

Town of Onancock
Town Council Meeting
Monday, February 24, 2025
7:00 PM

- 1) **Call to order and roll call.** – Mayor Fosque called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and roll was called. Councilmembers Lisa Fiege, Omar Grubb, Cindy Holdren, Joy Marino, Sarah Nock, Maphis Oswald and Mayor Fosque were present. Town Manager Matt Spuck and Town Clerk Debbie Caton were also present.

- 2) **Pledge of Allegiance**
 - Councilmember Fiege moved to amend the agenda to include the Onancock Main Street (OMS) grant match request that was presented at the January 2025 Town Council meeting along with discussion of a plaque in remembrance of Russell Jones. Councilmember Holdren seconded the motion. The motion carried with a 6-0 vote.
 - Councilmember Nock asked for any questions about the Wayfinding Signs be emailed to herself and Town Manager Spuck. This agenda item was struck. Councilmember Nock also stated the annual presentation from the Historic Onancock School (HOS) will stand as the Community Reports update.

- 3) **Vote on January 27, 2024, meeting minutes.** – Councilmember Nock moved to approve the meeting minutes. Councilmember Fiege seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

- 4) **Public Hearing**
 - None scheduled.

- 5) **Public Presentation**
 - **Historic Onancock School** – Kerry Baird, President of Friends of Onancock School (FOS) presented the 2024 annual report. See the full executive summary attached.
 - **Onancock Volunteer Fire Department (OVFD) presentation** – Mike Rydberg, Fire Chief presented the 2024 annual report. The full presentation is available at www.onancock.com.
 - **A-NPDC Northeast Neighborhood Revitalization project presentation.** – Eric Luchansky gave an update on the Northeast Neighborhood Revitalization project. To date, 15 Watson Street has been revitalized and the family has moved back into the home. Currently, 30 Boundary Street is the recipient of a new roof, new windows, and new HVAC in addition to a remodeled kitchen and bathroom. The latest project, 5 Spady Lane is also being revitalized with a facelift to the home. Bids went out to solicit for a new contractor for two upcoming projects at 4 Cross Street and 12 Church Street. Three derelict homes were demolished and two are scheduled for demolition in March 2025.

Town of Onancock
Town Council Meeting
Monday, February 24, 2025
7:00 PM

6) Council Action

- **Plaque – In Remembrance of Russell Jones.** – T. Lee Byrd asked for consideration of a commemorative plaque for the former mayor Russell Jones that will be placed at the Harbor Master facility. Councilmember Fiege moved to approve the commissioning of a plaque in honor of Russell Jones to be placed at the Marina. Councilmember Marino seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote.
- **Onancock Main Street Grant Match Request** – Councilmember Fiege explained that during the January 2025 meeting OMS did a presentation to Town Council for a grant match. The first grant is the Virginia Tourism Commission for the marketing leveraging program. This is a 1:1 grant. The grant request is for \$20,000. The second grant is the Downtown Investment Grant which is only available to Main Street programs through the Department of Housing and Community Development. This is a 2:1 grant match. The grant request is for \$25,000. Councilmember Holdren moved to approve the request from Onancock Main Street. Councilmember Nock seconded the motion. The motion carried with a 4-2 vote.

7) Council discussion:

- **Wayfinding signs** – this item was struck from the agenda.
- **Animals and Fowl (Article 4)** - Town Manager Spuck explained Article 4 was reviewed five years ago, but no action was taken. The ordinance is antiquated and needs to be updated. Town Manager Spuck asked the Town Council members to send him edits or changes via email. Town Manager Spuck would like to schedule a public hearing in the next 90 days.

8) Committee Reports

- **Planning Commission (Cindy Holdren)** – Councilmember Holdren reported the Planning Commission nominated a Chair and Vice-Chair. Kasey Grier, Chair requested a budget line of \$3,000 in the FY26 budget to pay for an updated zoning map and training publications.
- **Economic Development Authority (Lisa Fiege)** – Councilmember Fiege reported the Economic Development Authority meets March 19, 2025.

