

**Onley Town Council
Regular Monthly Meeting
Minutes of January 9, 2023
Onley Town Office, 25308 Lankford Highway, Onley, VA**

Council Members Present: Ned Finney, Mayor
Daniel Bloxom
Brian Corbin
Bill Ferguson
Rodney Lang
Woody Zember

Council Members Absent: Katelyn Hill

Staff Present: Carl Bundick, Town Attorney
Lt. E. Jess Long, OPD
Greg Maggard, Town Manager
Jamye Salazar, Clerk/Treasurer

Call to Order

Mayor Finney called the meeting to order at 5:59pm.

Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Bloxom, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Corbin.

Statement from Mayor Finney

Mayor Finney stated that his main goal when he ran for the office of Mayor was to get back the unity that we once had as a Council. He said that he plans to keep the meetings as short as possible. He thanked former Vice-Mayor Rose Pierson for stepping up and doing a great job running the meetings when former Mayor Hart did not perform his duties. He thanked the former Council Members that are no longer serving as well. Lastly, he introduced a new employee, Officer Nathan Anderson.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Corbin asked to re-word Item J. under New Business to read: 2023 RE/PP Tax Relief Discussion.

Motion: To adopt the agenda with the change by Woody Zember and seconded by Daniel Bloxom.

Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

At this time, Mr. Bundick asked Ms. Salazar to confirm that all Council Members have been properly sworn in. Ms. Salazar confirmed that everyone has taken their oath of office.

Old Business

The Chief of Police’s job description will be discussed at next month’s meeting.

There was a discussion about what to do with the town-owned property on Front Street. The options are to remove the concrete pad, install a fence or both.

Motion: To rescind the previous motion of Council to demolish the concrete pad and instead entertain bids for fencing the property by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Brian Corbin. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom - yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

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New Business

Motion: To appoint Bill Ferguson as Vice-Mayor by Brian Corbin and seconded by Woody Zember. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- abstain; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Council will read the Code of Ethics & Model of Excellence and discuss it at next month's meeting. Mr. Bundick said that no one is required to sign this document but for the smooth operation of the Council it is good practice. Ms. Salazar stated that these documents are presented for adoption at the recommendation of the VML – one is adopted by the Council as a body and the other is signed by each individual Council Member.

Motion: To adopt the 2023 Council Meeting Schedule by Woody Zember and seconded by Bill Ferguson. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Motion: To appoint Greg Maggard to the position of Town Manager, Carl Bundick to the position of Town Attorney and Jamye Salazar to the position of Clerk/Treasurer by Brian Corbin and seconded by Woody Zember. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Motion: To appoint Brian Corbin to the position of Council Liaison to the Planning Commission by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Woody Zember. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- abstain; Ferguson- yes; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Motion: To adopt the Resolution of Bank Signatories (changing bank signers) by Brian Corbin and seconded by Rodney Lang. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Council asked Mr. Maggard to review the list (provided by Ms. Salazar) of past and current committees and make recommendations about how to proceed at the February meeting. Ms. Salazar stated that should committees be created; Council needs to establish uniformed guidelines for the committees to follow. Ms. Salazar also reported (at the request of Rose Pierson) that the Community Spirit Committee held a Fire Prevention workshop for about 30 attendees. It is Ms. Pierson's wish that Council will continue with the Community Spirit Committee as well as allow her to continue serving as a member. Before Mr. Corbin spoke on the matter of tax relief/suspension, Mayor Finney reminded everyone that we are just having a discussion – nothing has been decided. Mr. Corbin said that he read that the City of Williamsburg was able to suspend taxes for their residents and he feels that our town can afford it and it will benefit everyone in town.

Motion: To have the Town Manager, Clerk, and Attorney investigate this and see what the mechanics will be to do so by Brain Corbin.

Mr. Bundick stated that he will need to investigate but it is easier to reduce taxes than to add/increase them. He thinks it may be as simple as a vote of Council. Ms. Salazar suggested that we may need to adopt a resolution to that effect. However, she did express her concern about the impact on Accomack County since they currently assess and create our tax bills. Mr. Maggard asked for the opportunity to research the matter. Council agreed.

