



# The Town of Fenwick Island

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## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING

October 16, 2025, 9:00 a.m.

Town Hall

MINUTES

**Members Present:** Colleen Wilson, Vicki Carmean, Liz Lear, Stu Rubenstein (Zoom), Susan Brennan (Zoom), Pam Pridgeon (Zoom)

**Other Participants:** None

**Staff Participants:** Kathy Grab

Call to Order/ Flag Salute

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

1. Approval of Minutes of September 17, 2025.

**Motion to approve the Minutes of September 17, 2025, meeting on a Susan Brennan/Liz Lear motion.**

**Motion Passed Unanimously.**

2. Updates/Next Steps for Town Parks.

- a. Pollinator Park.

- Colleen Wilson reported the pollinator garden season is ending and was affected by the recent storm.
- A cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, October 25, from 9–11 a.m. with assistance from the Barefoot Gardeners
- Colleen Wilson will send out a reminder.
- Volunteers are encouraged to stop by to help with deadheading and cutting back.
- Susan Brennan suggested reviewing plant locations during cleanup to identify areas for adjustment based on sun and growth patterns.
- Colleen Wilson is requesting that Public Works move the dog trash container and bin be moved to the SW corner of Lewes and Bunting.

- b. Faucett Okie Family Nature Preserve.

- Colleen Wilson reported involvement in a mini-grant through The Center for Inland Bays for a pocket forest project.
- The grant was obtained by Deb Cowell, Janice Bortner, and their committee for the Faucett Okie Family Nature Preserve.
- A series of workshops is being held this fall to prepare for installation, Susan Brennan attended the first meeting.
- Susan Brennan shared highlights from the first workshop:
  - Participants include master gardeners, a master naturalist, and others with environmental expertise.
  - Each group selected a native plant to study; they will study the Wax Myrtle.
  - A site visit is planned for October 23 at 9 a.m., with homework due October 22.
  - The proposed project is a small pocket forest behind Lynn Zimmers' property, replacing a Bradford pear tree if possible.
  - The grant provides up to 65 plants, allowing for both the Faucett-Okie Nature Preserve and a salt-tolerant garden near the kayak park.
  - Planting is expected in spring, and will try tie it to Earth Day, encouraging volunteers.
  - The goal is to inspire local planting and tree preservation effort.
- Plans to build a natural fence behind two Coastal Highway rental properties to reduce unauthorized access to Faucett Okie Family Nature Preserve Park.
- There are concerns that residents have removed town-owned vegetation to improve their beach access.
- Temporary dune fencing may be used until the natural fence is complete; Town may have excess materials available.
- Susan Brennan suggested using landscape fabric under the fence to control growth.
- Colleen Wilson asked Kathy Grab to check with Public Works about available dune fencing.
- Colleen Wilson suggested additional park enhancements such as installing a large decorative nest like the Delaware Botanic Garden or adding an arch over one of the entrances to draw more attention.
- Current entrance visibility is limited due to parked cars; the new sign Natalie Magdeburger ordered will help.
- Parking adjustments were discussed at the last meeting to create a wider opening, but no action has been taken yet.
- The group will need to speak with Town Council regarding parking changes.

- Susan Brennan suggested cutting back shrubbery and adding native plants to highlight the entrance and support pollinators.
3. Planning for Additional Town Owned Areas.
- a. Sidewalk Barriers.
- Vicki Carmean noted some sidewalk barriers remain unmaintained despite recent work.
  - Past plantings, including daffodils, were lost due to inconsistent maintenance.
  - Stressed the need for a sustainable maintenance plan before adding new barriers.
  - Suggested hiring staff for upkeep, as volunteers alone are insufficient.
  - Colleen Wilson agreed, noting that many other Towns' gardens are beautiful and feels this can be done in Fenwick Island as well.
  - Vicki Carmean added this is an ongoing issue and it needs to be addressed. A process needs to be put in place to maintain these areas.
  - Susan Brennan would like to meet and review the sidewalk areas on Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> by Our Harvest at 2:00 p.m.
  - Colleen Wilson feels the committee needs to think about the medians as well.
  - Susan Brennan suggests if or when they find plants they do not want in the sidewalk areas, move them to the walkways in the medians to soften it up a bit.
- b. Street Ends.
- This is still on hold until the Infrastructure Committee has a more definitive plan.
  - Susan Brennan advised that at the last committee meeting with Straughan Engineering, it was discussed to have a natural way of holding the water and then allowing it to seep into the system, one idea of Straughan's was swales which would be in the Town's right of way and living shorelines on James Street. Vicki Carmean advises raising the bulk heads are needed as well.
4. Offshore Wind Update.
- a. Colleen Wilson advised there are no current updates.
- Keep an eye on the lawsuits against US Wind.
  - Stu Rubenstein advised that this lawsuit process will take a very long time.
5. Old Business.
- a. None.
6. New Business.
- a. Colleen Wilson provided background on Environmental Committee's projects past and current, and background.
- Overseeing the Pollinator Park and activities within.

- Barefoot Gardeners Club has story time in the park.
  - Overseeing the Faucett Okie Family Nature Preserve.
  - There is a lot to do in the preserve, currently the committee is working with the Center for Inland Bays on a mini forest grant.
  - Please take a walk through the preserve and bring in some ideas to help make it special.
  - Kayak Launch on Cannon Street has a nice park area that needs some TLC.
  - The committee has taken over the sidewalk plantings along Coastal Hwy.
  - Hoping to work with the Infrastructure Committee on the bay side street ends.
  - Beach Grass plantings, Earth Day activities, and beach cleanup in the fall are all done through the Environmental Committee.
- b. Colleen Wilson would like to develop a plan for sidewalk maintenance and a timeline for upcoming projects and maintenance.
7. Public Participation.
- a. None.
8. Date of the next meeting.
- a. November 12, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.
- Colleen Wilson advised there will be no meeting in December, and the committee agreed.
  - The committee agreed to stay with their meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 9:00 a.m.
9. Adjournment.

**Motion to adjourn at 9:57 a.m. on a Vicki Carmean/Liz Lear motion.**

**Motion Passed Unanimously.**