

Onley Town Council
Regular Monthly Meeting
Minutes of December 2, 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

The invocation was given by Councilman Corbin. Councilman Lang led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of Agenda

Motion: To adopt the agenda by Daniel Bloxom and seconded by Kate Hill. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Commission/Committee Reports

Planning Commission – Mr. Corbin reported that the Planning Commission did not have a quorum so there was no meeting. He added that the date of the meeting was changed and properly advertised but only two Commissioners came to the meeting. He asked that Council consider the following suggestions: **1.** The Planning Commission needs guidance from the Town Council and/or the Town Manager; **2.** The only thing that the Planning Commission is working on at this time is the Emergency Action Plan – he thinks that Accomack County already has a plan in place and perhaps we should work with them and follow their plan; **3.** The Commission does not need to have a monthly meeting – they should only meet at the request of the Town Council if/when there is a matter for their review.

Billye D. Custis said that a motion was made years ago that the Planning Commission should only meet when the Town Council tasks them with doing something. Ms. Salazar said that it needs to be stressed to the incoming Planning Commission Chairperson that communication with the Council, the Town Manager and the other Commissioners is key, she added that this has been an ongoing problem for as long as she has worked here. Ms. Rillo suggested that the Planning Commissioners take a Citizens Planner course. She has found one being offered from April to June by VCU that costs \$750.00 per person. She also asked that everyone think about who we can get to fill the vacancies. Ms. Salazar asked where the Commission will meet moving forward. Mr. Corbin said he wants them to meet at the town office. Council agreed. Mayor Finney asked for a “fresh” motion to make Council’s wishes clear to the Planning Commission.

Motion: To have the Planning Commission hold an organizational meeting in January 2025 and change the regular meeting time to quarterly or at the direction of the Town Council when needed to

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complete an assigned task 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

Public Works Garage Committee – Ms. Rillo said she still does not have a date for installation, adding that our representative had a family emergency. She has been told that they will contact her a week prior to delivery of the building. She asked that Council approve pushing the delivery back to the beginning of the year due to the holidays and her upcoming vacation. She did research the issue of the ARPA funds and found that Ms. Custis is correct, and it is okay if the funds are not spent before the end of the year, as long as they are earmarked. Council agreed to push the delivery date.

Procurement Policy Committee – Mr. Corbin reported that they did not have a meeting. Due to the holidays, they will not meet until the beginning of the new year.

Old Business

Ms. Salazar said that she has had numerous requests from random organizations asking to be put on the meeting agenda to make presentations and ask for a donation. A while ago, Council asked Ms. Rillo to create some donation guidelines based on Virginia Code. Ms. Salazar recently responded to an email request for a donation using some of Ms. Rillo’s suggestions (made to her in the office) and she and the auditors thought it might be a good idea to put them together in a formal policy. She presented Council with the draft copy. Several Council Members asked why we need to wait until the fourth quarter to distribute funds. Ms. Salazar stated the reason for that is we need to make sure that our revenue is coming in as expected and that we can cover the cost of general operating expenses before we start donating funds – essentially, we need to make sure the town’s needs are met first and we should not donate funds until we have them. Mr. Bloxom said he doesn’t think this is necessary. Mr. Ferguson asked how it will affect the Onley Pool. Ms. Salazar pointed out that the pool doesn’t usually get their donation until the fourth quarter so it will not adversely affect them. Mr. Bundick suggested that Council add a caveat stating that they can deviate from the policy by a majority vote. Ms. Custis asked several questions about the policy, so Ms. Salazar read the policy at this time to make everyone aware of the guidelines.

Motion: To adopt the Donation Policy adding the caveat suggested by Mr. Bundick (see above) by Brian Corbin and seconded by Bill Ferguson. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

New Business

Ms. Rillo asked the Council to authorize her to spend up to \$2,700.00 on a lift rental for the public works garage building. She presented Council with three estimates: Carter Rentals - \$2,580.00; Sunbelt - \$2,646.65; United Rentals - \$2,326.00. She said that Sunbelt and United’s bids were done online so they do not have liability coverage. Mr. Lang asked if these are torn up by the contractor, will the liability insurance cover it. Ms. Rillo said that it will.

Motion: To allow Ms. Rillo to spend up to \$2,700.00 on the rental of a lift handler by Daniel Bloxom and seconded by Bill Ferguson. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Council set January 6, 2025, for the first meeting of the new term. At that meeting, the yearly meeting schedule will be adopted. Ms. Salazar reminded everyone that they must be sworn in before that meeting. She has reached out to the Registrar’s office for the abstract of votes from the election, but she has not received it yet. She will keep everyone updated.

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Department Reports

Police Report

Chief Long presented his written report to Council. He noted that he has shortened the speed sign report but, in his haste to create the report, he did leave off locations, although the map is included. He is still working on getting the e-ticket computers installed. He is working with VPS to get it set up so that we can run tags through the system. Lastly, there is no projected date for the completion of the new car installation. Mayor Finney asked if we have ever received the computer for the car. Chief Long said that we have received it. Mr. Corbin asked if it is normal for it to take 4 – 5 months to get a vehicle operational. Chief Long said he spoke with Lt. Wright at the ACSO, and he said if they get theirs within four months, it's a good thing. Mr. Lang said that next time we purchase a vehicle, we need to consider the time frame for installation, along with the bid price. Chief Long said that the discussion of the procurement policy pushed things back a month. Mayor Finney disagreed and said that it shouldn't have any effect on this. He added that as long as officers are sharing vehicles, it shouldn't affect numbers either.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Salazar reported that at last month's meeting, Council made a motion to transfer \$750,000.00 to a CD with a rate of 4.43% at Atlantic Union Bank. The following day when she reached out to confirm the CD purchase, she was told that there had been an error on Atlantic Union's part and that rate should not have been offered to us. In an effort to correct their error, Atlantic Union offered to give us the rate of 4.43% on the current money market account which has a balance of \$814,000.00. Ms. Salazar said that this is a win for the town since we are getting the same rate on a larger amount, and we will not have the funds tied up in a CD. She asked if Council had any objections to the change since it was not exactly what the original motion stated. Council had no objections. She pointed out that she has moved the \$75,000.00 from the Town Office Construction budget to the Public Works Garage Construction budget. She reported that there are several businesses that are delinquent on meals tax and one that is delinquent on transient occupancy tax. She told Council that in the new year, she would like for them to review the Meals Tax and Transient Occupancy ordinances since delinquencies are becoming a real problem and our ordinances don't have a lot of "teeth" when it comes to collections.

