



Thank OCCOQUAN TOWN COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
Town Hall – 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125
Tuesday, May 19, 2026
7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Earnie Porta; Vice Mayor Jenn Loges, Councilmembers Robert Love, Theo Daubresse, Eliot Perkins, and Cindy Fithian

Absent: None

Staff: Adam Linn, Town Manager / Chief of Police; Megan Lubash, Town Clerk / Assistant Town Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

Mayor Porta asked for unanimous consent to move the regular business item 4A, "Request to Adopt Resolution R-2026-07 regarding Share the Air Policy in Town Parks" which was given.

2. REGULAR BUSINESS

a. Request to Adopt Resolution R-2026-07 regarding Share the Air Policy in Town Parks

Two high school students from Potomac High School, Na'Yema M. and Maame Q. gave a presentation on Y Street's program 'Share the Air' which promotes tobacco, vape, and cigarette free parks and outdoor spaces. Both students went over the presentation giving personal reasons why they are for this policy and they urged the Town of Occoquan to join the other 50 Virginia Counties, Cities and Towns to adopt this voluntary resolution.

Mayor Porta acknowledged the excellent job both youths had put into their public address. Councilmember Perkins asked when this program started and the program manager, Kiran D. noted that it started in 2019.

Councilmember Love asked if there could be any enforcement on this policy and Town Manager Linn noted that this was a voluntary policy and would primarily be implemented with signage and education.

Vice Mayor Loges remarked that she had met with the group virtually a few weeks prior and that she was excited to add this signage to the Town's parks. Councilmember Perkins and Councilmember Fithian also noted their support for the resolution.

Vice Mayor Loges moved to adopt Resolution R-2026-07 to adopt a voluntary "Share the Air" tobacco-free and vape-free policy for town parks and recreational areas. Councilmember Perkins seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

The Mayor, Vice Mayor, and all councilmembers took photographs with the two student presenters.

3. PUBLIC HEARING

a. FY 2027 Proposed Budget Hearing

Mayor Porta opened the public hearing at 7:19 p.m. No people spoke at the public hearing. Councilmember Fithian moved to close the public hearing. Councilmember Perkins seconded. The

motion passed by unanimous voice Vote.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Request to Accept April 7, 2026, Town Council Meeting Minutes

Councilmember Daubresse moved to approve the request to accept the consent agenda.

Councilmember Love seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

5. REGULAR BUSINESS

b. Request to Adopt FY 2027 Tax Rates

Councilmember Perkins moved to set a real estate tax rate for the Fiscal Year 2027 beginning July 1, 2026, of \$0.116 per \$100 of assessed valuation. Councilmember Fithian seconded. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Councilmember Fithian moved to set a meals tax rate for the Fiscal Year 2027 beginning July 1, 2026, of three and one-half percent (3.5%). Vice Mayor Loges seconded. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Councilmember Love moved to set a transient occupancy tax rate for the Fiscal Year 2027 beginning July 1, 2026, of seven percent (7%). Councilmember Perkins seconded. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Vice Mayor Loges moved to set the cigarette sales tax for the Fiscal Year 2027 beginning July 1, 2026, at the rate of \$0.40 per pack or \$0.02 cents per cigarette sold. Councilmember Love seconded. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

c. Request to Adopt FY2027 Annual Budget

Councilmember Daubresse moved to adopt the Fiscal Year 2027 General Fund Budget beginning July 1, 2026, as presented in the amount of \$1,586,786 in expenses and \$1,586,786 in revenue and appropriate the funds for the expenses shown in the budget. Councilmember Fithian seconded. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Councilmember Perkins moved to adopt the Fiscal Year 2027 Events Fund Budget beginning July 1, 2026, as presented in the amount of \$236,379 in expenses and \$323,797 in revenues and appropriate the funds for the expenses shown in the budget. Councilmember Daubresse seconded. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Vice Mayor Loges moved to adopt the Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Improvement Plan beginning July 1, 2026, as presented in the amount of \$1,389,231 in expenses and \$1,389,231 in revenues and appropriate the funds for the expenses shown in the budget. Councilmember Perkins seconded. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Councilmember Daubresse moved to adopt the Fiscal Year 2027 Mamie Davis Fund Budget beginning July 1, 2026, as presented in the amount of \$0 in expenses and \$1,000 in revenues and appropriate the funds for the expenses shown in the budget. Councilmember Fithian seconded. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Councilmember Fithian moved to adopt the Fiscal Year 2027 E-Summons Fund Budget beginning July 1, 2026, as presented in the amount of \$13,160 in expenses and \$15,000 in revenues and appropriate the funds for the expenses shown in the budget. Councilmember Love seconded. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

d. Request to Approve Funding to Construct an Event Deck Behind Mill House Museum and Related Services

Town Manager Linn updated Town Council on the second quote for the deck project behind the Mill House Museum. This quote did not have a firm price and the quote ranged from a minimum of two hundred thousand dollars to four hundred thousand dollars because of the unknown variables at play. After conversing with Town Engineer Reese and the engineer from the company providing the second quote, Town Manager Linn reported that Town Staff recommended approving funding for a geotechnical survey and for tree removal behind the Museum.

Mayor Porta asked if the new contractor had stated that they need a geotechnical survey to understand the composition of the soil better in order to be more certain of the cost, while Prince William Home Improvement had stated that they were confident that they would be able to build at their quoted price without having done that geotechnical work in advance. Town Manager Linn affirmed that this was the case.

