

**Onley Town Council**  
**Regular Monthly Meeting**  
**Minutes of September 4, 2024**  
**Onley Town Office, 25308 Lankford Highway, Onley, VA**

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

Staff Present:                              Carl Bundick, Town Attorney  
   E. J. Long, Chief of Police, OPD  
   Susan Rillo, Town Manager  
   Jamye Salazar, Clerk/Treasurer

**Call to Order**

Mayor Finney called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

**Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance**

Councilman Corbin gave the invocation. Vice-Mayor Ferguson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Adoption of Agenda**

Mr. Corbin asked to add under New Business, item #7E. Council Notifications.

**Motion: To adopt the agenda (with the addition) by Kate Hill and seconded by Woody Zember. Roll**

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

At this time, Chief Long introduced a new hire, Officer Phillip Barringer.

**Commission/Committee Reports**

**Planning Commission** – Mr. Corbin said that at last Council meeting, copies of the draft Comprehensive Plan were given to Council, and Council members were supposed to email Ms. Bliss any changes or suggestions. Ms. Salazar reported that she sent the draft plan to Elaine Meil, A-NPDC, at the request of Council. Ms. Salazar has forwarded Ms. Meil’s recommendations to Ms. Bliss and Mr. Corbin. Mr. Corbin said he does not have anything new to report.

**Public Works Garage Committee** – Ms. Rillo reported that JHP Construction has started digging out the foundation. All utility checks have been done at this time. She said that things are happening on schedule. Mr. Corbin asked about the plumbing work. Ms. Rillo stated that we will be using Bundick’s since they have done all the other work. Mr. Corbin asked about the costs. Ms. Rillo did not have that information at this time. There was a discussion about who will be doing the electrical work. Ms. Rillo said that she has had trouble in the past with getting an electrician to help us. Mayor Finney said he would like to see us purchase a generator for this building and the police department as well as electric door openers. Ms. Rillo would also like an alarm system installed at the garage.

**Old Business**

Chief Long told Council that the new patrol vehicle has been delivered. He presented Council with two estimates for the vehicle upfit. Copies will be available upon request.

**Onley Town Council  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
Minutes of September 4, 2024**

**Onley Town Office, 25308 Lankford Highway, Onley, VA**

**Motion: To accept the estimate from Nottingham & Sons for the upfit of the police vehicle (in the amount of \$12,357.75) by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Kate Hill. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin-yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED**

Mr. Ferguson asked Chief Long if we are on the rotation for the radio upgrades. Chief Long said that they are doing the 911 system first and then the fire departments. He believes that the various police departments will be at the bottom of the list, so he has not been given a date at this time, but he is aware and so is Mr. Nottingham.

Chief Long reported that the in-car camera systems have been shipped and we were supposed to have a meeting yesterday with Axon to set them up. Chief Long believes that the meeting happened, but he was not part of it. At this point, we are just waiting for Axon to get here and do the installation.

Ms. Rillo presented Council with estimates for an 18' panel tree for the park, a 3' tree topper and 22 lighted Christmas trees for the utility poles. She gave Council the option of two different trees. A copy of the estimates will be available upon request. Ms. Rillo expressed her concern about Percy Smith getting the 18' tree up by himself. Ms. Salazar suggested that when we put the installation of holiday lights out for bid, we add the installation of the park tree as well. Council agreed. Mayor Finney said that we may need some underground wiring done at the park for the tree. Mr. Corbin said that he thought we planned to install some new lights around town along Coastal and Main Street. Ms. Rillo will research that with ANEC.

**Motion: To purchase 28 6' traditional Christmas tree lights for the utility poles, the 18' panel tree and the 3' topper by Rodney Lang and seconded by Daniel Bloxom. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin-yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED**

#### **New Business**

Mr. Ferguson asked that Council review the Town's Procurement Policy, noting that this is something that may take some time to review and possibly change. Mr. Corbin agreed and said that the whole document needs to be re-done. Mr. Bundick suggested that Council form a committee, adding that Council needs to decide what their comfort level is with spending limits for employees. He also expressed concern that there seems to have recently been some purchases made that may have been done so by breaking up one purchase into several smaller ones. Lastly, he does not feel comfortable with the current wording that allows for purchases to be approved by the mayor and only one or two Council Members or by three Council Members. He noted that if the mayor and two Council Members or three Council Members are discussing purchases, that would be considered a meeting and is not allowed. It was noted that while this has not actually happened, it is suggested and allowed in the wording of the current procurement policy. He also thinks we need to remember to use competitive bidding. Ms. Rillo read some information from the Virginia Procurement Act, mentioning 30,000.00 and \$50,000.00 thresholds, not referencing competitive bidding. Mr. Bundick agreed that we need to use Virginia Code, but he does not feel that anyone should spend that kind of money without competitive bidding and appropriate approvals. Council seemed to agree. Ms. Salazar explained the difference in acquiring estimates and advertising for bids. She further explained that the difference in these two things may be based on the thresholds for spending. She added that in the past, once we solicited bids and no bids were received, then we attempted to acquire estimates. Ms. Rillo said that most Town Manager's have a \$10,000.00 approval threshold. She added that if an emergency arises, that will allow the Town Manger to handle it. Mr. Corbin reiterated that we need to follow the current policy – those are the rules. Mr. Corbin, Mr. Bloxom and Mr. Lang expressed interest in serving on the Procurement Policy committee.

