



OCCOQUAN TOWN COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Town Hall – 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125

Tuesday, February 3, 2026

7:00 p.m.

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

Absent: None

Staff: Adam Linn, Town Manager / Chief of Police; Megan Lubash, Town Clerk / Assistant Town Manager; Jason Forman, Deputy Chief of Police; Kristin Shaw, Town Treasurer; Phillip Auville, Deputy Town Treasurer; Martin Crim, Town Attorney

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

Mayor Porta noted that Martin Crim, Town Attorney was attending remotely.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. CITIZENS' TIME

No residents spoke during Citizens' Time.

Mayor Porta wanted to thank Town Staff for handling the 'snow-crete' and mentioned he would like to talk about snow removal later in this meeting.

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

3. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Request to Accept the January 20th, 2026 Minutes

Councilmember Fithian moved to approve the request to accept the January 20th minutes.

Councilmember Love seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

4. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Porta reported the following:

- On January 9th, he attended the ribbon cutting of Aspire Counseling.
- On January 17th he attended the inauguration of Governor Spanberger. He also noted that Town business "Hello Jackson" participated in the Virginia Artisan Market.
- On January 27th he testified remotely before the House of Delegates General Laws Subcommittee on ABC and Charitable Gaming regarding cemetery legislation that is being carried by Delegate Sewell. Town Manager Linn and Town Attorney Crim both reviewed the legislation in their free time.

- On January 30th he attended the visitation and funeral of long time Occoquan town resident Don Ohs with Town Manager Linn and several Occoquan Police Department members.
- On January 31st he and Councilmember Daubresse attended the US Pakistan International Chamber of Commerce.

5. COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS

Councilmember Perkins noted that he attended the ribbon cutting on January 9th and noted it was very warm and inviting.

6. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The Architectural Review Board and Planning Commission did not meet in January due to inclement weather.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

b. Administrative Report

Mayor Porta talked about the Riverwalk extension project. The Mayor indicated that the Town should not expect money from the state and was thinking of actions that Town could take to continue this project. The Mayor asked if councilmembers would be agreeable to reconvening the Riverwalk Special Committee.

Councilmember Love mentioned the goal of connecting the riverwalk in places where it is currently possible should be the immediate goal. He stated doing the assessments and valuations could be done easily. Councilmember Love agreed that the committee would be a great vehicle to discuss funding opportunities, construction, and feasibility of the Riverwalk.

Mayor Porta asked Town Attorney Crim if there could be a closed session in regards to the Riverwalk later this meeting which Town Attorney Crim said was acceptable.

Mayor Porta asked if it was possible that capital such as the unmanned arial vehicle can be publicized. Town Manager Linn said it was fine to let the public know that those items were received from grants. The Mayor indicated that he had received a complaint saying the Town wasted its money on drones and other items when there were issues with snow removal, but explained to the individual that the much of the funding for specific public safety equipment was received through donations or grants.

Councilmember Love thanked Assistant Town Manager Lubash and Maintenance Associate James Auville for their work in the Mill Street Museum renovation.

No other questions were raised with respect to the Administrative Report.

c. Town Treasurer's Report

Mayor Porta noted that based on his normal tolerance checks for expenditure through this part of the year appeared to be in normal ranges. He inquired about very delinquent business and if they were still in operation. Councilmember Fithian and Town Treasurer Shaw noted that this business was no longer active in the Town. Town Treasurer Shaw noted that the FY2026 audit was soon to be finished.

Mayor Porta then asked what was the process of handling delinquencies that the town would not likely collect. Town Manager Linn replied that he would have to look into it further but that the Town does not write it off. Town Attorney Crim noted that if the debt was deemed uncollectable then there is a formal process where Town Council relieves the Town Treasurer from the duty to collect.

Mayor Porta asked if Town Attorney Crim knew the statutes of limitations for delinquent Business, Professional, & Occupation License taxes to which he replied that he would have to look it up.

Mayor Porta noted that the Town Meal's Tax was on par with previous years. Town Treasurer Shaw noted that there are fifteen thousand dollars outstanding from three delinquent businesses on the report. She is formulating a priority list for the Town and the Business Owner.

Councilmember Love asked if they could perform in-kind work in lieu of the tax. Town Treasurer Shaw responded that the work would be taxable as a 1099 income and there would have to be a contractor since there are separate companies: one doing services and the other being a restaurant.

Vice Mayor Loges added that making sure the contract was related to outcomes versus hours to incentivize efficiency would be beneficial.

d. Town Attorney's Report

Town Attorney Crim researched the statute of limitations for uncollectable taxes that was five years. There were no questions in regards to the Town Attorney's report.

8. REGULAR BUSINESS

e. Request to Approve and Authorize the Town Manager to Execute Agreement with Axon Enterprise, Inc. to Transfer Current Officer Safety Plan to an Updated Officer Safety Plan

Vice Mayor Loges moved to approve and authorize the Town Manager to execute agreement with Axon Enterprises, Inc. to transfer current officer safety plan to an updated officer safety plan. Council member Perkins seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

f. Budget Work Session #1 (Schedule and Strategic Framework) Discussion

Town Manager Linn provided an overview of the budget work session and how it will continue from February until May. He explained that the proposed date of FY27 Budget Submitted to Council and available to the public was changed to Friday, April 24th, 2026 to allow for sufficient time for the public to be able to review it prior to the Public Hearing on May 5th, 2026.

