

Onley Town Council
Regular Monthly Meeting
Minutes of December 1, 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 6:00pm.

Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance

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

Adoption of Agenda

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

Onley Recreation Association

Joseph Cuba, a representative of the Onley Recreation Association, spoke briefly about the organization. He asked that Council consider renewing the previous agreement from last year/season whereas the town donated \$5,000.00 and the ORA offered discounted memberships to our residents until the \$5,000.00 is spent. He reported that those funds were used to purchase 10 family memberships, 1 single membership and 9 senior memberships for a total of 4,590.00. He noted that their focus at this time is to continue to grow membership and not increase rates. Mr. Lang asked if they would consider offering a larger discount to our residents if we were to increase our donation. Mr. Cuba said they would entertain that proposal if the math makes sense. Mr. Corbin expressed concern, stating that they are not getting a very big donation after the half-off memberships are paid. Mr. Cuba said the assumption is that not everyone would join if they had to pay the full membership rate, so it is still a benefit to the organization. Ms. Salazar noted that per our donation policy, Mr. Cuba has provided the financial statement for the organization and they are financially sound. She added that we are making an exception to our donation policy and hearing their request now so that they can make plans for the upcoming holiday and advertise the membership discount to our residents. She said (in response to a question from Mr. Campbell) that she does believe that the number of citizens utilizing this benefit is growing.

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Commission/Committee Reports

Town Office Construction Committee – Ms. Rillo reported that they have a draft RFP for Architectural Services that they hope to present at the January 2026 meeting. They plan to meet again later this month.

Old Business

Ms. Salazar asked Council to rescind their motion (from last month) to pay the Axon Enterprise invoice (\$16,540.94) from next fiscal year's budget and make another motion to pay the invoice immediately from the current fiscal year's budget. She explained that on Tuesday (last week), a representative from Axon called to check the status of the invoice. Ms. Salazar told her that Council had decided to hold off on paying the invoice until July 2026 and that a company representative had approved it. The representative then told Ms. Salazar that the person that she initially spoke with was not authorized to approve that and that we should make the payment by the due date.

Motion: To rescind the motion to pay the Axon Enterprise invoice in the amount of \$16,540.94 from the 2026-2027 budget by Rodney Lang and seconded by Daniel Bloxom. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Motion: To pay the Axon enterprise invoice in the amount of \$16,540.94 from the current 2025-2026 budget by Daniel Bloxom and seconded by Jason Campbell. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

New Business

Mr. Campbell said he would like to increase the donation amount to the ORA with the hope that more residents will be able to join. Mr. Lang agreed and said he would like them to give our residents a larger discount. Mr. Campbell said that if they increase the discount, that will still limit how many people can join.

Motion: To increase our donation to ORA to \$7,500.00 by Jason Campbell and seconded by Rodney Lang. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom - abstain; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Ms. Salazar asked Council to clarify if they wish to keep the same terms, specifically the 50% membership discount for our residents. Council agreed.

Motion: To adopt the 2026 Town Council Meeting Schedule by Jason Campbell and seconded by Woody Zember. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Ms. Rillo presented Council with a quote for the cost to repair the 2008 Chevrolet Silverado in the amount of \$1,089.58. This amount includes the coolant temperature sensor for the radiator, two new tires, brake work, labor and the cost of the inspection. She added that \$871.29 of this repair is necessary for it to pass state inspection but it makes sense to do the entire repair at one time.

Motion: To repair the Chevrolet Silverado at a cost of \$1,089.58 by Brian Corbin and seconded by Woody Zember. Before the vote was taken, Mr. Bloxom said he would like to know what they are doing for that money. Mayor Finney said Ms. Rillo just told us what they are doing.

The following vote was taken on the above motion: Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