**Onley Town Council  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
Minutes of September 4, 2024**

**Onley Town Office, 25308 Lankford Highway, Onley, VA**

**Motion: To appoint a committee consisting of the Town Manager and Council Members Corbin and Bloxom to revise the Procurement Policy as per the recommendation of the Attorney and Town Council by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Woody Zember. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -abstain; Corbin- abstain; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Ms. Salazar asked Council's permission to issue an RFP for the 2023-2024 audit. She stated that she has emailed Robinson Farmer Cox Associates, and they are interested in possibly performing both audits at the same time. She added that she has already started the process of pulling the information requested for the 2022-2023 audit.

**Motion: To issue an RFP for the 2023-2024 audit by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Kate Hill. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Ms. Rillo told Council that she is planning the following Fall/Winter events: **Trunk or Treat** on October 31, 2024, with a rain date of November 1, 2024, **Veterans Day Celebration** on November 9, 2024, **National Night Out** on October 1, 2024, and a **Tree Lighting Ceremony** on December 1, 2024. Council agreed. Ms. Salazar will get the information in the upcoming newsletter.

Ms. Salazar asked Council if they wish to purchase the Food Lion gift cards as a means of tax relief again this year. She reported that there are 40 cards left from last year. Her recommendation is to order 160 cards at a cost of \$12,000.00, giving us a total of 200 cards for distribution. She said that we distributed 185 cards last year. She noted that gift cards are distributed to property owners (one per household, regardless of number of properties owned) and renters with proof of residence and all real estate and personal property taxes must be paid before anyone receives a card. She would like to continue with sending them out in the newsletters, noting that system has worked very well. Lastly, she was asked to research whether Council Members can receive a card since they are taxpayers. Michelle Gowdy, from VML, offered an advisory opinion, stating that she does not believe this is a conflict of interest since it is a service/benefit provided to everyone that pays taxes in the town. Ms. Gowdy also noted that no Council Member should have a personal interest in Food Lion – they do not. Mr. Zember agreed and stated that he does not feel Council Members should be penalized for serving on Council.

**Motion: To purchase 160 (\$75.00) Food Lion gift cards with the stipulations above by Rodney Lang and seconded by Kate Hill. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Mr. Corbin stated that Council received a notification from Ms. Rillo about a police-related event that happened over the weekend. Unfortunately, he had already heard some of it from a citizen. He asked Chief Long why they didn't receive notice sooner. He also asked for some more details about the event. Chief Long stated that he has spoken with his officers about the need to notify him about certain events. Mr. Lang said he saw some things on Facebook. Mr. Ferguson said we cannot combat everything that people put on Facebook. Mayor Finney said that Chief Long cannot necessarily give details in criminal matters – all Council needs to know is that the event happened (as soon as possible).

## **Department Reports**

### **Police Report**

Chief Long presented Council with his written report. He also gave them a copy of the monthly speed sign data. Chief Long noted that his numbers are down because Officer Barringer is currently using his patrol vehicle until the new one can be upfitted. There was a discussion about the speed report. Chief Long presented Council with a quote from Patrol PC in the amount of \$10,500.93 for the purchase of an in-car camera system for the fifth patrol car. He added that he would like to use the Law

**Onley Town Council  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
Minutes of September 4, 2024**

**Onley Town Office, 25308 Lankford Highway, Onley, VA**

Enforcement Assistance funds (\$15,796.00) to cover this expense, along with the cost of a new vehicle cage and Breathalyzers.

**Motion: To accept the quote from Patrol PC in the amount of \$10,500.93 by Daniel Bloxom and seconded by Woody Zember. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Chief Long presented Council with a quote from Tyler Technologies for the purchase of the E-Summons computer software. He stated that the quote has expired, and he will need to get a new one.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Ms. Salazar asked if there were any questions about her written report. Mr. Corbin asked if we are operating “in the black”. Ms. Salazar responded that we are, and she explained that most months when the meeting packets are created, all the monthly bills have not been received so the numbers presented are “preliminary”. Mr. Zember asked if the mosquito spraying invoice is for one month. Ms. Salazar responded that it is. Ms. Hill asked why we are paying an invoice to a local attorney. Ms. Salazar explained that when our officers write a violation using the town code and not state code, we are responsible for the attorney fees for the person that was charged with the offense.