9) Community Reports

- **Onancock Main Street (Lisa Fiege)** – Councilmember Fiege reported that OMS welcomed Javon Smith and Mary Benaknin as new board members. The new program manager starts March 3, 2025. OMS used grant money to help promote businesses during the shoulder season.
- **Historic Onancock School (Sarah Nock)** – The earlier presentation by Kerry Baird serves as this month's community report.

Town of Onancock
Town Council Meeting
Monday, February 24, 2025
7:00 PM

10) Public Comment

- Rosemary Paparo – see the attached for full comments.
- Priscilla Hart – Ms. Hart asked the Town Council to support the OVFD’s request for \$35,000 for an extractor and dryer for turnout gear. Ms. Hart is delighted the Town Council approved the plaque for Russell Jones.

11) Mayor’s Report – Mayor Fosque asked for participation from the Town Council for the St. Patrick’s Day parade.

12) Town Manager’s Report

- **Financial** – see full report in the Town Council packet.
- **Manager’s Report** – Town Manager Spuck gave an update on the following projects:
 - **Queen Street parking lot** – The design firm is completing the perspective drawings. The drawings will be available in a few days.
 - **HRSD meter replacements** – HRSD hired a contractor to replace the meters. HRSD is still waiting for a lead time from the meter manufacturer to start the install.
 - **Habitat for Humanity house** – Habitat for Humanity is breaking ground in early March.
 - **Blood Drive** – Town Manager Spuck reminded everyone of the Town Blood Drive scheduled for Monday, March 3, 2025, from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM at town hall.
- **Police Report** – see full report in the Town Council packet.

13) Town Councilmember comments –

- **Councilmember Fiege** – no comments.
- **Councilmember Grubb** – no comments.
- **Councilmember Holdren** – Councilmember Holdren asked Town Manager Spuck to email the budget request form to the Town Council.
- **Councilmember Marino** – no comments.
- **Councilmember Nock** – Councilmember Nock asked if the new legislation for license plate readers (LPR) will affect the Onancock Police Department. She also asked if any of the changes at the federal level will affect the town’s budget.
- **Councilmember Oswald** – Councilmember Oswald asked for consideration of the OVFD request for \$35,000 in the upcoming budget cycle. She also asked can the town make personal property exemption for volunteer firefighters.

Town of Onancock
Town Council Meeting
Monday, February 24, 2025
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14) Closed Session

a. None scheduled.

15) Adjourn – Councilmember Fiege moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Nock seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:04 PM.



Fletcher Fosque, Mayor



Debbie Caton, Town Clerk



Historic Onancock School Annual Report 2024 - Executive Summary

The Friends of Onancock School remain committed to establishing the Historic Onancock School and the 14 acre grounds as a vital, vibrant and accessible community and cultural center to benefit the Town of Onancock, our residents and the citizens of the entire Eastern Shore of Virginia. We believe that we are one of the many essential components that make up the Onancock Experience alongside the shops, restaurants, theaters and the waterfront that make up our charming town.

This report summarizes the major initiatives and accomplishments of the organization during 2024.

HOS Vision - at the heart of our diverse community, the Historic Onancock School Community & Cultural Center contributes economically, culturally and educationally to the quality of life on Virginia's Eastern Shore while preserving the community character.

HOS Mission - to connect, inspire and embrace our diverse community through artistic, educational, social & recreational means to sustain our legacy for future generations.

HOS Diversity Statement - we are a place for all. We strive to include all citizens across race, gender, age, religion, identity, and experience as we work together to build our community.

