



# OCCOQUAN TOWN COUNCIL

## Meeting Minutes

Town Hall – 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125

Tuesday, October 3, 2023

7:00 p.m.

**Present:** Mayor Earnie Porta; Vice Mayor Loges, Councilmembers Nancy Freeborne Brinton, Theo Daubresse, and Eliot Perkins

**Absent:** Councilmember Cindy Fithian

**Staff:** Adam Linn, Town Manager / Chief of Police; Philip Auville, Town Clerk; Julie Little, Events Director; Liz Quist, Interim Town Treasurer (remote); Jason Forman, Deputy Chief of Police; Martin Crim, Town Attorney (remote); Bruce Reese, Town Engineer (remote)

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

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

### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### 3. CITIZENS' TIME

No one spoke during citizens' time.

### 4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. September 19, 2023, Meeting Minutes
- b. Request to Adopt a resolution to Set the Schedule of Regular Town Council Meetings for Calendar Year 2024
- c. Request to Approve Purchase of Holiday Pole Lighting

**Councilmember Perkins moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Vice Mayor Loges seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

### 5. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Porta reported the following:

- On September 15th, he emceed Trivia Night in River Mill Park.
- On September 21st, he did a television segment on Occoquan History with WETA.
- One September 27th, he gave a talk at the Lake Ridge Rotary Club on recent updates related to the town.
- On September 28th, he attended the Verano ribbon cutting, and he attended VDOT's virtual meeting on I-95 and Rt. 123 intersection updates.

Mayor Porta noted the compliments he has received regarding the Town Police. Council members received a copy of the letter of appreciation a traveler expressed regarding their interaction with Office Martinez. Another letter of appreciation was received regarding an interaction with Officer Goodson. Additionally, at the Lake Ridge Rotary function a member approached the Mayor to compliment one of our officers (whose name was not mentioned) regarding a traffic infraction interaction.

## 6. COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS

Councilmember Perkins thanked staff for all the work and effort put into the Fall Arts and Crafts Show. He stated it was hard to put all the work in only to have to cancel the event because of weather.

Vice Mayor Loges noted that she assisted in discussions with the Mayor and staff on the decision to cancel the Fall Arts and Crafts Show. She also met with the Town Manager on ways for growth and future budgeting. She also thanked staff on moving from setup, to tear down, to emergency preparation in a matter of hours.

## 7. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Councilmember Daubresse reported that the Architectural Review Board (ARB) did not meet on September 26<sup>th</sup>.

Councilmember Perkins reported that the Planning Commission met on September 26<sup>th</sup>. He noted that the Planning Commission focused on their Strategic Planning and that the Planning Commission has been holding subcommittee meetings on individual topics of the Strategic Plan. He also noted that Commissioner Wood will be providing a report to the Planning Commission on water samples collected from the Occoquan River and tested by the Potomac Riverkeeper Network.

Mayor Porta asked if there are sufficient volunteers participating in the program to collect samples, or if it has been necessary for the Potomac Riverkeeper Network to send someone to collect samples. Councilmember Perkins indicated that no one from the Potomac Riverkeeper Network has had to collect samples thus far. More volunteers are needed, however, to help spread the workload of driving the samples to the Potomac River Keepers.

## 8. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mayor Porta asked for unanimous consent to move up on the Administrative Reports the Town Treasurer Report. There being no objection, the item was moved up on the agenda.

### b. Town Treasurer's Report

The interim Town Treasurer, Mrs. Quist, provided a written report as part of the agenda packet.

Mayor Porta noted that some expenses that are higher than might be expected based on the number of months passed, reflect payment dates early in the year (e.g., insurance) or the purchase of a reimbursable item. Mr. Linn noted that was correct and that the vehicle cost for the public safety vehicle will be reimbursed with a DJIS Grant.

Mayor Porta also noted the low cash balances due to real estate taxes not being collected yet and the resulting need to temporarily use funds from the reserves.

Mr. Linn confirmed Mayor Porta's comment.

