

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR AUGUST 2025

HAPPY AUGUST FENWICK ISLANDERS!

To stay informed about events, meetings and things going on around Town, please be sure to check out the Town's website at <https://fenwickisland.delaware.gov/> and look under the **MEETINGS, EVENTS, AND CALENDAR** tab in the center of the homepage to review all the events, meetings and links for Zoom attendance. There is lots of information on the website and you can even access many of the forms that the Town uses.

You can also sign up for an "**Events Subscription**" by going to the **Contact** tab at the top of the Town's website homepage which will result in the receipt of an email to you on each day that notices of meetings and events are published on the Town's website, including a link to the activity.

You can also use the **Contact** tab on the website to contact Town Hall if you have a question, need assistance or have a suggestion.

The Town's Facebook page also hosts updates/announcements and is on Facebook at **Town of Fenwick Island-Government**.

There are LOTS of activities and meetings going on and we hope by using the Town's website and Facebook, you will not miss the things that are important to you and your family. Of course, if you do not use the internet, you can always call or stop by for assistance or information.

UPDATE ON FENWICK'S DREDGING PROJECT:

FINALLY! THE CHANNEL MARKERS ARE INSTALLED AND THE DREDGING PROJECT IS COMPLETE!



A huge shout out to Bill Rymer and the Dredging Committee, Jack Armstrong, Andrew Emerson, Steve Magdeburger, Jack Pyne and Steve Ross, for their tireless effort in bringing this project over the finish line. Thank you also to our Public Works crew who put the markers together so that they could be seen. We are also indebted to Representative Ron Gray, Senator Gerald Hocker, Doug Hudson, John Reilly, Todd Lawson and the Sussex County Council for helping finance the project.

As for the main western channel and the shoaling present, the Town has informed DNREC about the dangerous shoaling for the last four years and again this year. In addition to the shoaling, the channel markers had been damaged. Recently, DNREC placed some temporary buoys to better mark the channel. They also reduced the speed.

The western main channel is one maintained by DNREC and while we offered to allow DNREC to piggy-back on our dredging project several times in the last four years, they declined to do so, citing lack of funding. We will continue to urge DNREC to prioritize dredging at that location so that the western main channel remains open and can be safely navigated. Mayor Magdeburger has also spoken with Representative Gray and Governor Meyer's office to find funding for DNREC to complete the dredging along the western channel.

Please stay safe while boating and try to not hit our channel markers!

Wow! Over 10 years in the making and now finished.



TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Town's overall cash balance as of June 31, 2025, was \$4.1 million.

The RTT taxes in 2025 to date is \$673,567 as compared to the \$350,000 budgeted.

We continue to maintain overall operating expenses consistent with the annual budget.

Based on current results, we continue to forecast that the town will beat the combined operating budget and RTT revenue budget by approximately \$650,000 for the full year.

In addition, the Town Council unanimously approved the 2026 budget. Details regarding the approved budget can be found at:
<https://fenwickisland.delaware.gov/files/2025/06/FY2026-Budget-Comparison.pdf>.

The Town Council voted to decrease the short-term rental tax for rentals of residential homes to 7.5% because of the State imposing a tax on short-term rentals while increasing the hotel tax from 3.5% to 4% to equalize the tax paid by visitors to the Town. The change in the tax rate is budget neutral to the Town and will go into effect on January 1, 2026.

CHARTER AND ORDINANCE UPDATES:

The Charter & Ordinance Committee has been asked to review the Town's Charter to consider making changes to the voting cycle (date elections are held), term limits of Town Council Members and Town Council composition (currently 4 members of Town Council must live within 50 miles of the Town). No recommendation has been finalized by the Charter & Ordinance Committee at this time.

In addition, at the request of a business owner, the Charter & Ordinance Committee was asked to review and modify a parking ordinance that prohibits the use of parking on unimproved lots. The Charter & Ordinance Committee will study this request and make recommendations to Town Council.

The Town Council did unanimously adopt a change to Chapter 160-10 (c) that was requested by the Business Committee that allows businesses to share parking on another business improved lot by exchanging compensation.

INFRASTRUCTURE /FLOODING UPDATE:

We received disappointing news that the FEMA BRIC grant we requested in February 2024 that was to be used to purchase engineering recommendations to mitigate bayside flooding/resiliency efforts was no longer available for funding. In response, the Infrastructure Committee recommended to Town Council to proceed with creating a Comprehensive Engineered Master Resiliency Plan for the Town without federal funding and was able to negotiate a proposal for a total cost of \$299,000.00 (approximately \$125,000 less than what was proposed with federal funding).

Given the high priority and need for resiliency planning and bayside flooding mitigation, Town Council unanimously voted to proceed with the proposal offered by Straughan Environmental.

The new scope of work to be completed by Straughan Environmental will include creating a Comprehensive Engineered Master Resiliency Plan for the Town, defining engineered methods of mitigation, recommending proposed demonstration projects, developing concept designs for the demonstration projects, preparing final design plans

with cost estimates and preparing bid documents for the high priority demonstration projects.