Lease Agreements – 2024 marks the 17th year of the FOS lease with the town of Onancock

- ❖ **Use of Premises** - FOS continues to use the premises in the manner stated in the lease: for community purposes as a nonprofit community and cultural campus, including both indoor & outdoor spaces for educational, social, recreational, artistic, cultural, athletic and other community activities as well as legitimate casual activities.
- ❖ **Rehabilitation and Development** - FOS continues to use its best efforts to rehabilitate and develop the premises to be used in accordance with provisions stated above.
- ❖ **Benchmarks** - the first anniversary (2008), fifth (2012) and tenth anniversary in 2017 were all met (and exceeded). In order to comply with this 16th year benchmark, the director and Board President of FOS have met on several occasions with the Town Manager and Mayor to discuss operations, compliance with lease requirements as presented in the most recent annual report, funding opportunities, and future plans. We also discussed the significant capital needs and ways to address them. These valuable conversations continue to further the relationship between FOS and the Town.
- ❖ **Maintenance** – FOS has cared for and maintained the facility in a condition that has far exceeded the condition that existed on the date of the lease. In fact, well over \$670,000 has gone towards maintenance, upkeep and improvements to the facility since 2007.

Strategic Plan

- The Board of Directors continue to focus on our 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. This plan guides our continuing efforts to improve the building and open spaces, grow revenue to provide stability within our organization and to increase the value of the Historic Onancock School as a cultural and community center.

The Goals are as follows:

- Continue to improve the building and open space of the Historic Onancock School
- Ensure sufficient income to cover operational expenses and to increase contingency/capital funds
- Cultivate greater community support and outreach to increase usage of facility
- The 2022-2025 Plan is attached with a detail ✓ of completed goals

Building and Open Space Improvements:

- General interior building maintenance and repairs to studios and common spaces included continued upgrades to ensure the safety, energy efficiency and appearances, condition and use of the facility. Outdoors, upgrades include landscaping, tree & brush care and ensuring the safety of the grounds, trail and playground. All of this is accomplished with volunteer hours that totaled over 800 hours in 2024.

Financials:

- Operating Revenues of \$140K include: \$71.4K in studio rentals, \$16.2K in fundraising income, \$12.4K in Special Event income, \$40K in contributions & support
- Operating Expenses of \$138.9K, including \$17.9K in building, facilities and grounds improvements, \$68K in payroll expenses, \$19.9K in utilities, \$10.2K in fundraising expenses and \$22.9K in General Operating Expenses
- Net Income of \$1K for Operations
- Pavilion designated donations for pavilion construction were \$+220K
- Pavilion construction costs \$274K. All construction costs for the Pavilion are paid in full, there is no debt
- Bank balances of \$225.3K as of 12.31.2024
- In-Kind Support -Volunteer Service recorded through 2024 totaled 1,673 hours resulting in a total of \$56K In-Kind dollars to support FOS (This is based on nonprofit industry standard valuation of time as \$33.49 per hour)

Building and Grounds Use:

- 100% of studios on both floors are rented
- The number of people who visited or attended functions on the grounds or in the Historic Onancock School building during 2024 increased to exceed 16,000. This total is counted and recorded from our event application process, tickets sold as well as guest counts at our events, meetings and classes and reported visitors. The success of our own signature fundraisers: Blooms & Brushes Garden & Studio Tour and Champagne & Oyster Tasting plus monthly Wine Wednesday have increased attendance. A continued uptick in community use of our Gallery for private rentals has boosted numbers of visitors. [Countless others use the outdoors public access green space daily for exercise, walks on the nature trail, bird watching, playground, picnic gatherings, disc golf, soccer, home school classes and many children's birthday parties, outdoor use has more than doubled in the past 4 years.]

Kudos and Thanks:

- To all the volunteers, many organizations, business, church, school and individuals including the Town of Onancock and other local organizations who supported FOS. We cannot be successful without this support.

Local Collaborations

Local nonprofits, organizations and services who support HOS by bringing their meetings, classes, seminars and events along with their members and guests to support our facility.

