

Town Council Actions: November 2021

- Adopted a resolution to set the schedule of Town Council Meetings for 2022
- Cancelled the November 16, 2021 Town Council Meeting
- Set a public hearing date for amendments to Town Code § 157.304 (B)(12) regarding illuminated signs
- Set a public hearing date for amendments to Town Code § 157.121 to permit residential use by-right in one-story buildings fronting Commerce and Ellicott Streets in the B-1 zoning district
- Set a public hearing date for amendments relating to land development process
- Set a public hearing date for the Comprehensive Plan Update

*The above items are extracts of recent actions and are not official meeting minutes.
Minutes and agendas are posted at occoquanva.gov.*

Reminder: Real Estate Tax Bills Due February 15, 2022

Residents of the town receive the benefit of services from both the Town of Occoquan and Prince William County. As a result, property owners pay real estate taxes to both the Town and County. Town of Occoquan real estate tax bills have been mailed to each property owner unless a mortgage services company has requested the tax bill. **The real estate tax for 2021 is due in one lump sum on February 15, 2022.** Most homeowners pay real estate taxes through their mortgage services company. If you do not utilize a mortgage services company, then you must pay your tax amount directly to the town. Send payments to Town of Occoquan at 314 Mill Street, P.O. Box 195, Occoquan, VA 22125. for more information go to occoquanva.gov/living-here/tax-information or contact the Treasurer at (703) 491-1918 or treasurer@occoquanva.gov.

OCCOQUAN NEWSLETTER

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TOWN OF OCCOQUAN

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Occoquan, VA 22125

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OCCOQUAN NEWSLETTER

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December 2021

TOWN COUNCIL

Earnest W. Porta, Jr., Mayor
Jenn Loges, Vice Mayor
Krys Bienia
Cindy Fithian
Laurie Holloway
Eliot Perkins



TOWN HALL STAFF

Kirstyn Jovanovich, Town Manager
Adam Linn, Chief of Police
Michele White, Town Clerk
Manuel Casillas, Town Treasurer
Julie Little, Events Director
Bucky Brill, Maintenance Supervisor
Ginny Rosell, Administrative Assistant

Mayor's Letter

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. As we move forward in the winter holiday season I want to thank everyone who helped make our Shop Late & Tree Lighting event on November 20th so successful. It was a wonderful evening and we're hoping to have many more in the coming weeks. To that end we've instituted some holiday decorative firsts in Town, adding lights to trees on Mill Street and the sycamore by the Mill House Museum, as well as by lighting the evergreens in River Mill Park. If you have not already, please make sure to swing by Town Hall and the park in the evening to get a glimpse. And don't forget to participate in the inaugural Occoquan Lights, a free holiday decorating event with four (4) categories for residences and one (1) for businesses. For more information and to register/vote go to occoquanradio.com/occoquan-lights.

Our next big holiday event occurs on December 4th when we bring Santa into Town by boat and he visits with families in River Mill Park during our Holiday Artisan Market. While Santa's maritime arrival at 10:30 a.m. on the 4th is an annual tradition in Town, the Holiday Artisan Market is new! From 11-8 on Saturday and 11-4 on Sunday, River Mill Park will host crafters working in a variety of media. There will also be caroling, fire pits, hot chocolate and more. In addition, the Market will be the site where we display the entrants in our third annual Gingerbread House Contest. The following weekend, December 11th and 12th, the park will again be the site of staged readings of *A Christmas Carol* by the Castaways Repertory Theatre. Of course, as many of you already know, the winter holidays are an extremely important time for our Town businesses, which are the largest source of Town tax revenue and thus help us keep residential real estate taxes low. Please consider them for your holiday shopping needs. You may participate in their Wine, Dine & Win Passport Event through December 12 and win a share of more than \$1,600 in gift cards! All of this is part of Occoquan's HolidayFest. For more information see elsewhere in this newsletter and go to occoquanva.gov/events.

Last this month, we bid farewell to our long-time Postmaster, Judy Chang, who is retiring. Please join me in wishing Judy the best. Thank you once again for your support and please feel free to contact me at eporta@occoquanva.gov with any comments, questions, or concerns. Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year to everyone!

Earnest W. Porta, Jr.