Assistant Town Manager Lubash then reviewed the strategic framework starting with an overview of capital tiers and operations tiers.

In Capital Tier 1, Mayor Porta mentioned that we are at a disadvantage for receiving an earmark from the federal government because of a recent award. He reiterated that parking is something to prioritize and direct staff on trying to work with private property owners and parking applications to increase parking. Councilmember Fithian brought up reaching out to the property owners at 401-

411 Mill Street for additional parking.

There was discussion regarding whether to remove completed items from the strategic plan. Mayor Porta suggested removing completed projects from the list, noting that the framework is intended to assist with future budget planning. Vice Mayor Loges agreed that removing completed items would help keep the focus on upcoming priorities.

Councilmember Perkins expressed concern about removing projects, stating that doing so might cause the public and Council to lose sight of what has already been accomplished. Town Manager Linn clarified that all categories would continue to be reflected in the monthly administrative report, even if individual completed items were no longer listed in the strategic plan, they would still be shown in the quarterly updates.

Councilmember Love asked whether retaining the category titles while removing completed projects might be a good approach, as this would preserve the structure of the plan while still allowing new projects to be added within those categories.

In Capital Tier 2, Councilmember Perkins mentioned removing glass recycling from the Pursuing Energy Efficiency and Sustainability tier. Councilmember Fithian asked if, under the improving Town Gateways, if a banner could be added to the side of Tanyard Hill gateway where the Town advertises events year-round. The Mayor and Councilmembers agreed that this would be a worthwhile project to investigate.

Continuing in Capital Tier 2, Mayor Porta asked which part of Town Staff was handling the new holiday push. Town Manager Linn and Assistant Town Manager Lubash indicated that it was a whole Town Staff endeavor utilizing Events, Public Safety, Public Works, and Administration.

In Capital Tier 3, Vice Mayor Loges inquired about the timed parking equipment. Town Manager Linn responded that it was new software as the previous license expired. Vice Mayor Loges noted that she is in favor of capital investments such as automating and lessening the time and administrative burden on the police officers. Council members asked about other items they expected in the Public Safety Projects as they cannot anticipate items that are not listed. Town Manager Linn noted that many projects for this year were expected to use general funds and not capital improvements. Deputy Chief of Police Forman reiterated that there are many projects the Police would like to ask for, but Public Safety would like to be a good steward of taxpayer funds. Both Town Manager Linn and Deputy Chief Forman mentioned the grants the Town applies for and receives is usually how they pursue large ticket items and stretch goals.

Continuing in Capital Tier 3, Mayor Porta asked where snow removal services would be categorized. Town Manager Linn explained that the classification would depend on whether the issue related to contractual operations (which would fall under the operational tier) or to equipment needs (which would fall under the capital tier).

While Public Safety staff assisted with clearing the Town during the recent snow event, Town Manager Linn cautioned that this should not be assumed as a regular responsibility, as not all public safety personnel are available or suited for these activities. Mayor Porta suggested that willingness to perform such duties could be considered as a selection criterion for future staff; however, Town Manager Linn advised against making this a hiring expectation.

Town Manager Linn further explained that the Town's snow removal contract is structured so that the Town authorizes specific services at a predetermined rate established in the Fall. Mayor Porta

requested the addition of a new Public Works bullet to include snow removal equipment.

In Improving Town Properties, Councilmember Love asked to include bullet points for the Old Visitor Center and Mill Street Museum as there are future projects for those buildings. Vice Mayor Loges brought up including the pocket parks at the Mill Street Storage as well as other future opportunities in the Town for small parks.

In Operational Tier 1, Councilmember Perkins mentioned speaking and talking with the contractors to ensure that it is more intentional and beautiful than it has been in previous years.

In Operational Tier 2, Mayor Porta mentioned that Visit Occoquan will not be able to keep up with the requirement of Virginia Main Street without substantial money or Town Staff time investment. With respect to IT security and protocols as part of Operational Tier 2, Deputy Chief Forman mentioned that IT security and protocols are constantly being innovated and changed so they need to remain.

Vice Mayor Loges wanted to explore how to get people to engage with the town for longer periods of time and wanted to add a bullet to an operational tier for this purpose. Mayor Porta remarked that timed parking in Town was set at 4 hours as it was enough time to eat a meal, shop, and take in the river. Councilmember Perkins mentioned finding a way for people to spend more time in town by increasing the use of the river. Vice Mayor Loges clarified that the goal should be to attract visitors earlier and to figure out a way to get them to spend more with experiences. Ultimately, Vice Mayor Loges directed staff to add 'Exploring Off-peak Opportunities' to the operational tier.

10. CLOSED SESSION

Vice Mayor Loges moved that the Council convene in closed session to discuss the following as permitted by Virginia Code § 2.2-3711 (A)(8), consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel relating to the discussion of real property for the Riverwalk. Councilmember Love seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

The Council went into closed session at 8:35 p.m.

The Council came out of closed session at 9:03 p.m.

Vice Mayor Loges moved to certify that, in the closed session just concluded, nothing was discussed except the matter or matters (1) specifically identified in the motion to convene in closed session and (2) lawfully permitted to be discussed in a closed session under the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act as cited in that motion. Seconded by Councilmember Fithian The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Ayes: Vice Mayor Loges, Councilmember Daubresse, Councilmember Fithian, Councilmember Love, Councilmember Perkins

Nays: None

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Megan Lubash', written over a horizontal line.

Megan Lubash, Town Clerk