Academy of Lifetime Learning (ALL) classes
 Eastern Shore Master Naturalists
 Ye Accawmacke Garden Club
 Eastern Shore of VA Museum Network
 Paul Nolz Soccer Camp
 Roseland Cinema & Entertainment Center (RCEC)
 ESVA Historical Society /Shore History
 Virginia Coastal Reserve /The Nature Conservancy
 Eastern Shore of VA Land Trust
 Eastern Shore Art League
 Onancock Business & Civic Association (OBCA)
 ESVA Chamber of Commerce
 Community Christian Youth Fellowship
 Little Hands Little Feet, LLC.
 Eastern Shore Center for Independent Living

ES Maritime Museum
 Onancock Main Street
 Accomack Community Band
 Eastern Shore of VA Tourism
 Eastern Shore Spartans
 Eastern Shore Cruisers Car Show
 Arcadia High School
 Nandua High School
 Broadwater Academy
 Artisans Guild of the Eastern Shore
 Town of Onancock
 ESVA Community Foundation
 East Coast Migrant Head Start
 Weichert Realty
 YMCA

*A detailed listing of supporters and donors will be posted on our website with this Report within the next 30 days.

Additional accomplishments in 2024

- The Onancock High School (OHS) Memorabilia Exhibit, opened in October 2023, has now had many visitors including alumni and their families in 2024. This exhibit was a result of a fundraising Class Challenge conducted in 2022-23. In 2024 a new fundraising opportunity was conceived to designate all classrooms, and spaces in the facility through a Room Dedication Campaign. Thus far, 3 classrooms and several common spaces have been dedicated with the campaign to continue into the future.
- The Eastern Shore Disc Golf Club held its spring disc golf tournament on the grounds and continues to play regularly throughout the year.
- The Eastern Shore Car Cruisers held a fall car show on our campus and have selected HOS for one of their fundraising shows which resulted in a generous donation to FOS.
- Initiated the first annual 'Field Day Fiesta' a free family-focused fundraiser featuring outdoor activities
- A successful CBES Bike Ride based in Onancock that began & ended at HOS plus our own 'Pedal & Pour' event brought over 1200 visitors to HOS.
- The Holiday Artisan Market at HOS, started in 2018 to add to the OBCA sponsored *Christmas in Onancock* festivities, continues to be a holiday favorite with 12 guest vendors along with many of our open studios. We had over 275 visitors to attend the market and many purchased tickets to the Homes Tour and attended Cokesbury Concert series while visiting our town.
- The second annual 'Blooms & Brushes' Garden Tour was again a resounding success. Most importantly through the collaboration with local businesses, organizations, sponsors and generous homeowners who donated their time and allowed us to showcase their home gardens. We would like to mention their names again as their participation and support was outstanding. Kerry Baird & Doug Matthews, Beth Belote, Sherry & Gene Morgan, Nancy Bateman, Patsy & Greg Felthousen and Cindy Holdren.

Grants Received in 2024

Robert E. & Marie Orr-Smith Foundation
United Way of Virginia's Eastern Shore

Looking Ahead in 2025:

- The Board of Directors installed seven new directors in January 2025. We look forward to a successful year with this new energy, and support from our community
- The Board will begin to work on our 2026-2030 Strategic Plan
We plan to continue our annual fundraising and events -
- Field Day Fiesta on May 3, a Fun Family event with outdoor activities, and music
- Blooms & Brushes Garden & Studio Tour on May 31
- Love Your Park Day on September 13, a celebration of our green space open to all of our community
- Champagne & Oyster Tasting on November 16th
- We look forward to returning favorite events - the OBCA Ice Cream Social and Artisans Guild Holiday Tour among other partnerships
- Fundraising and seeking grant funding for the pavilion and related improvements to the building and grounds including a memory garden, safe pedestrian and ADA access for events will continue
- The construction of a Performance Pavilion will be completed to provide a destination for arts, cultural events, performances and community events with a proposed opening in Summer of 2025

As presented by FOS Board President, Kerry Baird to the Onancock Town Council on February 24, 2025

Historic Onancock School

Strategic Plan 2022-2025

HOS Vision – at the heart of our diverse community, the Historic Onancock School Community & Cultural Center contributes economically, culturally and educationally to the quality of life on Virginia’s Eastern Shore while preserving the community character.