Holiday Artisan Market: December 4 & 5

On December 4 & 5, River Mill Park will transform into a magical shopping experience! Join us for a **Holiday Artisan Market** where artisans and crafters will offer original, handmade work in a full range of media. Santa



will visit between 11 am and 1:30 pm both days and the festivities run into the evening on Dec 4, with caroling and hot cocoa and s'more kits available at the fire pits for roasting marshmallows. Admission is free. For more information, visit occoquanva.gov.

Saturday, December 4: Market Open 11 am - 8 pm

10:30 am: Santa arrives by boat at Mamie Davis Park

11 am - 1:30 pm: Santa visits with families at the top of each hour at River Mill Park

4 pm - 8 pm: Sweets With Santa - caroling, marshmallow roasting, hot cocoa and a visit from Santa!

Sunday, December 5: Market Open 11 am - 4 pm

11am - 1:30pm: Santa visits with families at the top of each hour

Free shuttle service from the commuter lot at 123 and Old Bridge Road will be available on December 4 from 11 am to 9 pm, and December 5 from 11 am to 5 pm.

Letters to Santa Drop your letter to Santa in our special North Pole mailboxes at Town Hall (314 Mill St, Occoquan, VA) or Hitchcock Paper Co. (125 Mill St, Occoquan, VA). If you include a return address, Santa will send a personalized letter back!

Note from Postmaster Judy Chang on her Retirement:

"In everything, there is a beginning and an end. I am announcing that I will retire on December 31st of this year. I greatly appreciate all of your friendship, kindness and support for the past 16 years, which made my job pleasant in Occoquan. Please extend this support to the Occoquan staff Eric, Eleanor and the new Postmaster. I wish for you and your family to have a safe and peaceful holiday."

MEETINGS & EVENTS

DECEMBER 4 & 5

Holiday Artisan Market

River Mill Park

12/4: 11 am - 8 pm

12/3 11 am - 4 pm

DECEMBER 4

Santa Arrives in Occoquan by Boat

Mamie Davis Park

10:30 am

DECEMBER 7

Town Council Meeting

7 pm

DECEMBER 11 & 12

A Christmas Carol

River Mill Park

3 pm and 5 pm, both days

DECEMBER 14

ARB Meeting

7:30 pm

DECEMBER 15

Planning Commission Meeting

6:30 pm

DECEMBER 20

Meals and Transient Occupancy Taxes Due

DECEMBER 23, 24 and 27

Town Hall Closed for Christmas Holiday

DECEMBER 31

Town Hall closed for New Years Holiday

*Meetings held at Town Hall,
314 Mill Street,
unless otherwise noted.*



Shop, Dine & Win Passport Event: Nov 20 through Dec 12

Shop and dine at your favorite Occoquan businesses for a chance to win gift cards to use this holiday season! More information at visitoccoquan.com/holiday.

Third Annual Gingerbread House Contest

Build a fun gingerbread creation and enter to win \$50 in gift cards! You are cordially invited to enter our third annual Gingerbread House Contest! Use your imagination and gingerbread to build anything from a simple cottage to an elaborate historic reproduction.

Entries should be submitted in person on Saturday, December 4, at the entrance to River Mill Park between 9 am and 11 am. A special tent will be decorated for these deliveries and the community will be invited to vote for their favorites between the hours of 11 am and 8 pm. Winners will be announced on Sunday, December 5, at 12 pm via Facebook Live. For more information about entries and to download an entry form, visit occoquanva.gov/occoquan-events/gingerbread-contest.

Santa Comes to Occoquan by Boat on December 4

Santa will arrive by boat to the town dock in Mamie Davis Park on December 4 at 10:30 am. Kids of all ages are then invited to escort Santa to River Mill Park. He will be ready to visit with families at the top of each hour from 11 am to 1:30 pm on December 4 and 5, to coincide with the Holiday Artisan Market in River Mill Park. Santa will sing songs and tell stories and he may even let you take his photo! A free shuttle is available both days beginning at 11 am picking up from the commuter lot at Route 123 and Old Bridge Road and taking you directly to River Mill Park for your visit. For more information, visit occoquanva.gov.

A Christmas Carol: December 11 and 12

Get in the holiday spirit with a festive production of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. This staged reading from Castaways Repertory Theatre will take place outdoors in River Mill Park (458 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA). Seatings for both days are at 3 pm and 5 pm.

Tickets are \$5 for adults/youth; ages 12 and under are free. Bring camp chairs and dress appropriately for an outdoor performance! Tickets available at the door or at eventbrite.com/e/a-christmas-carol-tickets-205291561587.