manager duties. Ms. Salazar said that she cannot answer that but there may be a few things. Ms. Bliss asked Ms. Salazar if we can now run an ad for a town manager. Ms. Salazar responded that she cannot without direction from the Mayor and Council, and she doesn't feel that we should be discussing it since it is not an agenda item. Ms. Custis stated that she made a motion at the last meeting to start the process. Ms. Salazar agreed with Ms. Custis.

**At this time, a vote was taken on the motion: Roll Call Vote:** Corbin- yes; Custis-yes; Ferguson- yes; Harmon – yes; Pierson – did not vote; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

**Proposed Capital Budget**

**Motion: To accept the Proposed Capital Budget as presented by the Budget Committee by Brian Corbin and seconded by Woody Zember.**

Ms. Custis asked Ms. Bliss to speak on the matter of the ARPA funds and the Capital Budget. Ms. Bliss stated that while it will be great to be able to use ARPA funds for the sidewalks and the new PD vehicle, this ensures that we can move forward in any case.

**Roll Call Vote:** Corbin- yes; Custis-yes; Ferguson- yes; Harmon – yes; Pierson – did not vote; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

**Mosquito Spraying**

Mr. Corbin stated that Council has received two proposals from Billy Joe Tarr for mosquito spraying. He stated that he has spoken with Mario Hernandez, and he is interested in becoming a licensed sprayer. Mr. Tarr is willing to train Mario along with initially spraying the town himself. He added that we can use the current public works truck for spraying – we will just need to cover the sprayer with a tarp and/or

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disable the power. Council instructed Mr. Corbin to contact Theresa Pittman at the Ag Dept. for more information.

**New Building Committee**

Mr. Corbin reported that the Building Committee now consists of Ted Bliss, Woody Zember and Doug Young. He stated that Ned Finney has requested to be added to the committee. The committee plans to proceed with researching the possibility of a pole building.

**Motion: To accept the resignations of Rose Pierson, Arlene Evans, and Richard Evans by Billye D. Custis and seconded by Claudia Harmon. Roll Call Vote:** Corbin- yes; Custis-yes; Ferguson- yes; Harmon – yes; Pierson – did not vote; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

**Motion: To appoint Ned Finney and Brian Corbin to serve on the Building Committee along with Ted Bliss, Woody Zember, and Doug Young by Billye D. Custis and seconded by Bill Ferguson. Roll Call Vote:** Corbin- yes; Custis-yes; Ferguson- yes; Harmon – yes; Pierson – did not vote; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

**Police Dept. Update**

Lt. Long introduced Ofc. Ira Sacks to Council adding that he comes to us from ACSO and has several years of law enforcement experience. He also reported that today he received notice that the judge has ruled in his and the Town's favor in the lawsuit stemming from his vehicle accident last May.

Mr. Corbin stated that he forgot to ask if we should add Council Comments or if anyone wants to make a comment. Ms. Custis asked if Mayor Hart's statement will be struck from the minutes. Mr. Bundick said that Council is certainly within their rights to do that since there is no public comment tonight. Ms. Salazar stated that is not something that we commonly do – the minutes are a true representation of the meeting. Mr. Bundick suggested that Council may want to consider appointing a Sergeant at Arms for meetings.

Fred Gardner asked to speak. He stated that it is obvious that the mayor being able to hire and fire at will is not working for the town. He suggested Council make sure that the charter and any charter changes currently proposed state that the Council is involved in making those decisions.

**Adjourn**

**Motion: To adjourn at 6:52pm by Woody Zember and seconded by Bill Ferguson.**

**Roll Call Vote:** Corbin- yes; Custis-yes; Ferguson- yes; Harmon – yes; Pierson – did not vote; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Jamye Salazar, Clerk/Treasurer

  
Matthew D. Hart, Mayor