HOS Mission - to connect, inspire and embrace our diverse community through artistic, educational, social & recreational means to sustain our legacy for future generations.

Diversity Statement – we are a place for all. We strive to include all citizens across race, gender, age, religion, identity, and experience as we work together to build our community.

Our Values: What we believe and what we stand for

- Diversity
- Environment
- Enrichment
- Heritage

Our Goals: 2022 - 2025

Goal 1: Continue to improve the building and open space of Historic Onancock School

The 101 year old building is continually in need of repairs and improvements to maintain a safe and inviting place for rentals and special event use. The large open space surrounding the building provides an ideal location for a great number of uses. Those involved with the Historic Onancock School are committed to continuing to improve these valuable assets to make them more inviting to all who visit and spend time here.

Objectives:

1. Main Building Maintenance & Improvement

- Continue needed repairs to building (a) as budget permits and (b) to take advantage of new funding opportunities ✓
- Identify sources and pursue funding for (a) roof replacement, (b) window replacement, and (c) HVAC replacement ✓
- Create restroom and storage space in lower level ✓

2. Outdoor & Indoor Future Improvements to ensure long-term success, engage more of the community and increase revenues

- Construct state-of-the-art performance space (“Pavilion”) on grounds ✓
- Renovate Home Ec cottage into classroom/event space if funding permits
- Continue grounds upkeep and tree maintenance as resources permit ✓
- Obtain and install security lighting and possibly video surveillance of property ✓
- Develop a grounds plan to guide siting of structures, planting of trees, parking and access, and ease of upkeep ✓

Updated 12.2024

3. Continued & new events, rentals classes

- a) Provide staff support for more short-term rentals and events ✓
- b) Engage non-HOS players to use pavilion, Home Ec. & other exterior spaces for events on a space rental basis ✓
- c) Respond to community generated ideas for events and activities on site ✓

Goal 2: Ensure sufficient income to cover operational expenses and to increase contingency / capital funds

As a non-profit, the Friends of Onancock School needs to continue to explore and take full advantage of all potential sources of income in order to fulfill our Mission.

Objectives:

- 1. Identify revenues needed to cover operational expenses and revenues needed to fund contingency/capital funds**
 - a) Increase funds from studio rentals by 15% in next 3 years ✓
 - b) Increase net income from special event rentals by 30% in next 3 years ✓
 - c) Increase contributions and support income to \$25,000 within three years ✓
- 2. Increase budget to maintain improvements and additional users**
 - a) Increase staffing: office and janitorial ✓
 - b) Additional staff to support increased usage ✓
 - c) Upgrade studios in order to raise rents
- 3. Increase community support; Annual membership, donors, alumni giving**
 - a) Partnerships with town, local organizations, businesses and alumni for events, classes and lectures ✓
- 4. Strengthen grant writing, including its administration and reporting**
 - a) Seek larger state and federal funding; broaden our reach with private foundations ✓
- 5. Implement a development plan for endowments & legacy gifts and Naming opportunities ✓**

Goal 3: Cultivate greater community support and outreach to increase usage of facility

As a Community and Cultural Center, the Historic Onancock School building and outdoor green space is an opportunity to welcome all citizens of the Eastern Shore as well as to visitors to our area. We feel that there are segments of our population who are not aware of the opportunities we provide. We plan to increase that awareness within the community and identify ways to increase usage.

