

**Town of Onancock  
Town Council Meeting  
Monday, October 23, 2023  
7:00 PM**

**1) Call to order and Roll Call:**

Mayor Fosque called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and roll was called. Mayor Fletcher Fosque, Councilmembers Brandon Brockmeier, Ray Burger, Cynthia Holdren, Sarah Nock and Maphis Oswald were present. Councilmember Marino was not in attendance. Town Manager Matt Spuck and Town Clerk Debbie Caton were also present.

**2) The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

**3) Approve minutes from September 25, 2023**

Councilmember Oswald moved to approve the minutes. Councilmember Holdren seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

**4) Public Hearing**

a. None scheduled.

**5) Public Presentation**

a. None scheduled.

**6) Council Action**

a. None scheduled.

**7) Council discussion:**

a. **VDOT Ready, Set, Go Grant** -The Ready, Set, Go Grant is a grant offered by VDOT to prepare the engineering work and cost estimates for a final application for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant. TAP normally does things like bike paths and sidewalks. The application will be for installation of a new sidewalk from the Queen Street driveway on Ames up to the corner of Ames and Market alongside the new mural. The details of what the grant covers is included in the Town Council packet along with pictures.

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Councilmember Oswald stated connecting the parking lot to Market Street is what the sidewalk would do. Parents and children attending the theater would be benefit and be safer for it. Town Manager Spuck responded that the reply to that statement is that those families and children could use the alleyway between the Corner Bakery and the new Welcome Center. The concern with this approach is the town does not own the property in the alleyway all the way back to the parking lot. The sidewalk would be VDOT property.

Councilmember Nock asked for clarification on the location of the sidewalk. Town Manager Spuck answered her questions by pointing out the specific location on the provided photos and drawings.

Councilmember Brockmeier asked if the sidewalk location is being aligned with the original town plan? Town Manager Spuck stated he can email the original plan from Hill Studios. The Town Council was in favor for applying for the grant. Town Manager Spuck reminded everyone that the Ready, Set, Go Grant does not pay anything toward the project itself. This grant pays for the engineering and any utility movements.

- b. **Habitat for Humanity** – Town Manager Spuck explained that in 2019 the town purchased a blighted property. The property has been on the market for over two years with zero interest to purchase. Chris Guvernator, Executive Director from the Eastern Shore Habitat for Humanity (ESVAHFH) gave a presentation at the September 25, 2023, town council meeting expressing the organization’s desire to build a new home in Onancock. Town Manager Spuck’s recommendation is that we donate the property to ESVAHFH but keep the newly increased water and sewer connection fees at \$6,900. The other caveats in the contract are once a building permit is issued, they must break ground within one year and complete construction of the new house within 120 days of groundbreaking.

Councilmember Nock asked for clarification on the reference to three parcels. Town Manger Spuck explained the lots are small and the code requires 10,000 square foot lot to build. This parcel is approximately 8700 square feet. A variance may be required but proposed home will fit with the appropriate setbacks.

Councilmember Holdren moved to donate the property to ESVAHFH. Councilmember Brockmeier seconded the motion. No additional council discussion. The motion passed with a 5-0. Town Manager Spuck will advertise the Public Hearing for the sale of real property.

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**8) Committee Reports**

- **Personnel – (Cindy Holdren)**- Councilmember Holdren reported the Personnel Committee met in October to present Town Manager Spuck with his annual evaluation.
- **Onancock Main Street –(OMS) (Cindy Holdren)**- Councilmember Holdren presented the funding for the Mural Project. These funds are only available for designated VA Main Street Communities. These are not funds that the Department of Housing and Community Development just hand out to towns. There is a great deal of work that goes into these projects. The first mural project was two murals which included the alley behind the Charlotte Hotel and the second story at 39 Market St. The \$10,000 cost was fully grant funded. The second mural phase was on the Ames St. side of the Northstreet Playhouse was part of a \$37,500 grant that funded several projects. \$25,000 was from VA Main Street and required a \$12,500 match from the town. The Northstreet Playhouse mural total cost was \$25,000 which \$13,333.33 was allocated from VA Main St. funds and \$6,666.67 was allocated from the town funds.
- **Historic Onancock School (HOS) - (Sarah Nock)** –Councilmember Nock reported the following list of events are upcoming in November.
  - Wednesday, November 1, 2023 – Wine Wednesday from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
  - Friday, November 10, 2023, from 6:00 – 8:00 PM – Open Reception
  - Sunday, November 12, 2023 - Champagne and Oyster Dinner

The performance pavilion construction in a phased plan with hopes of getting something useful but will not initially be the full design. The contractors and engineers are working on the new plans to present at the next board meeting.