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Department Reports

Police Report

Chief Long presented Council with his monthly report. He noted that he is still having issues with the speed sign on Pennsylvania Avenue. He will be reaching out to the company to find out how to fix the problem. He explained that there are two activity reports since we are now using the E-Summons system. The old report is from November 1st-11th and the new report begins on November 12th. He pointed out that there were 18 or 19 arrests for the month and 15 of them are attributed to Officer Sayo. He said that there has been no interest in the police officer vacancies at this time. Mr. Ferguson asked if ACSO has granted them NCIC/VCIN access. Chief Long said they have not because Accomack County's IT Department will not approve it. Mr. Campbell agreed with Chief Long and said the county is not going to allow it. He added that our officers still have access to those systems through ACSO via the radio or telephone, but it is just not readily available on the in-car computer. Mr. Bloxom asked how much of the overtime program authorized by Council a few months ago has been utilized at this point. Chief Long said he worked five hours today, but no other hours have been used. Mr. Campbell asked how many of the 163 summonses written by Officer Anderson were written during overtime hours. Chief Long responded that none were written on the town's program, but some were written while using Highway Safety Grant hours, however, he does not have a breakdown. Mr. Corbin asked Chief Long if he had contacted Tim Wilson to get help with the speed sign issues, noting that he made that recommendation at last month's meeting. Chief Long said he has not since he does not have contact info for him. Mr. Corbin said that Susan should have it. Mayor Finney asked why the daily log change was not made even though it was requested by Council last month. Chief Long said that it was put into effect today. Mayor Finney asked why it wasn't done last month when he was instructed to do it. Chief Long said that he has been very busy with the installation of the E-Summons program. Mayor Finney said he finds it "very funny" that it just started happening today – the day of the meeting. Mr. Lang said that asking for a log is not a negative reflection on the police department - it helps Council and Ms. Rillo to get an idea of what you and your officers do in a day. Mayor Finney asked about the FOIA request for police officer salaries that Council instructed him to make two months ago. Chief Long had that information (minus ACSO) and distributed it to Council at that time. Mayor Finney asked about the percentage of health insurance coverage that everyone else pays. Chief Long said that no one supplied that information. Mayor Finney said that would have been helpful information. After reviewing the salary information, the consensus of Council is that we are offering a competitive salary package. Mr. Campbell said he thinks the reason that we have trouble getting officers to come here is not strictly a monetary issue. He added that every time we have a meeting, we have issues with the police department. He said that while he is unsure if it is true, he has heard that Councilmen are calling other police officers and asking if they want to be our Chief. He said there is a lot of talk on the street that Council is unhappy with the police department. We are constantly making FOIA requests from other departments and doing comp studies and there are other issues as well. He added that he does believe that we must have oversight of the police department, but the consensus is that this town does not like their police department. He said that if someone can go somewhere and not write tickets, not work cases, and make the same amount of money as our officers – that's what they will do. Lastly, he said that he is not saying this to be nasty, but he feels that if we are genuinely trying to create a good police department, we must be cognizant of this behavior. Mr. Corbin responded by saying that a couple of months ago, we asked for a Closed Session to do exactly what you (Mr. Campbell) just did – "to discuss". He added that some of you voted that down and would not even go into the closed session, which has never happened before. He said that we as a Council need to communicate and if we don't allow

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ourselves to have discussions, we are not a Council anymore. He said that some of the things that Mr. Campbell just mentioned would have been addressed in that closed session so as not to upset or embarrass anyone and to not shine a negative light on the town. He added that we do not make motions or vote in closed sessions so there was nothing binding on the Council's part just by having a discussion. Mr. Campbell said he disagreed with the premise of that meeting and reminded Mr. Corbin that a few months ago, he (Mr. Corbin) didn't want to have a closed session conversation that Mr. Campbell wanted to have. Mr. Corbin said while that is true, that was a totally different matter involving a private citizen, Mr. Campbell's wife – not an employee matter. Mr. Campbell said that Mr. Corbin was wrong - that was not about his wife. Mr. Corbin asked Mr. Campbell if he thinks Council is picking on the police department by demanding oversight. Mr. Campbell said he agrees there must be oversight, but there have been general conversations and perception from the public that is not positive about the police department. He said that if we are trying to get police officers to come to work here, we might have to change how we are doing things. Mr. Corbin asked Mr. Campbell what he suggests, adding that he (Mr. Corbin) goes over and checks in with Chief Long on a regular basis. He said just the other day, Chief Long told him that no one on Council reaches out to talk to him. Chief Long said he has had small conversations with various Council Members. He added that what he meant by that comment is that he has not had "sit downs" at his office with anyone other than Mr. Corbin and no one has come into look at paperwork like Mr. Corbin does. Mr. Corbin asked what paperwork. He said he has been through the records and there's nothing there. He said Mayor Finney asked for a change in the daily logs last month and that hasn't happened. Mr. Corbin asked what's wrong with officers keeping a log. Mr. Campbell said he doesn't object to the log. Mr. Campbell reiterated that this is a conversation about why we cannot get anyone to come to work for our town and he is certain as to why because he works with these people. Mr. Corbin said he has heard one reason why, but he will not repeat it at this meeting. Mr. Campbell said he believes that we can fix this department. Mr. Corbin asked what needs fixing. Mr. Campbell said we need applicants to fill the vacancies. Mr. Corbin said he knows that salary is not the problem. Mr. Campbell said no one will come to Onley and make the same amount of money that they can make somewhere else and not have any responsibilities. He said we expect a lot of our officers, which is a good thing. Mayor Finney asked where an officer can work and not have to do anything. Mr. Campbell said he will not say that out loud. Mr. Lang said he feels that Onley is a laid-back place to work. He added that he lived in Exmore and their police department was busy all the time. Mr. Campbell agreed that Exmore's police department is very busy. Mr. Lang asked Chief Long to spread out some of the case work so that Officer Sayo is not the only one doing the paperwork all the time. Chief Long explained that cases are not assigned, it just depends on what happens on the officer's shift. Mr. Lang said that he has heard that if an officer puts in an application to come to work here, you're going to get blackballed. Mr. Campbell said everyone is desperate for people and he feels that if you are certified and not blacklisted for something you've done, ACSO will hire you. Mr. Lang said they do not want anybody leaving them to come here. At this time, Mayor Finney said Council needs to move on to the next agenda item.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Salazar reported that taxes are coming in and she has been busy with that. She reported one business that is delinquent on transient occupancy tax. She calls them weekly and doesn't seem to make much progress. She reported three businesses that are delinquent on meals tax – one is at three months and two are at two months. There were no questions from Council.