Objectives:

- 1. Grow existing events and develop new events and programs to reach a wider audience ✓**
 - a) events, programs and classes for youth, families, clubs, alumni and seniors -✓

Updated 12.2024

2. Identify local businesses and organizations for partnership opportunities

- a) offer our rental venue for their use; seek sponsorship opportunities -✓

3. Increase community support; Annual membership, donors, alumni giving - ✓

- a) Offer member-only discounts for events, classes, lectures
- b) Build an alumni chapter
- c) Increase marketing and social presence

4. Maintain and grow active tenants who support the FOS mission

- a) Create opportunities and events for more open studios with more hours open to public ✓
- b) Keep rents affordable to retain tenants; artists, entrepreneurs, clubs and nonprofit organizations ✓

5. Plan for increase in capacity once planned future improvements are constructed

- a) Manage increased usage; staffing, groundskeeping, social media
- b) Town/community support; business partnerships

Friends of Onancock School

Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2024

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Pavilion Money Market Taylor Bank	23,813.47
Rainy Day MM Taylor Bank	55,221.97
Taylor Bank Operating	87,116.82
Wells Fargo Sec 3185-4744	59,207.44
Total Bank Accounts	\$225,359.70
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	-50.00
Total Accounts Receivable	\$ -50.00
Other Current Assets	
Cash in Transit	1,590.00
Contra AR	0.00
Undeposited Funds	0.00
Total Other Current Assets	\$1,590.00
Total Current Assets	\$226,899.70
Fixed Assets	
Accumulated Depreciation	-39,314.60
Buildings	155,703.86
Exterior Lighting	5,420.60
Land Improvements	5,970.13
Leasehold Improvements	2,380.00
Office Equipment	3,230.03
Playground Equipment	98,551.70
Total Fixed Assets	\$231,941.72
Other Assets	
Construction/Work in Progress	
Building Access - In Progress	0.00
Cottage Rehab - Const Progress	3,516.25
Pavillion - Const in Progress	344,420.62
Playground - In Progress	0.00
Total Construction/Work In Progress	347,936.87
Total Other Assets	\$347,936.87
TOTAL ASSETS	\$806,778.29

Friends of Onancock School

Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2024

	TOTAL
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Direct Deposit Liabilities	0.00
Direct Deposit Payable	0.00
Loans Payable - King	0.00
Payroll Liabilities	
Federal Taxes (941/943/944)	1,344.92
VA Income Tax	213.62
Total Payroll Liabilities	1,558.54
Security Deposits	625.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$2,183.54
Total Current Liabilities	\$2,183.54
Long-Term Liabilities	
SBA-EIDL Loan	59,097.76
Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$59,097.76
Total Liabilities	\$61,281.30
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	0.00
PY Adjustment Fund Balance	0.00
Restricted Donation Balance	
2020 Bldg Access Restricted	0.00
2020 Playground Restricted	0.00
Total Restricted Donation Balance	0.00
Retained Earnings	516,891.57
Net Income	228,605.42
Total Equity	\$745,496.99
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$806,778.29

Friends of Onancock School

Profit and Loss

January - December 2024

	TOTAL
Income	
Capital Donation	
Pavilion Construction Fund	222,122.07
United Way	1,008.04
Total Capital Donation	223,130.11
Capital Gain Income (Loss)	1,731.65
Contributions and Support	39,040.66
Marketing Income	862.38
Membership Dues Income	1,619.48
Rental Income	71,495.25
Room Naming Campaign	2,040.00
Special Event Income	12,450.01
Unapplied Cash Payment Income	434.75
Total Income	\$352,804.29
GROSS PROFIT	\$352,804.29
Expenses	
Bank Charges	139.75
Building Maintenance	1,339.42
Capital Expense	
Pavilion Construction Expense	0.00
Total Capital Expense	0.00
credit card fees	61.35
Depreciation	7,022.37
Dues & Subscriptions Expense	410.99
Facilities Improvements	12,120.51
Finance charges	10.00
Fundraising Wine Expense	446.87
Grounds Maintenance Expense	4,582.22
Insurance Expense	3,829.00
Janitorial labor	2,980.00
Janitorial Supplies	1,267.20
Legal & Professional Fees	2,180.54
License & Corporate Fees	235.00
Marketing Expense	2,720.05
Membership Drive Expenses	1,298.65
Office Subscriptions	2,728.86
Office Supplies Expense	1,909.91
Payroll Expenses	385.50
Taxes	4,872.95
Wages	63,698.58
Total Payroll Expenses	68,957.03
Postage and Delivery	261.00