- **Planning Commission – (Brandon Brockmeier)** – Councilmember Brockmeier reported the Planning Commission did not meet in October.
- **Waterfront – (Fletcher Fosque)** – Mayor Fosque reported the Waterfront Committee did not meet in October.
- **Economic Development Authority (EDA)– (Joy Marino)** – In Councilmember Marino’s absence, Mayor Fosque read a report from Councilmember Marino. The first meeting was October 17, 2023, where members were sworn in by Sammy Cooper. Officers were elected and terms were established. All members will be required to do FOIA and COIA training.

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**9) Public Comment**

- Rosemary Paparo – Ms. Paparo asked if it would be possible to have all the town study plans (Town Plan, Comprehensive Plan, and the Hill Studio design plan) digitized and added to the website for everyone’s reference. She thinks this would be a valuable resource for all citizens and the Town Council.
- Talia Custis Taylor – Mrs. Taylor is running for Clerk of Circuit Court at the November 7, 2023, election. Mrs. Taylor has a 25-year background in banking and finance. Mrs. Taylor is also involved in several volunteer organizations to include the Riverside Auxiliary Hospital Ball committee. She is asking for support with early voting or on election day.
- Thelma Gillespie – Ms. Gillespie thanked the town for the new playground at the Northeast Park. She has concerns about the mulched chips that are the playground’s surface area and the potential for injuries.
- Greg Felthousen – Dr. Felthousen had an opportunity to meet with and discuss the performance pavilion issues with several of our community’s long-standing citizens. He had the pleasure of touring the Historic Onancock School (HOS) with Cindy Downing. After learning about the significance of the historic value of the school to Onancock residents it is his opinion the town government is allowing the Friends of Onancock School (FOS) to move forward with considerable efforts while working on other town business. He thinks the legal use of the special use permit (SUP) for the performance pavilion will allow the FOS to move forward while protecting our community from the possibility of mismanagement and risk to public safety. He urged all involved to take the time to establish clear guidelines upon which all parties can feel safe and protected.
- Hermana Matthews –Ms. Matthews asked for a security camera placed on her street. There was a recent shooting, and two bullets came through her house. She works various hours between Riverside Hospital and private duty nursing; therefore, she often gets home late at night and is required to leave for work early in the morning.

**10) Mayor’s Report** – Mayor Fosque reminded the audience of the Special Election being held on November 7, 2023. Mayor Fosque attended the VML Mayor’s Conference which he felt was beneficial and informative.

**11) Town Manager’s Report**

- a) Manager’s Report- see attached report in the Town Council packet.
- b) Financial Report – see attached report in the Town Council packet.

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**12) Councilmember Comments**

Councilmember Brockmeier complimented the work on the gazebo with minimal disturbance to residents.

Councilmember Nock reminded everyone the Orchestra of Eastern Shore will be playing at the Market Street Church October 27, 2023. The great pumpkin carve is Saturday, October 28, 2023, at the gazebo.

Councilmember Oswald – no comment.

Councilmember Holdren is pleased the northeast playground is a success and hopes the mulch problem can be worked out.

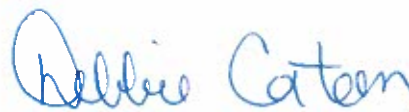
Councilmember Burger stated he was looking forward to the Halloween festivities.

**13) Closed Session: None scheduled.**

**14) Adjourn:** Councilmember Nock moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Holdren seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:21 PM.



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Mayor, Fletcher Fosque



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Town Clerk, Debbie Caton