Mr. Corbin rescinded his motion at this time.

Mr. Maggard presented Council with a Resolution of Support for the Eastern Shore Rail to Trail project.
Motion: To adopt the Resolution of Support for the Eastern Shore Rail to Trail project by Brian Corbin and seconded by Woody Zember. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

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Mr. Maggard reported that Mario Hernandez has left his position as part-time Public Works employee. This has afforded him the opportunity to do a labor analysis for the position. He is of the opinion that the current workload can be completed in 32 hours or less. He asked Council to decide how they want to proceed. Council decided to make the position full-time and asked Mr. Maggard to create a job description.

Motion: To advertise for a full-time public works person with salary to be negotiable by Brian Corbin and seconded by Rodney Lang. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Commission/Committee Reports

Planning Commission – There was no report. The Commission did not meet in December.

Department Reports

Police Report & Schedule

Lt. Long reported that Officer Anderson is almost ready to work independently – he expects that to happen within the week. The new Ford patrol vehicle should be available for pick-up later this month.

Motion: To adopt the February 2023 schedule by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Brian Corbin. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Salazar gave her report. A copy is available upon request.

Motion: To pay the payables by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Rodney Lang. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom - yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Motion: To transfer \$75,000.00 from the PNC regular checking to Taylor Bank money market by Rodney Lang and seconded by Brian Corbin. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Town Manager/Zoning Report

Mr. Maggard reported that he is working on the personnel policy and the renovations for the police department. He suggested that everyone on Council get a town email account and use that for town business to separate business emails from personal. He will get back to Council about the trailer purchase since a decision has now been made about Public Works.

Attorney's Report

Mr. Bundick reported that he is still working on the delinquent tax letters. He also has an appointment with the magistrate to act on the delinquent meals tax issue.

Consideration of Minutes

Motion: To adopt the minutes of the December 5, 2022, Regular Meeting by Brian Corbin and seconded by Rodney Lang. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Public Comments

Billye D. Custis asked what the County does in the matter of tax relief and suggested that Council check with them. She asked that Council think about all the expenses that the Town has before suspending

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taxes, noting that it will affect the budget. She said that the town email accounts for Council is a great idea because everything is covered under FOIA. She asked where things are with the audit. Ms. Salazar responded (with Mayor Finney's permission) that she has tried to get answers from them and has not had any luck so we may need to pursue other options.

Claudia Harmon said that she is very upset with the amount of money that has been spent tonight – the first meeting of the new year and with a new Council. She said that we went from having a public works contractor to having an employee with us for 14 months. She reiterated that Mr. Maggard said (earlier in the night) that everything was being done in 32 hours or less, but you have chosen to make this a full-time position. She added that she feels going from \$35,000.00 to \$53,900.00 is a lot. She requested that the list of public works duties be emailed to her. She asked if the schedule that was adopted tonight is still in keeping with Monday night meetings. Ms. Salazar stated that it is unless there is a holiday.

Ms. Harmon asked when it is appropriate for the public to voice their opinions on decisions that are being made via motions throughout the meeting. She said that she would have liked to have spoken about the decision that was made about the public works employee, but she was unable to do so earlier. Janet Turner introduced herself as the Accomack County School Board representative.

Council Comments

Mr. Ferguson thanked everyone for coming tonight. He thanked everyone for the vote of confidence in choosing him as Vice-Mayor.

Mr. Bloxom thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Mr. Zember said he thinks we accomplished a lot in a short amount of time. He thanked everyone for coming tonight.

Mr. Lang said that he knows we're not always going to agree on everything but he hopes that we can still be respectful of each other. He assured Ms. Harmon that he is taking her feelings into consideration.

Mr. Corbin agreed that it is nice to have a Council that seems to be "clicking together". He feels that's the way to accomplish things. He added that we need some things and if that means spending some money, he feels we are headed in the right direction.

Mayor Finney thanked Ms. Custis and Ms. Harmon for their input tonight as well as their previous service to the town. He thanked Mr. Bundick and the other employees for their help.

Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn (7:24pm) by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Brian Corbin. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom - yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – absent; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Respectfully Submitted,


Jamye Salazar, Clerk/Treasurer