

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

November 26, 2007

7:00 p.m.

TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Duke Shannahan
Kathyanne Runniger
Kay Wescott

George Miles
Fletcher Fosque
ABSENT: Maphis Oswald

OTHERS PRESENT:

Bruce Paone, Mayor
Susan D. Scott, Town Mgr.
Jeff Barrett
Vera Bruton
Valena Gibb
Kris LaMontagne

Karen Simpson, Adm. Asst.
Anne Nock
Haydon Rochester
Diane Smith, Auditor
Shirley Zamora

- I. Mayor Paone called the Town Council meeting to order, after which the Pledge of Allegiance and invocation were recited.
- II. Consideration of Minutes of October 22 and November 5, 2007 Meetings. Councilman Miles made the motion to approve the October 22 and November 5, 2007 meeting minutes, Councilwoman Runniger seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
- III. Public Comment. Anne Nock commented that the Town's Christmas decorations were beautiful. She encouraged the crowd to promote the school project by attending the Christmas Home Tour and concert. She passed out some posters.

Vera Bruton asked for assistance in making cakes for the gazebo event after the Christmas Parade on December 15th. She announced that Robert Postell would be helping her again this year, as well as Scott & Martha Landreth and Sheila Spelman. Shirley Zamora offered to bake a sheet cake.

Shirley Zamora is concerned about the Town's debt. She noted that properties generally were selling for 15-35% below the asking prices, and wondered why the Town bought the large parking lot from BB&T for nearly one million dollars – full price. She suggested the Town get three (3) appraisals for the property, not just one (1), and take the middle appraisal.

Kris LaMontagne gave a report at the Town Manager's request. The Home Tour brochure will be out shortly. The Orchestra of the Eastern Shore will be at each house on the tour. He attended two meetings at the Town Manager's behest: 1) Branding - a draft is in process; the group will put out guidelines re the tag line "You'll Love Our Nature" with a logo including our peninsula. This logo will be used on correspondence, brochures, stickers, postcards, etc. Incentives will be drafted for B&B's, aquaculture, restaurants, etc. Lift-off will be in January or February. The Tourism Commission will put the history of the Eastern Shore on the Internet so people plug in and use the logo and other information. TODS = Tourism Oriented Directional Signage - they are working with VDOT to get signs up. Hopefully Towns, businesses and civic organizations will chip in for the cost of signage after the first year, which may be paid by the group. Funds may be available from the Gateway program and T-21 grants. The consistency of use of the tag line and logo is visited in the guidelines. Another group meeting is scheduled in a couple of weeks.

2) Broadband - Onancock needs a spur to connect to fiber optic cable running down the spine of the Shore. VHCD needs a commitment from Onancock soon before construction begins. Verizon and Charter Communications will have to join the cooperative to extend the line into Onancock. The OBCA is requesting the Town to make the commitment soon. Mr. LaMontagne has provided a template resolution and letter of commitment for this process. Parksley has already completed the paperwork and committed. There are ways to complete this project. A business plan will have to be written. Many businesses need the higher speed broadband in order to do their work.

The first step is the letter of commitment. The next step is to form a committee to write a business plan. Councilman Shannahan offered to be on the committee with Mr. LaMontagne, and recommended the committee utilize the expertise of Evan Clements when he feels better.

Councilman Miles made a motion to adopt the resolution in support of the broadband endeavor, Councilman Shannahan seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Members of the core committee at this time are: Kris LaMontagne, Harry Brough and Duke Shannahan. A request was made for any other people who might be interested to contact Mayor Paone.

Councilman Shannahan, Chairman of the Advocacy Committee for Housing, spoke about the new Accomack Manor near Parksley, which has 93 units for people, aged 55 and older and 17 units for people aged 45 and older. All units need to be leased by the end of 2007 in order not to lose tax credits. The current deal is one cent for the first month and one cent for the security deposit -- \$303 a month for one bedroom and \$330 a month for two bedrooms. There are two elevators, two laundry rooms, computer room, cable TV, handicap accessible, community activity room with a full kitchen, fitness room, on-site management, one pet per unit, security code entry and Star Transit access for \$2 a trip and \$3 for an individualized trip. Rent is based on income with a one-year contract.

