



**OCCOQUAN TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**Town Hall – 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125**  
**Tuesday, October 15, 2019**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**Present:** Mayor Earnie Porta, Vice Mayor Pat Sivigny, Councilmembers Matthew Dawson, Cindy Fithian, Laurie Holloway, and Eliot Perkins

**Absent:** None

**Staff:** Kathleen Leidich, Town Manager; Adam Linn, Chief of Police; Julie Little, Events and Community Development Director

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Porta called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

**A motion was made by Councilmember Perkins, seconded by Councilmember Fithian that the minutes of the October 1, 2019, regular meeting be approved. Motion passed unanimously, by voice vote.**

**3. Regular Items**

**A. Visitor Center Lease Agreement**

Ms. Leidich explained that the County Tourism Office would like to continue to lease 200 Mill Street as a Visitor Center on a month-to-month basis until such time as plans for the replacement full service kiosk are finalized. She confirmed that the lease agreement had been reviewed and approved by legal counsel.

**A motion was made by Councilmember Holloway, seconded by Councilmember Fithian to authorize the Mayor to sign the Visitor Center Lease Agreement on behalf of the Town. Motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Vice Mayor Sivigny, Councilmembers Dawson, Fithian, Holloway, and Perkins, by roll call vote. Nays: None.**

**B. VRS Request Letter**

Ms. Leidich explained that the FY 2020 budget included funding for an actuarial study to provide information necessary in determining whether or not the Town would ultimately wish to participate in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) for Town employees.

**A motion was made by Councilmember Perkins, seconded by Vice Mayor Sivigny to authorize up to \$2,000 for the completion of the BRS actuarial study and authorize the Mayor to sign the request letter on behalf of the Town. Motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Vice Mayor Sivigny, Councilmembers Dawson, Fithian, Holloway, and Perkins, by roll call vote. Nays: None.**

**C. Update on Kayak Ramp Project**

Ms. Leidich updated the Council on the status of the Kayak Ramp project. Council members reiterated to Ms. Leidich the importance of keeping the project on track, noting in particular the hoped-for December 31 completion date and the environmental restrictions that would prevent work from February to June if the project schedule slipped significantly.

#### **D. Report of Events and Community Development Director**

Mayor Porta noted that in prior years Ms. Little had been asked to give her Arts & Crafts Show report in November after all related transactions had been finalized. When he was previously Mayor, however, preliminary reports had been provided to the Council a few days after the show, since most of the revenues and expenses were known prior to the show (e.g. vendor booth fees) or very soon thereafter (e.g. bus revenues and expenses). These preliminary reports proved useful to Council members in fielding inquiries from the general public and typically did not differ substantially from final numbers. For that reason he had asked Ms. Little to provide a report on preliminary results at this meeting and wanted to make certain Council members were aware that these are not final figures.

Ms. Little reported that the Fall Arts & Crafts Show had generated net revenues of \$49,000, which was approximately \$10,000 less than budgeted and approximately \$20,000 less than the fall 2018 show. She noted that the fall 2018 show had generated unusually high net revenues (approximately \$10,000 more) as a result of weather conditions in North Carolina that had led to a number of vendors substituting the Occoquan show for shows they normally attended in North Carolina. As to performance relative to budget, the major factors in the approximately \$10,000 difference were (a) security inadvertently budgeted in operations rather than in the Craft Show budget, (b) booth revenues lower because of an increase in Town business vendors replacing external vendors (Town businesses pay a lower booth fee), and (c) \$3,000 less in anticipated sponsorships.

Mayor Porta noted that he and others had thought that sponsorship revenue budgeting was aggressive as it could be hard to see the value that sponsors would receive for their sponsorship. He also noted that it was important for everyone to be aware, as had often been pointed out by Vice Mayor Sivigny, that the staff costs for the show had increased noticeably over the past five years, and that while it had certainly improved the operation of the show, it was important to keep this in mind when making historical comparisons. He noted that he had found this particular subject to be a source of confusion among some participants on the Craft Show Advisory Committee and was unsure to what extent it had influenced their conclusions. Councilmember Holloway noted that she appreciated the increased participation of Town businesses in the show. Vice Mayor Sivigny posed the question of whether or not it was worth considering raising booth fees for external vendors. Councilmembers Holloway, Fithian, Dawson, Perkins, and Vice Mayor Sivigny asked questions about the types of vendors who would be participating in the Riverfest event that is replacing the spring arts and crafts show. Some also asked about the signage that would distinguish the different types of vendors and the activities taking place in River Mill Park during Riverfest. It was agreed that Ms. Little would return at a future meeting to discuss the specific types of vendors intended for Riverfest, including how they are defined and where they will be located. At that time the Town Council will provide additional direction insofar as it is deemed necessary.