**Motion: To pay the August 2024 payables by Kate Hill and seconded by Bill Ferguson. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Ms. Salazar reported that there is a CD maturing at Atlantic Union Bank in the amount of \$517,956.41 on September 9, 2024. She explained that Council has three options: (1) set another meeting after that date to discuss it (2) roll it over into a 7-month CD at a rate of 4.75% at Atlantic Union Bank (3) close it and move it to the regular checking or money market account.

**Motion: To rollover the current CD at Atlantic Union Bank into a 7-month CD with a rate of 4.75% by Brian Corbin and seconded by Woody Zember. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

**Town Manager’s Report**

Ms. Rillo reported that she attended the Accomack Board of Supervisor’s meeting to speak against the Route 179 road diet. She reported that the initiative failed, which is the best possible outcome for the town. She praised the Board of Supervisor’s for running such a professional and efficient meeting. She suggested that everyone attend at least one meeting to see how well things are handled. She said that the Town of Accomac would like to purchase two speed reduction signs. Ms. Salazar has mailed them an invoice and Chief Long will deliver the signs once payment is received. She said that Public Works is running smoothly. She has been in contact with Canonie about the grass growing along the right-of-way. Simpson’s Tree Service will be cutting the grass next week as well as laying stone over the exposed rails. Mr. Zember asked how many grass violation letters she has sent this year. She responded one. Mr. Bloxom asked how the funds received from the Town of Accomac will be spent. Ms. Salazar said the funds will need to be returned to the ARPA funds budget. Ms. Rillo said we will most likely spend it on the Public Works garage construction.

**Attorney’s Report**

Mr. Bundick reported that he has reviewed the Procurement Policy and attended meetings for the month.

Ms. Rillo said that in the matter of the insurance rates increasing due to the town’s lack of fire hydrants, she has spoken with a representative from Farm Bureau. They said at this point, the town’s rating is still

**Onley Town Council  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
Minutes of September 4, 2024**

**Onley Town Office, 25308 Lankford Highway, Onley, VA**

good, but it could drop in the future. She noted that Tasley is listed as the town's fire department. The total cost of installing a fire hydrant is approximately \$10,000.00-\$20,000.00. She has also researched grants to pay for the installation, but it's important to remember there is also a yearly maintenance fee.

**Consideration of Minutes**

**Motion: To adopt the minutes of the August 5, 2024, Regular Monthly Meeting by Kate Hill and seconded by Daniel Bloxom. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

**Motion: To adopt the minutes of the August 14, 2024, Special Meeting by Woody Zember and seconded by Kate Hill. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- abstain; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

**Motion: To adopt the minutes of August 20, 2024, Special Meeting by Kate Hill and seconded by Bill Ferguson. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

**Public Comments**

Billye D. Custis agreed with Ms. Rillo about the Board of Supervisor's meeting. She said that they run an excellent meeting, and it would be a good idea for everyone to attend at least once. She then read a statement from a sign at her house: "The good thing about living in a small town is that if you don't know what you're doing, someone else will".

**Council Comments**

Ms. Hill thanked everyone for their continued dedication to the town.

Mr. Lang said he thinks things are going well and he thanked everyone for their hard work.

Mr. Bloxom said he is looking forward to the holidays. He is hoping to see everyone at the upcoming town events.

Mr. Corbin said he is pleased that we have broken ground on the new garage. He asked Ms. Rillo to keep the new town hall construction in sight. He said that he is happy that Council agreed to review the procurement policy. He believes that it needs to be re-done.

Mr. Zember agreed with Mr. Corbin that we need to continue with the construction of a new town office. He thanked everyone for working so well together to accomplish good things for the town.

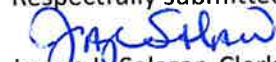
Mr. Ferguson thanked everyone. He is very happy to hear that there is interest from Council in proceeding with the construction of a town hall. He would like to see us draw up our own plans and move forward. He thanked Ms. Custis and Mr. Dennis for their continued interest in the town.

Mayor Finney thanked everyone for getting along so well, getting along with each other, and accomplishing things for town.

**Adjourn**

**Motion: To adjourn (7:39pm) by Kate Hill and seconded by Bill Ferguson. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Respectfully submitted,

  
Janye L. Salazar, Clerk/Treasurer

  
Henry E. Finney, Mayor