Town Manager Linn noted that the Town Engineer and his company believed that the geotechnical survey could be done competently for approximately five thousand five hundred dollars for the area behind the deck. Mayor Porta noted that this was for the portion behind the Museum and not the entire Riverwalk, which the Town Manager affirmed.

Vice Mayor Loges made known that she was strongly against removing the trees behind the Mill House Museum until the Town's selected contractor is ready to build as the shade the trees provide helps substantially to keep the museum cool. She also noted that the roof is in need of an update and cutting the tree early would create an economic burden on the Museum to maintain the building cool.

Councilmember Perkins asked Town Manager Linn if both contractors had had engineers out to look at the site. Town Manager Linn replied that only Prince William Home Improvement had had an engineer out to assess the area. He also noted that both companies were supplied with a 2017 geotechnical survey of the adjacent property that had topography lines extending into the Mill House Museum property.

Mayor Porta noted that while he wanted to get the best price, he was worried that the project may be left half done in the event Prince William Home Improvement, in the absence of a geotechnical analysis, starts building and finds the soil makes the work untenable at the price they quoted, or that they cannot build in a fashion that will pass county inspection for a commercial structure. He also noted that if the town proceeds with a geotechnical survey behind the Museum then perhaps the town should go ahead and complete the survey for the entire Riverwalk project, with the results of the area behind the Museum being made available first.

Councilmember Daubresse stated his trepidation that with the Prince William Home Improvement quote there would perhaps be change orders that caused the price to balloon from the original amount.

Mayor Porta noted that he did not want to lose momentum on this project. Councilmember Daubresse suggested that after getting the geotechnical survey results, this project should be sent out as a request for proposals to various commercial deck companies. Councilmember Fithian agreed noting that the difference in quotes was substantial and it would be useful to see where more quotes fell.

Vice Mayor Loges noted that after reading the relevant sections of the Town's Comprehensive Plan she was now favorably inclined toward making a deck amenity open in a fashion similar to Mamie Davis Park or River Mill Park, as this would be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

Vice Mayor Loges moved to approve a geotechnical evaluation for the area around the Mill house Museum and the Riverwalk project and appropriate funds from the Fiscal Year 2026 Town Budget in an amount not to exceed one hundred thousand dollars. Councilmember Perkins seconded and the motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Perfluorooctane Sulfonate Follow-up Discussion

Assistant Town Manager Lubash gave a follow up presentation on perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) and per- & poly- fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) levels in fish and water in the Occoquan Reservoir. She noted that two house bills passed in 2024 and 2025 caused the Department of Environmental Quality and Virginia Department of Health to look into the levels of forever chemicals in Virginia waterways. She then showed the Town council the sites where the fish and surface water samples were taken and the high levels of PFAS found in all samples.

Vice Mayor Loges lauded Assistant Town Manager Lubash's research and presentation. She noted that when she originally heard how few fish and samples were taken that she was skeptical if the results were as concerning as the advisory was painting it. When seeing that there were few fish, but all samples above and below the Town of Occoquan were highly contaminated with various forever chemicals, she then better understood the severity. While there were no samples in Occoquan, she no longer saw testing of fish from within the Town as necessary as all samples in the vicinity showed the same concerning levels of PFAS.

Mayor Porta asked if seven fish was a normal size of fish for a sample of this magnitude. Councilmember Perkins noted that this was one point on the sample and that the study was not just of and for the Occoquan watershed, but the state of Virginia, making this one data point of hundreds each containing several fish over various years. He also wanted to know when the next samples in the Occoquan were going to be done. The Assistant Town Manager noted that the reports had repeated sampling happening three to four years from the initial sampling.

Councilmember Daubresse asked about the parts per trillion of these chemicals in the fish sample at the Occoquan. Assistant Town Manager Lubash noted that while the fish samples did not get into the maximum level in Virginia, they did get into the most concerning level of contamination in all species and water sampled.

Councilmember Love noted that they are testing the water and have been testing it in the Potomac Watershed. Councilmember Perkins asked about the source of the contamination which Assistant Town Manager Lubash noted that airports and military bases were a large source. Councilmember Love noted that Vint Hill was also a source of PFAS contamination.

Assistant Town Manager Lubash noted that there were over seventeen thousand forever chemicals that the Environmental Protection Agency tracks and that there were millions more. In how Occoquan should handle this problem, Assistant Town Manager Lubash noted that the Town could: attend or monitor the minutes of the PFAS Expert Advisory Panel; inform anglers at fish themed events about catch and release or catch and kill; test the river or fish privately or; look into possible litigation.

Vice Mayor Loges noted that she, Town Manager Linn and Assistant Town Manager Lubash had talked about those in the meeting and she was against signage. She also noted testing was moot given the information presented to her and that the litigation mostly focused on drinking water or health concerns and not recreational usages.

After the presentation, Mayor Porta noted that salt is a major contaminant in the reservoir. Micron, VDOT and municipalities salting the road are some of the significant sources, according to what he has read. He noted that if the Town decides to take a public position on PFAS in the water, then we should for consistency's sake also look into reducing or eliminating the town's contribution to salt levels in the river.

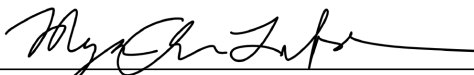
7. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Porta noted that Governor Spanberger had vetoed the collective bargaining bill as well as the cannabis bill that Town Council had been discussing for the past few months.

Mayor Portas also saw a good news story about the crab population in the Chesapeake bay increasing by 40 percent.

Vice Mayor Loges noted that the crab cakes at the Artisan Butcher are very good and she highly recommended others try them.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.



Megan Lubash, Town Clerk