



# Historic Onancock School

## Annual Report 2022 - Executive Summary

The Friends of Onancock School remain committed to establishing the Historic Onancock School and the 14 acre grounds as a vital and vibrant cultural and community center to benefit the Town of Onancock, our residents and the citizens of the entire Eastern Shore of Virginia. This report summarizes the major initiatives and accomplishments of the organization during 2022.

**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** – 2022 marks the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the FOS lease with the town of Onancock

- ❖ Use of Premises - FOS continues to use the premises 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 has used its best efforts to rehabilitate and develop the premises to be used in accordance with provisions stated above. FOS did not construct a new building on the Land without first obtaining the written consent of the Town for the location of such building and the approval of the Town of the appearance of such building.
- ❖ Benchmarks - the first anniversary (2008), fifth (2012) and tenth anniversary in 2017 were all met (and exceeded). In order to comply with this 15<sup>th</sup> year benchmark, the director of FOS and Town Manager have met on several occasions to discuss operations (rentals and events), the 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 casual conversations nurture the relationship between FOS and the Town.
- ❖ Maintenance – FOS has cared for and maintained the School in a condition that has far exceeded the condition that existed on the date of the lease. In fact, over \$600,000 has gone towards the maintenance, upkeep and improvements to the facility since 2007.

**2022 was again a year of adapting to the pandemic. Our first large event was outdoors in May and centered on bringing the community together for an outdoor SpringFest celebration. This event was led and sponsored by a group of citizens. Revenue from rentals, events and fundraisers were again down for the first six months, but rebounded in the early fall.**

### Strategic Plan

- The Board of Directors started out the year by focusing on the new 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. This plan guides our continuing efforts to improve the building and open spaces, grow revenue to provide stability to 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

## Building and Open Space Improvements:

- General interior building maintenance and repairs to studios and common spaces included upgrades in electric, plumbing and painting to insure safety, energy efficiency and appearances. Outdoors, extensive upgrades included guttering, additional security lighting on the grounds, landscaping and adding an additional ADA parking space.
- Following the March Town Council unanimous approval of the Pavilion project on the grounds of Historic Onancock School, our facilities committee forged ahead to finalize plans, obtain wetlands and building permits, update budget to reflect changes in materials supply and set the timeline for phases of construction.
- Additional improvements were made to the playground with the addition of a Story Trail - an interactive walk & read activity with 18 stations for families to read together and a Little Free Library for Kids was constructed and installed. This was accomplished using grant funding from the Robert E & Marie Orr-Smith Foundation and volunteer labor.

## Financials:

- Revenues of \$141.5K Includes \$60.4K in studio rentals, \$21.3K in fundraising income, \$8.2K in Special Event income \$29.4K contributions & support and \$22.2 in grant income and designated donations.
- Expenses of \$189.9K, including \$16.2K in building maintenance and facilities improvements, \$46.2K in payroll expenses and \$17.3K in utilities costs, 49.6\* in General Operating Expenses and \$60.6K in Capital Expenses. \* \$43.4 in funds were held over from grants received in 2021.
- Net Income of \$18.7K reflects unused grant funds.
- Bank balances of \$141.8.6K at end of 2022 plus stocks valued at \$65,365 on 12.31.22

## Building and Grounds Use:

- 100% of studios on both floors are rented. There continues to be a steady wait list for space availability.
- The number of people who visited or attended functions on the grounds or in the Historic Onancock School building during 2022 exceeded 10,000. This total is counted and recorded from applications, tickets sold and reported visitors. This is double the number who visited in 2020 & 2021 combined. Considering the addition of Springfest in May, a new monthly event Wine Wednesdays and increased rentals of our event space, we now feel that the pandemic slump is over. Countless others daily use the outdoors public access for exercise, the nature trail, bird watching, playground, picnic gatherings, disc golf, home school classes and many children's birthday parties.

## Kudos and Thanks:

- To all of the volunteers, business and individual donors and the Town of Onancock and other local organizations who supported FOS (list below) as we all recover from the past years in survival mode.

### Local Collaborations

- Local nonprofits, organizations, services who 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 Housing Summit
- Onancock Baptist Church
- Roseland Cinema & Entertainment Center (RCEC)
- ES Historical Society /Shore History
- Virginia Coastal Reserve /The Nature Conservancy
- Eastern Shore of VA Land Trust
- Eastern Shore Art League
- OBCA
- ESVA Chamber of Commerce / ESVA Tourism
- ES Waterman's Museum
- Onancock Main Street
- Accomack Community Band
- ES Museum Network
- Paul Nolz Soccer Camp
- ES Cruisers Car Show
- Eastern Shore Spartans
- Nandua High School
- Broadwater Academy
- Artisans Guild of the Eastern Shore
- Town of Onancock
- ESVA Community Foundation

## Other accomplishments in 2022

- Added on to our Playground with a Story Trail, a Little Free Library.
- New disc golf professional nets and signage.
- Alumni Class Challenge netted \$18,383. Donations were distributed to operations, Home Ec cottage improvements, plus, an Onancock High School memorabilia exhibit, dedicated to the Class of 1958 who won the class challenge.

## Grants Received in late 2021-2022

Gerhart Family Foundation

Murray Family Foundation

Robert E & Marie Orr-Smith Foundation

United Way of Virginia's Eastern Shore

Virginia Humanities Sharp Grant

Total \$ 65,650

## Looking Ahead in 2023:

- There are additional improvements to the playground space, all with a focus on our youth. Adding to the new Story Trail and Little Free Library we are installing outdoor chalkboards, original from the OHS building, for budding artists and to nurture creativity.
- We plan to continue our annual fundraising events; Creekside Crawl 5K, Public Lands Day and Champagne & Oyster Tasting. Plus, the addition of two new events 'Blooms & Brushes' Garden & Studio Tour in June and a partnership with the Eastern Shore Waterman's Museum to feature a Maritime Festival in August. We look forward to favorite events; the OBCA Ice Cream Social and Artisans Guild Holiday Tour among other partnerships.
- The construction of a Performance Pavilion to provide a destination for arts, cultural events, performances and community events.

As presented to the Onancock Town Council on February 27, 2023