Ms. Quist also noted that we are waiting on grant funds from DEQ for costs that were already spent in FY2023. She noted that the cash flow issues are temporary due to timing and will go back to normal once the grant funds come in and real estate taxes come in.

### a. Administrative Report

Mr. Linn provided a written report as part of the agenda packet.

Mr. Linn expressed his appreciation to staff and thanked them for their efforts with handling the cancellation of the Fall Arts and Craft Show.

Mayor Porta asked if there were any property owners who denied access to their property for surveying the Town's stormwater systems under the Community Flood Preparedness Fund Grant. Mr. Linn noted there were two property owners that did not give permission to access their properties for surveying the stormwater systems. Mr. Reese added that it hasn't been an issue to date and the team has been able to work around these instances without needing to be on those properties.

Mayor Porta also asked if there is any progress on the Mill at Occoquan project. Mr. Linn noted that the Town is still waiting for the demolition permit to be submitted.

Mayor Porta asked if a presentation to the Council on the Town's emergency preparedness plan could be scheduled in the future. Mr. Linn replied that he, along with Mr. Forman have been planning on giving a presentation to Council on the Town's emergency preparedness plan in November or December.

#### **b. Town Attorney**

Mr. Crim provided a written report as part of the agenda packet.

Mayor Porta noted that the Town Attorney had met with Mr. Linn regarding a potential contest to redesign the Town Seal and that for the moment the project has been tabled.

Mayor Porta asked if the language in the draft mural contract had been resolved based off the Artist's comments. Mr. Linn replied that the mural contract language had been resolved and the town was waiting to receive the signed contract from the artist.

### **9. REGULAR BUSINESS**

There were no Regular Business items on the agenda.

### **10. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **a. Discussion on Craft Show Cancellation and Holiday Season**

Mayor Porta described the process that led to the decision to cancel the Fall Arts and Crafts Show. He noted that he, the Vice Mayor, and town staff met the morning before the show and reviewed the latest weather forecast, which called for rain and high winds during the show. As a group they considered moving the Craft Show to the following weekend depending upon vendor availability. After the group telephoned as many non-town vendors as possible, it was decided that there were not enough vendors who could participate both days to justify the additional sunk costs and staff time necessary to move the show to the following weekend. Consequently given the weather forecast and concern for vendor and visitor safety (and vendor products) the Fall Arts and Crafts Show was cancelled.

Mr. Linn provided a presentation on the Holiday Season.

Mr. Linn went over the Holiday Tree Lighting event and adding a street pop-up market on Mill Street from Ellicott Street to River Mill Park for Town Businesses.

Mr. Linn also went over the Holiday Artisan Market and the plans to expand the market onto Mill Street. The two options were to close Mill Street from Union Street to River Mill Park and the second to only close Mill Street from Ellicott Street to River Mill Park. The first option would have vendors lining both sides of Mill Street up to Ellicott Street, a row of vendors on Ellicott Street, and a row of vendors going down the center of Mill Street from Ellicott to Union Street.

Town Business Owner, Pam Konwin, raised concerns about having Mill Street closed from Union Street west, indicating she believed that would negatively affect hers and other businesses.

After discussion, Council directed staff to move forward with closing Mill Street only from Ellicott Street to River Mill Park and to allow vendors in the park as well if needed.

## 11. CLOSED SESSION

**Vice Mayor Loges moved that the Council convene in closed session to discuss the following as permitted by Virginia Code § 2.2-3711 (A)(3), a matter involving: discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose specifically involving 119 Poplar Lane, because discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the City's bargaining position or negotiating strategy. Councilmember Daubresse seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

The Council went into closed session at 8:39 p.m.

The Council came out of closed session at 8:53 p.m.

**Vice Mayor Loges moved to 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 in a closed session under the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act as cited in that motion. Seconded by Councilmember Perkins. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.**

**Ayes:** Vice Mayor Loges, Councilmember Daubresse, Councilmember Freeborne Brinton,  
Councilmember Perkins

**Nays:** None

## 12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.



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Philip Auville, Town Clerk