



**OCCOQUAN TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Town Hall - 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125**  
**Tuesday, June 18, 2024**  
**7:00 p.m.**

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

**Absent:** Councilmember Cindy Fithian

**Staff:** Adam Linn, Town Manager / Chief of Police; Matt Whitmoyer, Deputy Town Manager; Philip Auville, Town Clerk; Julie Little, Events Director; Jason Forman, Deputy Chief of Police; Asma Rupani, Town Treasurer

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

As a result of personal reasons, Councilmember Theo Daubresse attended remotely from Portland, ME.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. CITIZENS' TIME**

Town business owner, Zoya Koleva, of Vizia Art Gallery, spoke on ways to bring more people into businesses on Poplar Alley. She asked if the Council would support changing the current sign code to allow more than one a-frame sign and to permit a-frame signs to be placed on Mill Street if the business is located on Poplar Alley. She further asked if the Council would add booths in Poplar Alley during the craft shows that would help move people into the alley. Finally, she asked that the Council consider placing sign/advertising boards on the main streets in Town for town businesses to advertise their business.

Mayor Porta instructed staff to follow up with Ms. Koleva and review the sign ordinance to see if the suggestions are viable within the current code.

Since there were no further citizen comments, Citizens' Time was closed.

**4. CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. **Request to Accept May 21, 2024, Town Council Meeting Minutes**
- b. **Request to Execute Contract with Aves Construction Corporation for DEQ ARPA Funded Union and Commerce Streets Occoquan River Stormwater Pipe Remediation**
- c. **Request to Execute Contract with Motorola Solutions for PremierOne Mobile and RMS for Public Safety**

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

Mayor Porta asked for unanimous consent to move up on the agenda Item 9C entitled Request to Adopt Resolution of Appreciation for Ryan Somma, Item 10C entitled Visit Occoquan Annual Report, and Item 10A entitled Riverfest 2024 Update. There being no objection, the items were moved up on the agenda.

## 5. REGULAR BUSINESS

### a. Request to Adopt Resolution of Appreciation for Ryan Somma

Councilmember Perkins read the Resolution and expressed his gratitude to Ryan Somma for serving on the Planning Commission. He also thanked Ryan and his family for all they have contributed to the community.

Mayor Porta noted that over the years the entire Somma family has volunteered and contributed in numerous ways without ever seeking recognition.

**Councilmember Perkins moved to adopt Resolution R-2024-07 recognizing Ryan Somma for his years of dedicated service to the Occoquan community. Councilmember Daubresse seconded. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.**

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

**Nays:** None

## 6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

### a. Visit Occoquan Annual Report

Ms. Burzio from Visit Occoquan provided a report as part of the agenda packet and responded to brief questions from the council.

Mayor Porta asked if the growth in followers of Visit Occoquan has met expectations.

Ms. Burzio replied that it was higher than expected and saw more of a growth in the past 6 months than they did in the entire prior year.

Mayor Porta asked about the average open rate of emails sent out and if there has been an analysis of those unopened to see how many bounced, etc.

Ms. Burzio replied that the open rate is about thirty-four percent (34%) and that there are now over 10,000 subscribers. She also noted that emails that get bounced back or can't be sent due to a full inbox are removed from the list.

Councilmember Perkins asked if in the future council could be updated on successes and things learned over the next year.

Ms. Burzio replied that would be possible. She also noted that the Visitors Guide is now going to be two issues per year due to rising printing costs. This way ad costs for Occoquan businesses don't rise.

### b. Riverfest 2024 Update

Ms. Little provided a report as part of the agenda packet and responded to brief questions from the council.

Ms. Little noted that a new promotional campaign and one-third of vendors being rescheduled from the Fall Arts and Crafts Show contributed to the record number of vendors participating during Riverfest.

Mayor Porta congratulated Ms. Little on the success of Riverfest and on the quality of the report, noting in particular its self-awareness in identifying shortcomings. He also noted the issue with the new volunteer system. In particular, he noted that not allowing volunteers to choose their days and times at sign up had caused some past and some potential volunteers not to sign up at all.

Councilmember Daubresse asked if a comparison could be made on online ticket sales for the shuttle bus to last year's numbers.

Ms. Little noted that the comparison will be sent out to Council once compiled.

Mr. Linn advised that there were approximately 900 more shuttle riders than during Riverfest 2023.

Ms. Little also noted that she sent out feedback surveys to vendors and volunteers to identify critical issues that could be addressed at the next show.

## 7. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Porta reported the following:

- On May 12<sup>th</sup>, he emceed the rescheduled Trivia Night in River Mill Park.
- On May 14<sup>th</sup>, he attended the press conference for Congresswoman Spanberger along with Council and staff.
- On May 18<sup>th</sup>, he met with the Prince William Fire Chief along with the Town Manager and he participated in the I-95/Route 123 Meeting at Occoquan Elementary School.
- On May 29<sup>th</sup>, he attended the pre-opening event for the Tiny Supply Company.
- On June 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, he participated in RiverFest, participated in the Whatever Floats Your Boat Parade, and ran the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Duck Splash.
- On June 4<sup>th</sup>, he participated with Councilmember Daubresse on a WETA segment on Occoquan.
- On June 6<sup>th</sup>, he attended and spoke at the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Prince William Resolves in Dumfries.
- On June 8<sup>th</sup>, he attended the ribbon cutting of the Tiny Supply Company and he attended the reenactment of the Prince William County Resolves Debate.
- On June 13<sup>th</sup>, he met with representatives from the East Coast Greenway Alliance along with Councilmember Perkins.
- On June 14<sup>th</sup>, he attended the ribbon cutting of Hello Jackson. He also emceed Trivia Night in River Mill Park.
- On June 15<sup>th</sup>, he attended the concert in River Mill Park.