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Motion: To pay the November 2025 payables by Daniel Bloxom 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 spoke with Jim Patterson this morning about the public works garage and he said the following: framing is roughed in, plumbing and electrical inspections are complete and passed, the insulation and drywall will be started tonight, completion date of December 15th. She said that it looked like someone was trying to pry open the garage door. The cameras from the police station reach that area but not well enough to get a good view of the door. She asked Council's opinion on purchasing a "doorbell" type camera. Council agreed. Mr. Bloxom asked if we have plans to install an alarm system at that building. Ms. Rillo was unsure. Ms. Salazar said she does think our intent was to put an alarm system once the building is complete. Mayor Finney asked if the outside lights had been fixed. Ms. Rillo said the electrician has been and the issue should be fixed. She will check again tomorrow. Mayor Finney asked Billye D. Custis if the lights were still blinking. John Dennis said yes. Mayor Finney said we cannot have them shining into the neighboring homes and bothering everyone and if they cannot be fixed, they need to be removed.

Attorney's Report

Mr. Bundick reported that he has worked on contracts this month for the public works garage construction and the holiday light installation.

Consideration of Minutes

Motion: To adopt the minutes of November 3, 2025, Public Hearing & Regular Monthly Meeting by Rodney Lang and seconded by Daniel Bloxom. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Public Comments

Billye D. Custis said the following: There are a few things that I would like to bring to everyone's attention. I do not want answers or explanations until after I have finished. The town was chartered 75 years ago and the spring newsletter stated that there would be a celebration this year – that never happened. The only thing done for veterans this year was the yard signs distributed by Debbie Bliss – thanks to her for that. There was no tree lighting at the park this year. Events need to be advertised and everyone needs to participate. The budget will soon be amended, that falls under the duties of the Town Manager. The town office hours are 9:00 – 3:00 on Fridays. I understand that was started under our previous mayor's term and I do understand the concept now, but I still feel that there needs to be a Council approved policy as to how that's handled. In the matter of the closed session at the October 15th meeting, the motion was made and passed to adopt the agenda, yet the closed session motion was voted down. That has never happened in all the years that I have been coming to the meetings. It was to be a discussion which some Council Members thought was necessary. Closed session is for discussion – not for motions. It is sometimes necessary to discuss issues so that they can be resolved before developing into a bigger one. In the matter of the police department salaries, Claudia Harmon, Arlene Evans and I spent hours getting that information together for Council several years ago. She added that along with the health insurance and numerous other benefits, Council should remember that our officers get a take-home vehicle, which does not happen everywhere and is a huge benefit.

