



OCOCOQUAN TOWN COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
Town Hall - 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125
Tuesday, January 16, 2024
7:00 p.m.

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

Absent: None

Staff: Adam Linn, Town Manager / Chief of Police; Matt Whitmoyer, Deputy Town Manager; Julie Little, Events Director; Jason Forman, Deputy Chief of Police; Asma Rupani, Town Treasurer; Bruce Reese, Town Engineer (remote); Pamela O'Berry, Assistant Town Attorney (remote)

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Porta noted that Pamela O'Berry is standing in for the Town Attorney Martin Crim who had a scheduling conflict.

3. CITIZENS' TIME

No one spoke during citizens' time.

Mr. Linn introduced the new Town Treasurer Asma Rupani to the Council.

Mayor Porta noted that on the Consent Agenda item 4d, the Request to Adopt Ordinance to Amend Title III of the Town Code, is being removed from the Consent Agenda and placed under Regular Business since additional edits were proposed by the Town Attorney before consideration of the Council. The item will be moved under Regular Business.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. December 5, 2023, Meeting Minutes**
- b. Request to Reappoint Ann Kisling to the Planning Commission**
- c. Request to Accept VTC Grant**

Councilmember Perkins moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Fithian seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

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.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

b. Town Treasurer's Report

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

Mayor Porta noted that there was a significant drop in the cash balances compared to last year of over \$300,000 and noted that this is from paying for dredging services that have not yet been reimbursed from grant funds.

Mrs. Quist noted that was correct and that there was also \$140,000 in undeposited funds as well.

Mayor Porta noted that if straight lining the budget through November, we should expect to see around 40% to 45% of the budget having been spent at this time, which appears to be the case except for some budget categories where the costs tend to be incurred early in the fiscal year.

6. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Porta reported the following:

- On December 7th, he attended the Menorah Lighting in River Mill Park hosted by the Chabad Lubavitch of Greater Manassas & Gainesville.
- On December 11th, he attended the Volunteer Appreciation event at Madigan's.
- On December 13th, he provided a tour to a visiting tour company brought in by the County's Tourism Board.
- On December 13th, he chaired the Riverwalk Expansion Special Committee meeting.
- On December 28th, Sarah Burzio accompanied him and a photographer from the Washington Post to various locations in Town for an article.
- On January 10th, he attended the Institute for Defense and Business Executive Fellows Induction Ceremonial at the Army and Navy Club in Washington DC.
- On January 13th, he attended a hike sponsored with Supervisor Boddye at a new passive recreation area off of Davis Ford Road.

Mayor Porta complimented the staff on the new entrance way signage. He also complimented the Town Manager on the Administrative Report, especially on the Strategic Framework Section.

7. COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS

Councilmember Perkins noted that he attended the Volunteer Appreciation Party at Madigan's and was part of the Riverwalk Expansion Special Committee.

Councilmember Freeborne Brinton noted that she liked the new format of the Administrative Report.

Vice Mayor Loges noted that she has been working on the new Town Seal design process with Town Staff.

Councilmember Fithian noted the success of the Tree Lighting and HolidayFest events and thanked Town Staff on their efforts.

8. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Councilmember Daubresse reported that the Architectural Review Board (ARB) met on December 12th and had one agenda item with the applicant not showing up to the meeting.

Councilmember Perkins reported that the Planning Commission met on December 12th. He noted that

the Planning Commission is still continuing to work on their strategic planning.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

a. Administrative Report

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

Mayor Porta asked staff to follow up with the resident who made suggestions on the stop sign issues at the intersection of Mill Street and Ellicott Street.

Mayor Porta mentioned his appreciation that public works was planning on installing a brace for the mill stone located near the footbridge and the Mill House Museum. Mayor Porta noted that the mill stone was donated to the Town and he did not want to see it damaged.

Councilmember Freeborne Brinton asked about updates on the status of the Mill at Occoquan project.

Mr. Linn replied that the most recent information from the developer is that within 45 days he will begin demolition of the site, but staff hasn't received any permits or any other information.

