

**Onley Town Council
Regular Monthly Meeting
Minutes of January 5, 2026
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 Jamyre 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 Campbell. Vice-Mayor Ferguson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of Agenda

Motion: To adopt the agenda 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

Commission/Committee Reports

Town Office Construction Committee – Ms. Rillo gave Council a draft RFP for Architectural Design & Construction Management Services for the new building. She added that she has included a copy of our procurement policy because it is referenced in the RFP. She said if Council likes it, we can run an ad and proceed in February. Mayor Finney said he thinks Council needs to take it home and really review it. Mr. Corbin agreed. They will revisit the discussion about it at next month's meeting.

Old Business

Ms. Rillo asked Council to set a date for the 2025-2026 Budget Amendment meeting. She said that she will give Council a preliminary worksheet at the end of the meeting so that everyone can review it before the meeting. Council set the meeting for January 13, 2026, at 6:00pm.

Mr. Corbin said that Chief Long and Mayor Finney have each made FOIA requests to surrounding law enforcement agencies for salary information. He stated that we have received approximately ten responses and he has reviewed all of them and compiled some information that he would like to share with Council. The first thing that he determined (based on his findings) was that we are “in-line” with what other agencies are paying. He noted that our one officer, with four years of experience, is making more than other officers comparable to him at the other six agencies. He noted that most agencies pay 100% of health insurance with a couple agencies paying only 80%, so he does not feel that is a huge difference. Lastly, he recommends that we create and implement a pay scale for our police officers. He suggested we consider experience and rank when creating the scale. He noted that his findings are based on base pay – they do not include overtime, grant hours or other benefits such as a take-home

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vehicle, etc. He concluded by saying that our officer that left (recently) made a statement at last month's meeting that four officers went to work at other agencies for \$1,000.00. He said he is unsure if that is true, but if so, he believes that Council would certainly have addressed that and made allowances had it been brought to their attention.

New Business

Mr. Campbell said that after meeting with Chief Long and having individual conversations with Ms. Rillo and Ms. Salazar, he likes the idea of creating a step program and a pay scale for police officers. He also thinks the police department needs to update the policy and procedure manual, the holiday work schedule needs to be addressed, performance evaluations forms need to be updated, and job descriptions need to be reviewed and updated. He feels that we need a committee that can sit down with employees and figure out ways to make this town a more desirable place to work. He noted that currently employees can only carry over 40 hours of vacation per year. He pointed out that we only have two officers right now and they cannot really take vacation at this time, therefore, he does not feel it's fair to take it from them just because we began a new year. He suggested letting vacation accrue but putting a cap on the number of hours paid when an employee leaves.

Motion: To create an Employee Committee to discuss benefits and programs that may assist with retention in hiring consisting of Councilman Jason Campbell, Councilman Brian Corbin, Billye D. Custis, Chief Jesse Long and Susan Rillo 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

Ms. Salazar said that the ATL grant in the amount of \$15,000.00 has been received and Council needs to

make a motion to pass it along to our local fire companies. She noted that it is for fire related services.

Motion: To split the \$15,000.00 ATL grant equally between Tasley Volunteer Fire Co. and Onancock

Volunteer Fire Dept. by Rodney Lang and seconded by Jason Campbell. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes;

Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- abstain; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Ms. Rillo said that we have received a request from Andrea Zember to be appointed to the Planning Commission. Mr. Campbell said that Melissa Taylor has expressed interest in serving on the Planning Commission as well. Ms. Rillo said that Ms. Taylor needs to submit an email or a letter of interest asking Council to consider her.

Motion: To appoint Andrea Zember to the Planning Commission by Rodney Lang and seconded by Jason Campbell. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - abstain. MOTION PASSED

Ms. Salazar said that our police officers are having a lot of trouble getting fuel at the local Exxon station since ownership has changed. She asked Council's permission to apply for a fuel card that they can use at all gas stations. She has found one that will give us the tax exemptions as well as the same rebates that we currently have now.

Motion: To authorize Ms. Salazar to apply for the Wex Bank Sourcewell Fuel Card Program on behalf of the town 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

Department Reports

Police Report

Chief Long presented Council with his written report including the speed sign information. He said he has not had any luck getting the issues with the speed sign resolved but he plans to work on it again this month. He has had one person inquire about the officer vacancy, but they have not returned the

**Onley Town Council
Regular Monthly Meeting
Minutes of January 5, 2026**

Onley Town Office, 25308 Lankford Highway, Onley, VA

application. He noted that the HRCJTA is closed until March 1st because they are moving to another location. Lastly, he has had a request from former officer, Pat Coulter, to purchase his left-handed holster, adding that he (Coulter) has accepted a part-time position in North Carolina that requires him to carry a weapon. Council agreed to give Pat Coulter the holster at no charge.

Mr. Campbell asked Council if they think the speed signs are making a difference. He said that he feels we are spending a lot of time keeping the signs operational. Chief Long said he feels they have made a difference. Most Council Members agreed that they have made a difference. Chief Long and Ms. Rillo suggested making the sign on Pennsylvania a second mobile sign. Council asked that he get the sign working properly before that decision is made. Mr. Lang asked if Chief Long has contacted Tim Wilson. Chief Long said he has and he and Mr. Wilson have made plans to touch base after the new year.

