



OCOCOQUAN TOWN COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
Town Hall - 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125
Tuesday, February 4, 2025
7:00 p.m.

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

Absent: None

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

Mayor Porta asked for unanimous consent to add to the agenda a request to adopt a proclamation to proclaim the week of February 9th through 15th, 2025, as Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Week. There being no objection the item was added to the agenda.

Vice Mayor Loges moved to adopt the Proclamation as presented. Councilmember Fithian seconded. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

3. CITIZENS' TIME

No one spoke during citizens' time.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Request to Accept January 21, 2025, Town Council Meeting Minutes

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

5. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Porta reported the following:

- On January 27th, he attended the State of the County Forum hosted by the County Board of Supervisors Chair Deshundra Jefferson.
- On January 31st, he met with the 7th District's new Congressman, Eugene Vindman, and

accompanied him on a brief tour of the town.

- On February 3rd, he met with the Town Manager and the head of the County's Historical Preservation Division regarding the placement of a Road to Revolution Historical Marker for the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution Commemoration.

Mayor Porta noted that two bills that the town expressed opposition to that were introduced by a Democratic State Senator representing parts of Henrico County, were defeated in committee on a vote. These were SB839 which would have allowed by-right multifamily developments in areas zoned for commercial use, and SB975 which would require localities to increase their housing stock.

6. COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS

There were no Councilmember Reports.

7. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Architectural Review Board (ARB) Chair Seefeldt reported that the ARB met on January 28th and the board reviewed and approved one exterior elevation application. As required by code, the ARB also held its annual election of officers as Ms. Seefeldt was reelected to the chair position.

Councilmember Perkins reported that the Planning Commission met on January 28th and focused on their annual report and expect to have it finalized for Council at their March meeting.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mayor Porta asked for unanimous consent to move up on the agenda the Town Treasurers' Report. There being no objection the item was moved up on the agenda.

a. Town Treasurers' Report

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

Mayor Porta noted that expenses are tracking with what would be expected mid-year. He did note that some costs are paid upfront like insurance so those line items would be higher.

Mayor Porta asked if the booth rentals revenue is below budget for the craft shows because we are still receiving booth payments for Riverfest.

Ms. Little replied that is correct.

Vice Mayor Loges asked about the Mill Street Draft Garden lease if they are on track for with expectations regarding rent payments.

Mr. Linn replied that prior to their winter closing they looked to be on track to make the meals tax credit target. He also noted that the owner of the beer garden has requested permission to move some landscaping so that they could move the entrance to the sidewalk from what is now a parking space. They hope to open earlier than last year.

Vice Mayor Loges asked about the amount of funds in the Town's checking account and expressed concerns about it being over the FDIC limits.

Mr. Linn noted that transfers are made to the Town's investment fund with the Virginia Investment Pool as needed. Mr. Linn advised that staff have to manually transfer funds. He also advised that

staff would look at the policy and advise Council. Mayor Porta noted that the Council does not expect staff to seek Council approval to move excess balances into the appropriate investment or treasury vehicle. Staff should do so at their discretion.

Ms. Rupani answered brief questions on the budget sheet.

b. Administrative Report

Mr. Linn noted that prior to the meeting, a county representative had contacted staff and indicated that they are currently seeking funding to add the glass recycling container to a nearby location. This is different than what staff was told last year, when they were informed by the county that such a container would be placed in a local commuter lot by last summer.

Mayor Porta noted for clarification that the Mill at Occoquan has received a demolition permit to remove the steel structures but not for the buildings themselves. To be able to remove the steel the developer doesn't need to have the demolition permit for the buildings at the same time, but he cannot adversely affect the buildings when he removes the steel.

Mayor Porta complimented staff on having the storm drains cleared before storm events.

Mayor Porta also noted that he spoke with Supervisor Boddye about the Town's desire for the County to purchase the Tanyard Hill property from the town for park space. He also made sure he conveyed that Town Police would assist with patrols in the area of the park as part of their normal patrol patterns.

Councilmember Daubresse asked when we should expect implementation of the storm water grant.

Mr. Linn replied that last week staff had a meeting with the program manager at EPA and are hopeful that by the end of this fiscal year or the beginning of the next fiscal year the improvements to the storm water system will begin.

c. Town Attorney's Report

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

Mr. Crim noted that one of the bills that town opposed -- HB2641 to increase locality housing stock and create a Housing Approval Board -- was amended and passed the House.

Mr. Crim also noted that there are two bills in the House Finance Committee, one of which would cap meals taxes and the other that would allow taxation on vapes.

9. REGULAR BUSINESS

a. Request to Adopt Ordinance to Amend Title IX of the Town Code

Vice Mayor Loges moved to adopt the ordinance as presented. Councilmember Perkins seconded. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

b. Request to Set Public Hearing on Adoption of Cigarette Sales Tax Ordinance

Mr. Linn noted that staff was proposing the public hearing to be held with the rest of the taxes for FY2026 on May 20th.

Mr. Linn also noted that he has confirmed that cigars are not taxable under the code section.

Vice Mayor Loges moved to set a public hearing date of May 20, 2025, on the adoption of a tax on the sale of cigarettes. Councilmember Fithian seconded. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Vice Mayor Loges noted that currently no businesses in town are selling cigarettes and there are no current plans for any businesses to sell cigarettes. This is preemptive action by the Town and for the town to be a member of the Northern Virginia Cigarette Tax Board (NVCTB).

c. Request to Adopt Resolution Referring Zoning Text Amendment on Certain Short-term Recurring Zoning Offenses to Planning Commission

Mayor Porta noted that both the Planning Commission and Town Council would need a public hearing on this and that to save time and money it would most likely be a joint public hearing.

Councilmember Perkins moved to adopt the Resolution to refer amendments to the Planning Commission for its recommendation after public hearing. Vice Mayor Loges seconded. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

10. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mayor Porta asked for unanimous to move up on the agenda the FY2026 Budget Schedule and Strategic Framework Discussion. There being no objection the item was moved up on the agenda.

a. FY2026 Budget Schedule and Strategic Framework Discussion

Mr. Linn presented the proposed FY2026 Budget Schedule.

Due to conflicts with planned absences at the planned April 1st Council Meeting, the Town Council Budget Work Session #3 needed to be rescheduled. Mr. Linn advised he would come back to council with an updated schedule.

Mr. Linn provided a printout to Council on the Strategic Framework.

Mayor Porta recommended that Councilmembers review the printout and then review the Strategic Framework at their next meeting.

b. 2025 Town Events Calendar Discussion

Ms. Little provided a list of the events calendar for the 2025 year.

Ms. Little discussed and answered brief questions on the events calendar. Then she

discussed the winter holiday events to include bringing back the Holiday Artisan Market with a plan to have it encompass Union Street and Commerce Street in the center of town. The Holiday Artisan Market would have the shuttle drop off site at Mamie Davis Park and pick up on Ellicott Street to help visitors to walk through town. There would also be a fire light event on the Saturday night along with a shop late. The fire light event would be similar to the prior Tree Lighting fire light and would be located on Commerce Street just east of Union Street. The Tree Lighting event would focus more on the shopping late aspect and have the fire pits relocated to both ends of town in order to create more movement of visitors/shoppers. The fire pits would be located in the cul-de-sac on Mill Street and the other at in the Town parking lot near Urban Posh to provide places for temporary enjoyment of the fire light. Staff indicated it was planning on seeking vendors or Visit Occoquan to sponsor the fire light part of the event. Significant discussion followed.

Councilmember Perkins moved to endorse staff's plan on the events for calendar year 2025. Vice Mayor Loges seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.



Philip Auville, Town Clerk