Mr. Whitmoyer reported to the Council that before the Council meeting this evening there was the Quarterly Business Partnership meeting that was hosted for the first time by Visit Occoquan instead of the Occoquan Business Partners. The meeting consisted of Town reports, Visit Occoquan/ Business reports, and Public Safety Reports.

b. Town Attorney Report

Ms. O'Berry from the Town Attorney's Office noted that there will be a Local Government Day on February 1st at the Richmond Marriot Hotel for any Council Member interested in attending.

10. REGULAR BUSINESS

a. Request to Approve New Town Seal

Vice Mayor Loges noted that at the last Council Meeting the Council discussed how crowdSPRING, LLC works. A questionnaire was sent to the Council asking what they were envisioning in a new Town Seal. The overall objective was to create a Town Seal that more fully represents the town's history's important features. The current Town Seal was designed in the 1980s and depicts an unhistorical Native American of western plains origins.

Four designs were chosen to go forward to Council. The Council discussed the four designs.

Vice Mayor Loges moved to select Option #24 and adopt it as the Town Seal of Occoquan. Councilmember Fithian seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

b. Request to Adopt Ordinance to Amend Title III of the Town Code

Mr. Linn noted that after talking to the Town Attorney Mr. Crim, it was decided to change Section 34.10 (regarding the Fire Marshall) by removing the proposed language and keeping the language authorizing the Town Manager to appoint a Fire Marshall. Additionally, Section 34.30 (regarding Emergency Management) was changed so that when a local emergency is declared, the Chief of Police may act in accordance with the state code and local policy, and when not declared, the Town

Manager is empowered with the relevant authority.

Vice Mayor Loges moved to adopt Ordinance O-2024-01 to amend Title III of the Town Code as presented. Councilmember Freeborne Brinton seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

11. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. HolidayFest Recap and Look Ahead

Ms. Little provided a HolidayFest Report as part of the agenda packet.

Mayor Porta noted that the only labor costs being shown is the on-call labor. He suggested showing the working hours of the Town Staff and Police during events to get a better idea of the true costs and the extra hours worked by staff.

Council discussed how to proceed with HolidayFest in the future based on feedback from the vendors from the previous show.

b. Discussion on SLFRF Funding

Mr. Linn noted that staff is looking for Council guidance on streamlining the use of the SLFRF funding and reporting. The Town received \$949,560 of Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. The first amount was received in June of 2021 and the second amount was received in June 2022. In February 2022 staff briefed Council on the SLFRF Funds and presented potential projects with cost estimates. A public hearing was held in March 2022 and in April 2022 staff presented a revised potential project list and the Council directed staff to develop a spending plan. In June 2022, staff presented the draft spending plan on four spending areas. At the July 2022 meeting, Council approved the SLFRF Spending Plan. Since that time many projects have been modified, deleted, or delayed. It was noted that if the SLFRF funding is under \$10 million then the funds can be used for government operating costs. Staff advised they had researched what other towns and cities have done. Council members discussed the use of the remaining funds to reimburse the FY24 operating budget and then use the budgeted operating revenues for CIP in the future.

Council directed staff to come back at another Council Meeting to finalize approving that plan for the SLFRF Funds.

c. Discussion on Mill House Museum Lease and Status of Structure

Mr. Linn noted that the prior lease for the Occoquan Historical Society expired in February of 2023. Staff is looking for Council direction on moving forward with renewing a standard five-year lease and the same terms as the previous lease. The museum is in need of repairs, specifically the windows need to be replaced and there are potential issues with the roof.

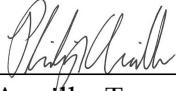
Mayor Porta, as Treasurer of the Occoquan Historical Society, recused himself from leading the discussion (staying to answer questions as needed) and delegated that to the Vice Mayor.

Ms. Vitter, the acting manager of the museum, then spoke about dry rot on the windows and doorway. The roof is currently settling, but she did not believe it needs repair at this time.

Council directed staff to keep the same lease terms for the Occoquan Historical Society.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.



Philip Auville, Town Clerk