Mayor Porta thanked staff for their efforts during Riverfest.

Mayor Porta also noted that on June 29<sup>th</sup>, the naming ceremony will be held at 10 a.m. giving the 100 block of Poplar Alley the honorary designation, "Ogle Harris Way".

## 8. COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS

Councilmember Perkins noted that he would like to discuss during the Administrative Report the performance of the Town's landscaper.

Councilmember Freeborne Brinton noted that she attended the ribbon cutting for Tiny Supply

Company and thanked staff for repairing boards on the Town Boardwalk.

Councilmember Daubresse noted that he participated with WETA on their segment of Occoquan.

## 9. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Councilmember Perkins reported that the Planning Commission met on May 28<sup>th</sup>. He noted that the Strategic Planning Report is on the agenda and awaiting further instructions from the council.

Councilmember Daubresse reported that the ARB met on May 28<sup>th</sup> and the board reviewed one exterior elevation application. Due to the item being a sculpture the ARB plans to update their guidelines to incorporate sculptures and artwork to help guide the ARB through the review process and the application will be tabled until the new guidelines are approved.

## 10. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

### a. Administrative Report

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

Mr. Linn introduced Cole Wigode, the new summer intern who will be assisting and learning with certain departments in the town government. Specifically, he will be assisting Town Hall Administration, Public Works, Public Safety, and Events.

Mayor Porta asked when the EV charger construction will begin.

Mr. Linn noted that they had begun earlier in the day, and they plan on completing the work by mid-July.

Councilmember Perkins noted that the landscaper was late planting and had only planted one type of plant. He wanted to know if in so doing they had fulfilled the contract with the Town.

Mr. Linn replied that staff believed the contractor had legally fulfilled the contract and that a meeting was held with the landscapers to discuss the issues. The next plan is for fall plantings of perennials in addition to the annual spring plantings. Mr. Linn advised that this contract was ending in FY25 and had been entered into prior to the current staff. However, he stated that a new Request for Proposals and engagement will be sent out that will be much more specific in its terms and requirements for contractors.

### b. Treasurer's Report

Ms. Rupani provided a written report as part of the agenda packet.

Mayor porta noted that if straight lining the budget we would expect to see about 83% of the budget spent at this time.

Vice Mayor Loges noted that a new sign went up at Pin Curls and noted that they are still delinquent on their BPOL.

Mr. Linn replied that delinquent notices have been sent out and the next step is to have an officer post a notice at the business.

**c. Town Attorney Report**

Mr. Crim provided a written report as part of the agenda packet. There were no questions.

**11. REGULAR BUSINESS****a. Request to Adopt Resolution Honorarily Naming the 100 Block of Poplar Alley Ogle Harris Way**

**Vice Mayor Loges moved to adopt Resolution R-2024-05 to honorarily name the 100 block of Poplar Alley "Ogle Harris Way", in honor of the contributions of Ogle Harris and his family to the Occoquan Community. Councilmember Freeborne Brinton seconded. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.**

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

**Nays:** None

**b. Request to Adopt Resolution of Appreciation for Carol Bailey**

**Councilmember Daubresse moved to adopt Resolution R-2024-06 recognizing Carol Bailey for her years of dedicated service to the Occoquan Community. Councilmember Perkins seconded. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.**

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

**Nays:** None

**c. Request to Adopt Resolution Celebrating the 34<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Rev. Dr. Charles A. Lundy as Pastor-Teacher of the Ebenezer Baptist Church**

**Mayor Porta asked for unanimous consent to add to the agenda this resolution. There being no objection the resolution was added to the agenda.**

**Vice Mayor Loges moved to adopt Resolution R-2024-08 celebrating the 34<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rev. Dr. Charles A. Lundy as Pastor-Teacher of the Ebenezer Baptist Church. Councilmember Perkins seconded. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.**

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

**Nays:** None

**d. Request to Adopt Revised Remote Participation Policy and Amend Code Section 31.028 Entitled Remote Participation**

**Councilmember Perkins moved to adopt Ordinance O-2024-02 to amend section 31.028 of the Town Code as presented and further move to adopt the policy entitled "Remote Electronic Participation by Members of the Occoquan Town Council, Boards and Commissions" as presented. Vice Mayor Loges seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

**e. Request to Name the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Army Corps of Engineers Dike in the Occoquan River**

After reviewing the list of names, the Council deferred selecting a name for the Army Corps of Engineers Dike until the next meeting.

**12. DISCUSSION ITEMS****a. Planning Commission Strategic Planning Recommendations**

The item was deferred until the next meeting in July.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.



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Philip Auville, Town Clerk