**E. Request to Purchase LIDAR Speed Detection Device from Grant**

Chief Linn explained that the highway safety grant the Town had received requiring speed enforcement included use of a LIDAR speed detection device, which needs first to be purchased by the Town. The grantor will then reimburse the Town for the purchase.

**A motion was made by Councilmember Holloway, seconded by Councilmember Fithian to authorize Town staff to purchase a Kustom Signal Pro Laser 4 LIDAR unit in accordance with the Highway Safety Grant in an amount not to exceed \$2,995. Motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Vice Mayor Sivigny, Councilmembers Dawson, Fithian, Holloway, and Perkins, by roll call vote. Nays: None.**

**F. Police Department SHIELD Program**

Chief Linn noted that Mayor Porta had asked him to investigate and report back to the Council on whether or not it would be useful to implement neighborhood and/or waterway watch programs in Occoquan. As a result of that evaluation, Chief Linn introduced officer Forman, who briefed the Town Council on the possible implementation of the SHIELD program in Occoquan, which is a program involving police, other organizations, and the local community. Neighborhood and Business Watch are a part of the program. Chief Linn indicated that there was no action for the Council at this time, but that he would keep the Council informed as the Police Department developed more detailed plans.

Mayor Porta noted that he fully supports the concept of neighborhood watches and recognizes the need for campaigns like “see something, say something,” but noted that he has also directly witnessed the latter sometimes resulting in what only could be described as profiling by citizens themselves. He requested that the issue of profiling thus be addressed in any public training. Councilmember Holloway expressed a similar sentiment and emphasized the need to adequately train police on the subject. Vice Mayor Sivigny noted that he supports the effort as well, but wanted to know the extent to which the program might adversely affect the time police have to perform their other duties. Chief Linn noted that training would include the issue of profiling. He did anticipate that the program would take some additional effort on his part, but at this time he did not believe it would adversely affect his ability and that of his officers to perform their other duties. Over the long-term the expectation is that the program would actually save time and effort on police functions.

**G. Miscellaneous**

Mayor Porta noted that some of the QR code markers he is installing under the auspices of the Occoquan Historical Society are to be placed on public property. In those instances he noted that he would ask if there was any Town Council objection. The next two markers are to be installed on the Town dock (for the 19<sup>th</sup> century dike) and by the Visitors Center (for the cooperage). There was no objection. Ms. Holloway asked that they be monitored for writing and other defacement.

Mayor Porta also asked about the white fences in front of Mamie Davis Park, noting that they were falling over. Ms. Leidich indicated that they had only been placed there to protect the flower beds during the Arts & Crafts Show and would be removed shortly.

**4. Closed Session**

Vice Mayor Sivigny moved that the Council convene in closed session to discuss the following as permitted by the Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), a personnel matter involving consideration or interviews of candidates for employment or appointment as Town Clerk. Councilmember Perkins seconded. Ayes: all, by voice vote. Closed session began at 8:06 p.m.

The Council came out of Closed Session at 8:08 p.m. Vice Mayor Sivigny moved that the Council certify that, in the closed session just concluded, nothing was discussed except the matter or matters (1) specifically identified in the motion to convene in closed session and (2) lawfully permitted to be discussed under the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act cited in that motion. Councilmember Fithian seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Vice Mayor Sivigny, Councilmembers Dawson, Fithian, Holloway, and Perkins, by roll call vote. Nays: None.

**5. Town Clerk Appointment**

**Councilmember Perkins moved to authorize the Town Manager to offer the position of Town Clerk to Katy Nicholson at a salary of \$50,000. Councilmember Dawson seconded. Ayes: Vice Mayor Sivigny, Councilmembers Dawson, Fithian, Holloway, and Perkins, by roll call vote. Nays: None.**

**6. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.



Town Clerk