Mr. Corbin said that Chief Long recently brought him the information that he requested about the Axon & E-Summons purchases and he would like to ask some questions about that information. He asked Chief Long if he had created the report that he brought to him. Chief Long said that he and Ms. Salazar created the report together. Mr. Corbin said that the E-Summons computer system has cost us \$112,000.00 and we've just started using it. He said that's unbelievable. He then asked what the \$1,900.00 E-Summons bill on this month's payables is for. Chief Long said he did not know without seeing it. Mr. Corbin said that over the last three years, we have spent \$85,000.00 on equipment from Axon. Chief Long said those are two separate systems and the E-summons equipment is being paid for by the E-summons tickets that are written. Mr. Corbin asked Chief Long to show him in the budget where the money from those tickets has paid for this equipment. Chief Long said he could not answer that and noted that Ms. Salazar handles those matters. Ms. Salazar asked to answer some of Mr. Corbin's questions. Council agreed. She stated that the \$1,900.00 to Tyler Technologies that Mr. Corbin mentioned is the airfare, mileage and per diem that we had to pay for the tech to come to Virginia to complete the final installation of the E-Summons software. She said the money for the purchase of the E-Summons equipment is money that we spent upfront but we are gradually recouping that money at \$5.00 per summons written. She noted that we have collected about \$47,345.00 up to this point. Lastly, she said the original Axon purchases were made with ARPA funds and anything after that (annual fees, etc.) will be out of pocket expenses. Mr. Corbin said we are still paying about \$35,000.00 yearly out of pocket to these two companies. Ms. Salazar agreed. Mr. Corbin said he feels that is a lot of money for what we are getting in return. Mr. Corbin asked if there is a line-item for these two expenses. Ms. Salazar said there is a line-item dedicated to E-Summons expenses, and the Axon expenses are charged to Equipment Expense for the PD. Mr. Campbell said he is hoping that once the leases are up on this equipment, we can lower these expenses by keeping the equipment and only paying a maintenance fee.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Salazar reported that the Payroll Expense is a little high this month because it includes November 26, 2025, payroll as well as Council pay and holiday bonuses. She reported that this month she worked on the following: BPOL renewals, collection of 2025 real estate and personal property taxes (delinquent bills will be mailed later this week), collection of delinquent transient occupancy and meals tax, the proposed amended budget, quarterly IRS payroll taxes are filed, quarterly VEC unemployment taxes are filed. Mr. Lang asked about a deposit with the description "Highway Safety Grant reimbursement". Ms. Salazar explained that when our officers work and are paid for the Highway Safety Gant hours, Kristie Finney, our Grant Coordinator, submits for reimbursement from the state for a portion of the money paid to them. She added that we receive it quarterly.

**Onley Town Council
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Minutes of January 5, 2026**

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Motion: To pay the December 2025 payables by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Woody Zember. 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 Council has been invited to the Onancock Volunteer Fire Department's Annual Banquet. She advised anyone who wishes to attend to contact Rickie Ross at the number on the invitation. She said the holiday lights were removed today and the tree at the park will be removed tomorrow. She reminded Council that we will be paying Carl Lee Gray \$8,500.00 for that. She told Council that Easter is early this year so if they want an Easter egg hunt, it will need to be in March. She stressed to the Council the importance of them helping with this event, adding that she cannot do this on her own. Mr. Campbell and Mr. Zember said they will be able to help. She would like to send Officer Anderson to an Advanced DUID training class in Williamsburg from March 2, 2026 – March 6, 2026. This is at no cost to the town. In the event Officer Anderson cannot attend due to personal reasons, Chief Long may go in his place. Council agreed. Mr. Lang asked Ms. Rillo if Mr. Patterson has completed the work at the Public Works garage. She said that he is finished.

Attorney's Report

Mr. Bundick had nothing to report.

Consideration of Minutes

Motion: To adopt the minutes of December 1, 2025, Regular Monthly Meeting 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

Motion: To adopt the minutes of December 9, 2025, Special Meeting by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Woody Zember. Roll Call Vote: Bloxom -yes; Campbell – yes; Corbin- yes; Ferguson- yes; Lang– yes; Zember - yes. MOTION PASSED

Public Comments

Billye D. Custis said when she, Arlene Evans and Claudia Harmon were on the Personnel Committee back in 2021, they created a pay scale with rank and experience so it can be done. She thinks the personnel policy for all employees – not just the police department - needs to be updated. Lastly, in her opinion, she feels that the Town Manager and the Chief of Police may have a lot to offer the new Employee Committee, but since they are employees, they should serve ex-officio (without the right to vote).

Ms. Salazar asked to speak and noted that she will look for the 2018 pay scale that was adopted and get that to the committee members.

Council Comments

Mr. Campbell is excited to work on the Employee Committee. He wants to figure out ways to make the town a nice place to work for the current employees as well as entice new employees to come here. He is excited about Easter and the upcoming event. He would like to see us have more events at the park. He suggested a party at the park to kick off summer.

Mr. Ferguson said he agreed with everything that Councilman Campbell said and he thanked everyone for coming out tonight.

**Onley Town Council
Regular Monthly Meeting
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Mr. Bloxom said he thinks this was a good meeting. He thinks we started our year off great. He is planning to attend the Elected Officials Conference in Richmond later in the week.

Mr. Corbin thinks this meeting was a good start. He likes the idea of a Police Committee to address some things going into the new year.

Mr. Zember thanked everyone for the work done on the police department's salary review. He thinks we had a nice meeting.

Mr. Lang said as the year goes along, we'll have people coming in and applying for the police positions. He wants us to be careful and take our time to hire the right people. He doesn't want us to hire people out of desperation. He hopes to see the proper research done when hiring people in the future.

Mayor Finney thanked everyone for a good meeting tonight. He thanked Ms. Salazar for her work on the proposed amended budget and some other things that she's been working on this past month. He added that he knows that she has been quite busy.

Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn (6:58pm) by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Brian Corbin. 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