



**OCCOQUAN TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Town Hall - 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125**  
**Tuesday, July 2, 2024**  
**7:00 p.m.**

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

**Absent:** None

**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; Bruce Reese, Town Engineer (remote); Martin Crim, Town Attorney (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. Request to Accept June 18, 2024, Town Council Meeting Minutes
- b. Request to Approve Encroachment License for 302 Commerce Street
- c. Request to Approve Encroachment License for 402 Mill Street

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

**5. MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Porta reported the following:

- On June 27<sup>th</sup>, he attended the Greater Prince William Trails Coalition Meeting.
- On June 29<sup>th</sup>, he participated in the Ogle Harris Way Dedication Ceremony.
- On June 30<sup>th</sup>, he spoke at the anniversary celebration of Paster Lundy at Ebenezer Baptist Church and presented him with the Town Resolution adopted at the last meeting.

**6. COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS**

Councilmember Daubresse noted that he attended the Ogle Harris Way Dedication Ceremony and met with Ms. Little on planning the Sponsorship Breakfast.

Vice Mayor Loges noted that she attended the Ogle Harris Way Dedication Ceremony.

Councilmember Fithian noted that she attended the June Concert in River Mill Park.

## 7. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Architectural Review Board (ARB) Chair Seefeldt reported that the ARB did not meet on June 25<sup>th</sup>.

Councilmember Perkins reported that the Planning Commission did not meet on June 25<sup>th</sup>.

## 8. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

### a. Administrative Report

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

Mr. Linn added that with regard to the recent water main break at River Mill Park, Fairfax Water has agreed they are responsible for the damaged landscaping. He noted that they had already completed a large majority of the remediation and staff agreed that placing replacement sod down during the summer would not be advisable. Fairfax Water agreed to review sod placement and planting in the fall when the heat would not be a factor. Fairfax Water also suggested using mulch as an entrance way at the bottom of the stairs leading up to the LOVE sign.

Mr. Linn also added that staff was advised that Visit Occoquan still had not received their 501(c)3 non-profit status. Staff is working with the current contract and seeking legal advice to determine if they are in breach of the contract. However, Mr. Linn stated that Visit Occoquan is providing needed services at a lower cost than under prior marketing agreements. Mr. Linn reminded Town Council the main reasons for wanting Visit Occoquan to be a 501(c)3 was to help apply to Virginia Main Street Program and they would deal with the logistics of hiring subs to complete the required work.

Mr. Linn advised that Town Hall will be closed both July 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> for the Independence Day Holiday.

Mayor Porta asked if the Auxiliary Police hours include policing duties beyond helping Public Works and Events.

Mr. Linn replied that the listed hours included both policing duties and community support in public works.

Mayor Porta noted that the Best of Prince William tourist Award was awarded to the Town.

Vice Mayor Loges asked the status of the work being done for the EV Chargers.

Mr. Linn replied that so far, they have only worked on the power supply and the contractor has reported they are waiting on the EV Chargers to ship due to a back log before installing.

### b. Treasurer's Report

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

Mayor Porta asked for clarification if the report covered the month of April or May.

Ms. Rupani replied that the report covered the month of May, and the April date was an error in the report.

### c. Town Attorney Report

Mr. Crim did not provide a written report as part of the agenda packet.

Mr. Crim noted that for the month of May he received notes to review ordinance changes for accessory dwelling units in the Zoning Code.

Mayor Porta asked where staff was regarding research on limiting the sale of vaping establishments within the Town.

Mr. Linn replied that staff has meet with Vice Mayor Loges and researched what other localities have done.

Vice Mayor Loges noted that getting parameters from Mr. Crim would help in the research process. She noted potentially limiting the sales of certain products would be in accordance with protecting public health. She asked Mr. Crim if the sales could be limited in regard to proximity to where children gather.