- IV. FY 2006-2007 Audit. Diane Smith presented the audit report. The introductory portion of the report includes management's discussion and analysis written by the Town Manager, which provides a readable informative document discussing the financial picture for the current year and the future. The financial statements are presented on a government-wide basis. Total assets are \$2,074,241 for government funds. Total assets for the proprietary (water/sewer) fund are \$5,692,396. Mrs. Smith spoke of the financial highlights, including statement of net assets, statement of activities, balance sheet of governmental funds, reconciliation's statement of revenues, expenditures and changes, statements of cash flows and notes to financial statements. Mrs. Smith strongly recommended the Town acquire some accounting assistance for the Town Manager – a strong bookkeeper. The Auditing Standards Board sets standards for auditors. One of the new standards is that financial statements are the responsibility of the entity. If the entity lacks the accounting expertise, then there is a material weakness in their internal control, which they must respond to. The Town Manager advised that there are funds in the budget for a part-time bookkeeper this year, and she will advertise for one after Christmas. The

auditor advised that there is nothing materially incorrect with our accounting procedures. She also advised that last month BB&T was hired to do the Town's payroll, which she hardily endorsed.

- V. Mayor's Report. Mayor Paone commented that the water tower is up and it looks nice. Steve Walton will start work shortly on the Ethel Lewis. He suggested Council look into allowing the Town police officers to drive the police cars to and from home during a scheduled several-day shift. Councilman Fosque suggested giving them a raise instead. This issue will be discussed by the Personnel Committee after the first of the year for inclusion in the FY 08-09 budget.
- VI. Town Manager's Report. i. Correspondence: a) letter to ES Rural Health confirming guaranteed access to the IDA wastewater main, and advising we would be able to accommodate them when our new wastewater plant is on line by September 2010; b) letter to the County Administrator advising of the Town's desire to work with the Blue Ribbon Committee regarding County wastewater issues; c) letter to Laura Belle Gordy requesting \$5,000 from the Supervisor's drainage funds to replace some pipe and repair bulk heading on Water Street; d) letter from Dept. of Historic resources denying the Onancock High School a listing in the National Register of Historic Places, but advises that new information will be considered at the next evaluation meeting; e) letter from the Onancock Rotary Club touting the fiber optic spur into Onancock; f) FOIA request and answer re Turner Sculpture; and g) correspondence to and from Ales Gregor, owner of Flamenco Restaurant, regarding flashing window sign.
- ii. Cost proposals from realtors and appraisers regarding the BB&T property. Councilman Shannahan informed Council that Mike Carpenter suggested that Council should be sure in any contractual agreement to make it abundantly clear that we should have the option to accept or turn down any bids. He recused himself from a vote on which realtor to hire, as his wife works for Mason-Davis. After discussion, Councilman Fosque made a motion to hire Kendall Bradley as the appraiser for a contract amount of \$2,250, Councilman Miles seconded the motion, and after discussion, it passed unanimously. Haydon Rochester suggested that Council find out the new reappraisal figure of the BB&T property from the County, which the Town Manager will do. Realtors can be asked for comps re appraisals. Shirley Zamora indicated

that the Town should deal with a commercial realtor – not just local residential realtors. Further discussion followed.

iii. Employee Christmas bonus. Personnel Committee Chairman, Kathyanne Runniger, and Councilman Shannahan are in agreement with the Town Manager's recommendations. She thought the Committee was only to discuss the Town Manager's bonus. Councilman Fosque felt that Council should set the Town Manager's bonus and authorize a certain figure for the Town Manager to divvy up as she sees fit among the employees. After discussion, Councilman Miles made a motion to approve the recommended bonuses, Councilman Shannahan seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Councilman Shannahan advised that he would be happy to meet with the rest of the Personnel Committee regarding the Town Manager's bonus, and he felt she was due more than she recommended.

- iv. December activities:
1. December 8th – House Tour.
 2. December 15th – Christmas Parade @ 5 pm (Rain date – December 16th @ 2 pm). Councilmen Miles, Fosque & Shannahan and Councilwomen Runniger & Wescott will ride in the parade.
 3. Town Hall will be closed December 24th & 25th and January 1st.

After discussion, Councilman Miles made a motion to cancel the December Town Council meeting. The motion died, as there was no second to the motion. It was decided to have the Town Council meeting on December 17th at 7:00 p.m. Councilman Miles made a motion to have the Town Council meeting on December 17th at 7:00 p.m., Councilman Shannahan seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- VII. Mayor and Town Council Comments. Vera Bruton requested that there be benches arranged at the gazebo park for after the Christmas parade. It was suggested that a sign be erected a block before the downtown section advising of no air horns or sirens from SunTrust Bank to Cokesbury Church.

Councilwoman Runniger complimented the Christmas lights in Town.

Councilman Fosque asked that something other than 4x4's be used to hold up lights on the bridge. He was advised that the Town Manager is

still awaiting the bid package regarding Onancock Landing. She will e-mail them again regarding this.

Councilman Shannahan complimented the water tower and decorations, and again highly promoted Accomack Manor.

The Town Manager advised that she would be taking a lot of her vacation December.

Councilman Miles made the motion to adjourn, Councilman Shannahan seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Susan D. Scott
Town Manager

Bruce Paone
Mayor