Friends of Onancock School

Profit and Loss

January - December 2024

	TOTAL
Room Naming Expense	850.00
SBA Loan	0.00
Special Event Expense	200.00
Telephone	208.59
United Way Project Expenses	881.56
Utilities	19,930.30
Website	3,060.00
Total Expenses	\$139,631.17
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$213,173.12
Other Income	
Fundraising	
Artisan Market	280.00
Artisan Market Expenses	-15.00
Total Artisan Market	265.00
Blooms & Brushes	6,355.77
Blooms & Brushes Expenses	-1,952.22
Total Blooms & Brushes	4,403.55
Champagne & Oyster Tasting	15,850.66
Champagne and Oyster Tasting Expenses	-6,625.42
Total Champagne & Oyster Tasting	9,025.24
Field Day Fiesta Income	2,194.16
Field Day Fiesta Expense	-140.00
Total Field Day Fiesta Income	2,054.16
Pedal & Pour Tasting	1,813.15
Pedal & Pour Expenses	-1,285.00
Total Pedal & Pour Tasting	528.15
Total Fundraising	16,276.10
Interest income	648.71
Total Other Income	\$16,924.81
Other Expenses	
Interest Expense	1,492.51
Total Other Expenses	\$1,492.51
NET OTHER INCOME	\$15,432.30
NET INCOME	\$228,605.42

February 24, 2025

I am Rosemary Paparo and I live in the Town of Onancock.

With respect to an inspection of the Onancock school by a qualified engineering firm, I have identified three firms in either Virginia Beach or Norfolk which routinely perform "existing physical facility evaluations." That is, they inspect the building "envelope" which is the roof, masonry, windows, foundation, etc. and either directly or subcontract the MEP (mechanical, electrical and plumbing) inspections. The evaluation will prioritize the order of work to be performed and also provide estimates for same.

The MEP report can include recommendations for replacement systems, if needed.

Best practices would require that the engineering firms create specifications and blind bid the jobs to contractors.

While there is a cost to such an evaluation, which cost can be borne by the Town, it is the only prudent way for the Council to proceed. I do not believe that anyone on the FOS Board or the Town Council or in the Town government has the qualifications to make decisions, costing hundreds of thousands of dollars, without the guidance of unbiased, qualified, licensed, professionals.


The additional cost for travel time to Onancock, bridge and fuel fees would be built into the engineer's proposal.

I will send the names, addresses, phone numbers and contact info of the engineering firms to Council members.

With respect to the Town's water system, over the course of the past year, I and other residents have repeatedly requested that the Town retain a water engineer to evaluate our system particularly in light of our Town Manager's decision to provide water to the 450 unit residential and commercial development outside Town limits. Now I understand that Onancock will provide water to an additional 130 "worker units" to be built at a location which may or may not be within Town limits. The Town Manager said the exact location is still confidential.

The Town Manager had repeatedly said that a water engineer would be a waste of funds as our water supply system is in perfect working order. Well, that is not quite the case.

Now, in his words, "the water system is in distress" and in his report at this meeting, he will further address the water supply issues. We also learned that our water fluoridation system has not functioned for a number of years--that is, our water is not fluoridated--and that it was intentionally not repaired.



I still believe that a water engineer is essential for assessing our system and what may be required. Rather than spending money on signage, let's focus on essentials. And there is also the very real risk that if patients are negatively affected by our inability to supply water to Riverside, the dialysis center, urgent care and/or Commonwealth, the Town--that is, us, the taxpayers--could be on the hook for very substantial civil damages. We shouldn't roll the dice on this and think it will all be ok because our Town Manager--who has a lot of other work to do and who, I believe, does not has an engineering background--is telling us that all is fine.

It is not.

Thank you

Rosemary Paparo

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rosemary Paparo', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.