Mr. Crim replied that there are two problems that would have to be addressed in response to protecting health. The first issue is do the fumes from the establishment affect people in public like passing by on the street. The second issue is the company selling a product that is harmful to children. He noted that courts have upheld limiting where such establishments could be located based on measurable data but that the data had to show harm to the public based on its location, not the product.

Mr. Crim discussed with Council the differences of restricting certain products based on public health and based on crime statistics.

## 9. REGULAR BUSINESS

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

Mayor Porta noted that from his research on William Craighill that he could not find anything that would suggest it would be inappropriate to name the island in the river after him for the coming year as part of the annual "Name the Island" contest.

**Vice Mayor Loges moved to adopt Resolution R-2024-09 to name the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Dike Craighill Isle, as submitted by Brandon D'Andrea, for a term of one year beginning on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and expiring on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Councilmember Freeborne Brinton seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

Mayor Porta asked for unanimous consent to move up on the agenda item 10a. There being no objection, the item was moved up on the agenda.

## 10. DISCUSSION ITEMS

### a. Speed Limit Discussion

Mr. Linn discussed that starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, a new law went into effect that permitted localities to lower the speed limits below 25 mph in business and residential districts. Prior to the new law, municipalities could not lower the speed limit without speed studies and approval from the Commissioner of Highways and VDOT. He noted that for several years there have been requests to lower the speed limit on Mill Street from 25 mph to 15 mph because of safety. Mr. Linn further commented from the police observation, it is difficult during the day to go even 25 mph just based on

the amount of people crossing the streets and from cut through traffic.

Mayor Porta noted that trying to enforce 15 mph on Mill Street would be difficult due to what was mentioned by Mr. Linn. He also noted that cars look fast when nothing else is moving faster and that loud exhausts on cars makes it sound like they are going fast.

Walt Seiberling of Poplar Lane was given the opportunity to speak and he stated that with all the people and parked cars people can't go fast as it is and probably wouldn't even notice 15 mph signs.

Mr. Linn noted that the more viable streets to lower the speed limit would be McKenzie Drive and a section of Washington Street which would help slow traffic before the crosswalks.

Mayor Porta directed staff to look into the viability of lowering the speed limit and how much signage would be needed to make it useful.

## 11. REGULAR BUSINESS

### a. Request to Adopt Proclamation Request and Issuance Policy

Mayor Porta noted that the goal is to limit Proclamations from specific individuals and groups without connection to the Town. He also noted that he would propose additional language to section 1Ei. of the proposed policy that says, "with specific ties to the Town of Occoquan."

Councilmember Fithian was concerned that this would miss out on Proclamations for honoring groups of individuals during different months such as Pride Month.

**Councilmember Perkins moved to adopt the Proclamation Request and Issuance Policy with the additional language added to section 1Ei. "with specific ties to the Town of Occoquan." Vice Mayor Loges seconded. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.**

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

**Nays:** Councilmember Fithian

Vice Mayor Loges asked if under the Staff Review Section b2 ("controversial issues") if the language is too vague.

Mr. Crim noted that Proclamations are to unite the community and not be divisive.

Mayor Porta suggested removing "controversial issues" in that section to instead say, "Proclamations should not endorse political or religious views".

**Councilmember Perkins moved to adopt the Proclamation Request and Issuance Policy as amended. Councilmember Freeborne Brinton seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

## 12. DISCUSSION ITEMS

### a. Planning Commission Strategic Planning Recommendations

Mayor Porta asked how Councilmember Perkins would like the information conveyed back to the Planning Commission.

Councilmember Perkins asked if individual sections could be reviewed to receive feedback from

Town Council and then have staff provide the written feedback direction to the Planning Commission.

Mayor Porta suggested that Town Council go through the recommendations and then draft up a memo to provide with Town Council's suggestions to the Planning Commission.

Council went at ease at 8:45 pm.

Council reconvened at 8:47 pm.

The Council discussed the six sections within the Planning Commissions Strategic Planning Recommendations to Town Council and provided feedback that will be presented to the Planning Commission in a written memo.

### **13. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:54 p.m.



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Philip Auville, Town Clerk