

**Onley Town Council  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
Minutes of August 4, 2025  
Onley Town Office, 25308 Lankford Highway, Onley, VA**

Council Members Present: Ned Finney, Mayor  
Bill Ferguson, Vice-Mayor  
Daniel Bloxom  
Jason Campbell  
Brian Corbin  
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 6:01pm.

**Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance**

The invocation was given by Councilman Bloxom. Councilman Campbell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Adoption of Agenda**

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

**Commission/Committee Reports**

**Public Works Garage Committee** – Ms. Rillo reported that the electric has been completed but we are waiting for Accomack County to perform the final inspection. Mr. Bloxom asked Ms. Rillo if we were getting exterior lights. She said that we have a pole light and motion sensors on all four corners of the building.

**Town Office Construction Committee** – Ms. Rillo reported that she and Mr. Lang met Saturday morning at the building site. They plan to write up a detailed description of what they want an architect to draw for us. They are hoping for a 32' – 40' x 50' building mimicking the same pitch line as the police department building with brick below, siding above, and a metal roof. They are hoping to use some of the original plans – probably the first set which is a 50' x 50' building – and cut them down to make them work for us. Mr. Bloxom asked Ms. Rillo to give him more notice before scheduling a committee meeting. He added that a three-day notice of a meeting does not always work for him.

**Old Business**

Mayor Finney said that he requested this item be on the agenda, but Ms. Rillo was asked (at last month's meeting) to contact Lusby's and investigate pricing. Ms. Rillo said that she has no information because Lusby's does not have a website, and their Facebook page isn't helpful. She will need to make a trip there or perhaps call them to see what they have. Mayor Finney asked Council to set a specific dollar amount and give Ms. Rillo permission to move forward with a purchase.

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**Motion: To spend up to \$1,200.00 on the purchase of a refrigerator/icemaker for the Public Works garage by Woody Zember and seconded by Brian Corbin. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. **MOTION PASSED**

Chief Long presented Council with figures for sending a candidate to the HRCJTA for certification. He approximated \$14,640.00 per person, not including salary and benefits. He suggested hiring candidates at a lower salary, increasing it by \$5,000.00 once they have completed the 20-week training and another \$5,000.00 once they come off the six-month probationary period. Mayor Finney asked what would happen if they quit before we have re-couped our investment. Chief Long said that he had planned to speak with Mr. Bundick about the possibility of an employment contract which would cover that, but he has not been able to at this time. He added that other departments have told him that the contract isn't worth the paper that it is printed on if the officer leaves. Mayor Finney said no matter what the circumstances, we cannot get the salary back. Mr. Bundick said the contract would be as tight as the terms, but it does sometimes depend on who is interpreting it when it comes to litigation. Council asked Chief Long if he has any candidates. He said he has 1-3 people that may be interested but no one has agreed to come aboard. Council discussed the possibility of a sign-on bonus to entice officers. Mr. Lang asked Council if someone can work as an officer until they can attend the academy (in January) – without certification. Chief Long said that it is possible in the state of Virginia, but that person must graduate from the academy within one calendar year. Council did not want to consider that option, citing liability to the town. Mr. Ferguson proposed that we set our own deadline of October 1<sup>st</sup> before we agree to send someone to the academy or set a sign-on bonus. He added that he is convinced that we can find a certified officer. Mr. Campbell asked Council to move forward immediately with the sign-on bonus. Council declined and agreed to wait until October 1<sup>st</sup> to proceed with everything.

**New Business**

Ms. Rillo read the newspaper ad for the park pond equipment. She stated that we received one sealed bid. She opened it and read it into the minutes: Charles Pruitt bid \$220.00 for the power vacuum.

**Motion: To sell the remaining two pond items (combined into one bid with a minimum bid of \$500.00) and accept the \$220.00 bid from Charles Pruitt for the vacuum by Jason Campbell and seconded by Bill Ferguson. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. **MOTION PASSED**

Mayor Finney stated that every year we have the same people that will not cut their grass in town. He said that each time we must send a certified letter and wait for them to cut it. He added that we repeat this process all summer and it is costly and time consuming. Mayor Finney asked Ms. Salazar what could be done to change that. Ms. Salazar said that if Council wants to change the process that means changing the ordinance. Ms. Rillo provided them with copies of the current ordinance as well as the ordinance that was repealed in 2022. Council asked Ms. Rillo and Mr. Bundick to review both ordinances and write a new ordinance implementing two notices per season and a \$75 hourly rate for the town cutting the grass or any other work performed by the town. Mr. Campbell would like to see us post a notice on their door giving them two days after the second notice. Council agreed.

Mr. Zember said that he has done a little bit of research on the possibility of the town connecting to the HRSD. He has not been able to get a lot of information but, in his quest, he has learned that most residents that he spoke to in town are not interested in pursuing it. Mayor Finney said that Ms. Rillo has spoken with the Town of Wachapreague and he believes that the first step is to hire a firm to conduct a feasibility study. He added that someday it may be mandated and then someone besides the Town of Onley and its residents will have to pay for it. Council agreed not to pursue this matter.