Motion: To pay the November 2024 payables 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

Town Manager's Report

Ms. Rillo reported that there is a tentative installation date for playground equipment of December 16th. The tree lighting ceremony has been cancelled due to lack of interest and lack of help. She said there was not a very good turnout for the Veterans Day Celebration. She stated that there were a lot of issues when we had the event committee, but at least we had some help. Mr. Ferguson said he thinks we are depending too much on social media for advertising. He suggested that we look into radio advertising. She has approved Dean Savage to work with Percy Smith to help with the cleanup of the town gutters. The new holiday lights are up, and we were still short a few, so they put up three snowflakes. She would like to order some more trees and new banners before next year. She thinks we can sell the snowflakes and banners to recoup some funds. Mr. Corbin said he has gotten two positive comments about the lights. Mr. Corbin had a copy of the RFP bid packet for the public works garage. He questioned why we do not have the aprons on the concrete pad and how the bidders did not bid on those since they were

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included in the packet. Ms. Rillo said she did not know. Mr. Corbin asked who wrote the bid packet. Ms. Rillo said that she did. He then asked her how she missed that there were no aprons. She said she did not know. Mr. Lang agreed and added that he wondered the same thing when he saw the concrete pad. Lastly, Mr. Corbin said that moving forward with other projects, we need to have a lot of eyes on this kind of thing because this should not have been missed. Mr. Lang asked what we are going to do about this right now. Ms. Rillo said that Mr. Pitt said he did not think we needed ramps because we were paving right up to the building. Mr. Corbin said that he disagrees with that, and he also reiterated that if we put ramps in the bid packet, they should have been included. Ms. Rillo said that we had a discussion, and we decided to remove the ramps to save money. Mr. Corbin said that was not ramps – it was drains. Ms. Rillo said that Council was provided copies of everything. Mr. Corbin said that Council did not review the bids because it was not our job.

Attorney's Report

Mr. Bundick had nothing to report.

Consideration of Minutes

Motion: To adopt the minutes of the November 4, 2024, Public Hearing & Regular Monthly Meeting by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Rodney Lang. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill – abstain; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Public Comments

Billye D. Custis said that the Planning Commission class that Susan spoke about earlier had five people in attendance. She paid for herself, but the town paid for everyone else. She said that they spoke last year about advertising town events in the ANEC magazine and that did not happen. She said that Council did talk about the ramps because there was a “tapering off” discussion because you cannot taper into the ground.

Council Comments

Ms. Hill read a statement expressing her gratitude to the town for the privilege of serving the last two years on the Town Council.

Mr. Lang said his first term was tough but now that he has some experience, he is hoping to accomplish even more things.

Mr. Bloxom wished everyone a happy holiday. He thanked Ms. Hill for serving and wished her well.

Mr. Corbin said he thinks we are accomplishing a lot, adding that we are certainly spending some money. He said we may have to tighten up a little bit but thinks that shouldn't be a problem.

Mr. Zember wished everyone a happy holiday. He feels that we have accomplished a lot over the last two years – maybe more that ever based on his experience. He hears great things about the park and the holiday decorations. He is looking forward to two more good years. He does agree that we need to be mindful of expenditures.

Mr. Ferguson thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. He wished Ms. Hill the best as she moves on from the Town Council and noted that he thinks her replacement will be a nice addition to the Council. He would like to move forward with the construction of a new town office.

Mayor Finney said he thinks we are doing a fine job. He notes that we have a lot of money in the bank.

Ms. Custis said that when she came on to Council, there was \$360,000.00 in the bank. Mayor Finney said we now have almost \$4,000,000.00. He thanked Ms. Hill for serving on the Council.

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Closed Session

Motion: To go into Closed Session (7:01pm) in accordance with Section 2.2-3711(A) of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended for the purpose of Paragraph 1: Discussion or consideration of personnel matters pertaining to Police Department, General Government & Public Works holiday bonuses 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

Open Session & Certification of Closed Session

Motion: To return to open session (7:15pm) 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

A roll call vote was taken after reconvening in Open Session, at which time each member certified by his/her vote whether only the matters previously disclosed were discussed during Closed Session: **Roll Call Vote:** Finney – yes; Bloxom -yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Hill-yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes.

Motion: To give the following holiday bonuses: Nathan Anderson - \$500.00, Philip Barringer - \$250.00, Pat Coulter - \$500.00, Jesse Long - \$500.00, Ira Sacks - \$500.00, Susan Rillo - \$500.00, Jamye Salazar - \$750.00, Percy Smith - \$500.00, Carl Bundick - \$500.00 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

Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn (7:16pm) 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,



Jamye L. Salazar, Clerk/Treasurer



Henry E. Finney, Mayor