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Anthony Sayo said the following: "How much time do I have? Start the clock. I didn't come with notes. I just picked this up as things went along. First off, we talk about oversight of the department, right? I typically will sit here and be a gentleman and just nod my head and be quiet. The reason that no one will come here is oversight of the department. Right. You're going to micromanage us to the hour of what we are doing. I'm not going to fill out that patrol sheet. I don't care that he made it and did a good job. I'm going to write patrol for ten hours. You don't need to know what I'm doing for ten hours. Now does anybody remember seeing A Few Good Men? How dare you sleep under the blanket of freedom that I provide and question the way that I do it? Fifteen arrests in thirty days and you want to know what I'm doing hour by hour. Absolutely not. No. No. We had four people that were going to apply to this department and left for a thousand dollars more to go somewhere else because of this. Right. I'm not pinpointing any one person but collectively it's piss poor. Which brings me to my next point. Council participation at events. I've gone to more events since May than I've seen every one of you be at together. It doesn't happen. I don't know why. I would love to see it. I come up for events when I'm not working. Council doesn't so don't confuse your laurels and elected position in this town with our ability to cut off your fun money. And that's me personally speaking. I'm not speaking for the other two. Alright. And it's embarrassing what you do to him. For a three-man department, he doesn't have that much to do. He has it pretty cake but to ride him like a child almost in every meeting, you guys should be ashamed of yourself. One hundred percent. He's doing his absolute best with what he's allowed to do because everything that I have pitched to him to come to you guys, he says well we've tried it before and we're not going to do it again. You know there's ten to fifteen policies that would be excellent here and we can afford it and do it to make life easier. You know I think you guys are going into closed session here in a little bit for holidays. Right. Just for my own personal, you know if you're giving us a free day off after...what is it? All the major holidays. How many are there throughout the year? The major holidays, right? So that's no consolation for us having to work those holidays. I would rather make pay commensurate with what everyone else is making than have a day off the next Tuesday when my family's not home. It doesn't do me any damn good to sit home and play with the dog for ten hours. If I got to work Christmas, pay me for working Christmas. Right and that's all I have to say. Excuse me and thank you."

Council Comments

Mr. Campbell said that Mr. Corbin is correct that we should be going into closed sessions for discussion and he will not vote no to that again. Everyone is correct about the town events; we should do better at advertising and certainly hosting them. He has been planning to do some more things out at the park, and he will try to do better next year.

Mr. Ferguson said he mirrors everything that Mr. Campbell just said. He thinks we have a great town and great police officers, and he wants to see us grow. He told Officer Sayo that he appreciates his statement. He would like to see us do better next year.

Mr. Bloxom said he can't say he has ever been so speechless. He thanked Officer Sayo for his comments, and he too feels bad about how things have been. He would like to improve things for the town. He hates that this was such a negative meeting. He wished everyone a good holiday.

Mr. Corbin wished everyone a nice holiday. He said if things are not working in the new year, we can certainly change them but we all must work together. He likes accountability and without it there are problems.

Mr. Zember wished everyone a good holiday. He said he too wants accountability and Council Members are entitled to see that. He said the Council Members are responsible to the citizens. They are elected to oversee things.

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Mr. Lang agreed with Mr. Zember that we were voted in by the citizens to oversee things in town and that includes the employees. He said that we have had some issues with the Chiefs in the past and maybe because of that we are taking it out on Chief Long and that's not fair, but we must have accountability. He thinks the logbooks need to be completed so that we can see what everyone is doing. He said it's not a "slap in the face" to our officers – it helps Council to better understand things. **Mayor Finney** said he needs to see things done on time. He thinks it makes us look bad when they aren't. He said if we need to go into a closed session to have a discussion, we should be able to do it. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Closed Session

Motion: To go into closed session (7:08pm) 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 holiday bonuses for the Onley Police Department, General Government & Public Works employees by Rodney Lang and seconded by Jason Campbell. **Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - no. MOTION PASSED

Open Session & Certification of Closed Session

Motion: To return to open session (7:20pm) by Daniel Bloxom and seconded by Bill Ferguson. **Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- 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:** Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

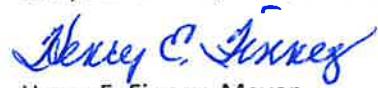
Motion: To give the following holiday bonuses: Long-\$750.00, Anderson-\$600.00, Sayo-\$500.00, Rillo-\$750.00, Bundick-\$500.00, Salazar-\$750.00, Smith-\$500.00, Woermer-\$100.00 by Rodney Lang and seconded by Jason Campbell. **Roll Call Vote:** Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn (7:22pm) 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

Respectfully submitted,


Jamye L. Salazar, Clerk/Treasurer


Henry E. Finney, Mayor