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**Department Reports**

**Police Report**

Chief Long presented his monthly written report and speed sign report to Council. He noted that he has added the citation total by charge per Council's request. He said that the pie chart is misleading since it is going from a 55mph zone to a 35mph zone. The updates to the speed signs have been completed. In the matter of the new hire discussion, he asked if the plan is to give sign-on bonuses to everyone, including officers that are not certified. He also asked if Council would make it retroactive to the officer that was just hired in May. Council said only certified officers would receive a sign-on bonus. In the matter of a retroactive bonus, no decision was made but several Council members said they would not support that since "sign-on" means a new employee. Mr. Corbin also stated that if sign-on bonuses are implemented, they would not get it all at once – there would need to be a process established. Chief Long said that Coffee with a Cop at the Book Bin was a success. He recently attended a Zoom meeting with Tyler Technologies to get an update on the E-Tickets system. He has been given an implementation date of October 2025. Mayor Finney expressed his concern that we have paid quite a lot of money for that system, and we still aren't able to use it. Mr. Lang agreed. Mayor Finney suggested that Chief Long contact David Smullin at the ACSO, adding that he is working on the same thing. Ms. Salazar said that she spoke with Taylor Dukes from the Town of Exmore on another matter, and Mr. Dukes offered their Police Chief's (Adam Zieger) help with this as well.

**Treasurer's Report**

Ms. Salazar presented her report to Council. She reported that there is one hotel delinquent on transient occupancy tax and two restaurants delinquent on meals tax. In the matter of cornhole boards, they have been delayed due to a problem at the plant. She tried to get another update this morning, but the representative is out of the office this week.

Mr. Bloxom questioned an invoice paid for spraying the parking lot, sidewalks, and the park walking path. He felt that it was very high and added that it also wasn't very effective, noting an abundance of grass and weeds growing. He said he would like to have Percy Smith acquire a spray license. Mr. Campbell asked if that is possible. Ms. Rillo said that it is possible, but she is not sure that Percy is interested or comfortable handling the chemicals.

**Motion: To pay the July 2025 payables by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Rodney Lang. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

**Town Manager/Zoning Administrator Report**

Ms. Rillo reported that she has spent a lot of time with the VDH working on an issue in town with a failing septic system. The house has been vacated but the homeowner has not applied for permits to install a new system. She is unsure what the holdup is at this time. She added that the town had done everything that they can – it is now between the homeowner, VDH, and Bundick's.

Mr. Zember said another issue that was brought to light by this incident is that we have too many people living in single-family dwellings. Mr. Bundick said that a major issue with this is finding the property owner's current residence so that they may be served with proper paperwork. Ms. Rillo said that it is also very difficult to prove how many people are living in the residence. She added that if we go to court, a judge is going to want proof of the violation. Mr. Lang asked Ms. Salazar if she could request physical addresses from property owners that do not live in the residence when she sends tax bills. Ms. Salazar was reluctant to agree to this, adding that while she could possibly include an insert with tax

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bills, she is not sure that people will respond, and she is certain that it will not resolve this issue. Ms. Rillo suggested enacting a sizeable fine for property owners in violation of the zoning ordinance.

**Attorney's Report**

Mr. Bundick reported that he assisted Ms. Rillo with the septic violation matter that she just reported.

**Consideration of Minutes**

**Motion: To adopt the minutes of July 7, 2025, Regular Monthly Meeting by Woody Zember and seconded by Rodney Lang. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Campbell – abstain; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

**Public Comments**

**Billye D. Custis** said that Lusby's was cheaper than Lowe's on a dryer that she just bought, and Lowe's dryer was on sale. She has a Whirlpool refrigerator that was purchased from Lusby's that had some problems, and they took care of it quickly. She asked if the police vacancy is on the website. Ms. Salazar responded that it is. She asked if there has been any news about the Planning Commission, adding that if ordinances are being changed, they should be involved. Lastly, she said she saw a woman with four kids going into one of the upstairs apartments downtown. She also asked if the woman in the downstairs apartment is still living there.

**John Dennis** signed up to speak but said his question was answered earlier in the night.

**Toni Nelson** did not wish to comment but said she is happy to be back.

**Council Comments**

**Jason Campbell** apologized for missing the last meeting. He said that he is hearing some good things about Officer Sayo.

**Bill Ferguson** thanked everyone for all that they do for the town. He is happy to see that we are proceeding with the town office construction, and he would like to see some progress. Lastly, he said as a Fire Chief, we do need to address the matter of too many people living in single family homes – it is a safety issue.

**Daniel Bloxom** said it is good to see everyone. He is happy to see everyone using McMath Park.

**Brian Corbin** said that he agrees with Mr. Bloxom about the weed spraying. He is not satisfied at all with the cost or the result. He asked Ms. Rillo to check with Mr. Tarr and find out what he's spraying and what the overall process is. He understands that Percy may be reluctant to get certified to spray the chemicals but suggested we offer a little more money if he would consider it. Lastly, he mentioned that the grass that is growing under the newly installed park equipment is out of control. He asked why we did not have them put down some underlayment. Ms. Rillo said that she contacted them, but they do not plan to do it. Mr. Corbin said he would like to know how that got by us.

**Woody Zember** agreed with Mr. Ferguson's statement and reiterated that we need to find a solution to the quantity of people that are living in single-family homes. He said the only reason that he put HRSD on the agenda was to see what the citizens thought about it and the consensus right now is the people do not want it. He thanked Office Sayo for handling an incident at his house involving a stolen license plate.

**Rodney Lang** thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. He likes the way that we get problems corrected quickly. He wants to be able to do the same with this housing issue. He asked Ms. Rillo if there was an issue with mosquito spraying since they seem to be bad at his house. Ms. Rillo said that Mr. Tarr has sprayed twice recently. He said that while he understands that the police department is

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shorthanded, he really needs them to do some speed enforcement on East Main Street, adding that cars are speeding by his house all the time.

**Mayor Finney** thanked everyone for coming. He said that we live in a nice community and that's attributed to fine citizens and a good Town Council.

**Adjourn**

**Motion: To adjourn (7:21pm) by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Rodney Lang. Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom - yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Respectfully submitted,



Jamye L. Salazar, Clerk/Treasurer



Henry E. Finney, Mayor