We hope to have the Comprehensive Engineered Master Resiliency Plan completed by Straughan Environmental within the next 18 months. The Comprehensive Engineered Master Resiliency Plan will provide the tools and insight for taking the next steps for mitigating bayside flooding and planning for resiliency.

Please mark your calendar to attend the **Fenwick and You: Our Shared Responsibility in Resiliency Preparedness, Planning and Implementation** meeting scheduled for **August 21, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.** in Town Hall.

RESIDENTIAL CONCERNS UPDATE:

The Residential Concerns Committee hosted the Fenwick Nurtures Nature on Green Infrastructure seminar on July 17, 2025. If you missed the event, you can view it at: https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/NaoVhKKyZosGb_QG1AofFRFgPnKW4NUzTHD46jaqR1hQPf2gSBidJnrPZ8J3J8Jv3cUCoHExoL_Z2pHt.gUCOtQ-q4OJXlHg?eagerLoadZvaPages=sidemenu.billing.plan_management&accessLevel=meeting&canPlayFromShare=true&from=share_recording_detail&startTime=1752770514000&componentName=rec-play&originRequestUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fus02web.zoom.us%2Frec%2Fshare%2FtAfmgQrQifaG4uKRgKIUExBrl-Rs2dLW81uRRHM6mzL6M0sELycMimxEIUgUGj4I.C8Eh86DzndtHmtlr%3FstartTime%3D1752770514000



Thank you to Deb Cowell and the RCC for hosting such a nice event.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE UPDATE:

The Environmental Committee continues to work opposing the Maryland Offshore Wind Project.

The Delaware legislature passed a bill, SB 159, to overturn Sussex County’s denial of the substation near the Indian River. This bill was met with fierce opposition by the Republican caucus as well as all three Delaware County Councils as it effectively overruled home rule on zoning decisions (home rule meaning local governmental groups are empowered to make decisions involving local zoning issues). The Republican caucus forced a compromise by threatening to withhold approval of the Bond Bill which delayed the effective date of SB 159 until January 31, 2026. It is anticipated that there may be a group challenging SB 159 in Court and Jane Brady, former Attorney General of Delaware, has offered to represent the Sussex County Council for free.

Meanwhile, the Trump administration has rescinded all new lease areas. This order does not impact U.S. Wind's permit off our shores but may limit other wind farm lease areas off Delaware. We are waiting to see if the Trump administration will revisit the permits that have been approved by BOEM (Bureau of Ocean Energy Management) for the Maryland Offshore Wind Project and some recent rulings indicate that they are moving in that direction.

In the lawsuit that we joined with Ocean City, Maryland in challenging the BOEM permitting process, the motion to dismiss filed by U.S. Wind was denied.

You may see flags starting to fly on boats around Town: Stop Offshore Wind. If you would like one, please come to Town Hall, we have a few to hand out. For more information about the Stop Offshore Movement, go to: <https://stopoffshorewind.com/>. You can also donate at that site.

We have also filed appeals in Delaware with Caesar Rodney Institute challenging the permitting process by DNREC that approved connecting the cables by jet plowing through the Indian River Bay, raising concerns about the negative impacts on the environment, including the inland bays, tourism and property values, as well as DNREC's failure to adequately follow its own regulations in approving the project. Recent document exchanges have revealed that the Center for Inland Bays had deemed that jet-plowing through the Indian River Bay was the "worst option" and would have a significant negative environmental impact. Briefing is about to begin on those actions and immediate donations to the legal fund are needed and would be most appreciated: <https://form-renderer-app.donorperfect.io/give/caesar-rodney-institute/ocean-environment-legal-defense-fund> or you can mail at Caesar Rodney Institute c/o Ocean Environment Legal Defense Fund 420 Corporate Blvd. Newark, DE 19702. If you donate, please write in the memo or message line – "For Fenwick Island."

Nantucket, who had initially embraced offshore wind, has had a change in their position because of Vineyard Wind's activities and the failed turbine blade which closed their beaches last summer. As reported by Nantucket Current, Select Board Member Dawn Hill stated:

"When we negotiated the Good Neighbor Agreement in good faith, we were really led to believe that this would have a much lesser impact on an island that is a historic landmark, is a fragile place, and is completely reliant on tourism for our economy," Hill said. "These wind turbines are bigger, brighter, and much more impactful than we ever thought, and not to mention the environmental hazard from failures. But my choice would be with our new, federal administration to really wake up and try and put an end to these things, because they're not worth it to the coast of the United States." For the full article, go to: <https://nantucketcurrent.com/news/nantucket-officials-blast-vineyard-wind-deliver-list-of-demands?fbclid=IwY2xjawL->

[CsBleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHt3DhjFPFNPPeUUPmG4FCrw8_fpx9h61FqiP7DHPLw eJIraZI6fllR7Dyf_aem_eeiWyHDUmaCSQn6DW3J4_Q](#).

We will continue to keep our residents informed. Meanwhile, write to your U.S. Senator, U.S. Representatives and Delaware governmental representatives and express your views. This is how our beach will look if the Maryland Offshore Wind Project moves forward:



The Environmental Committee is now taking on Phase II of the Faucett Okie Family Nature Preserve.

Please consider coming out to help with these opportunities to benefit Fenwick!

DARKSKY COMMITTEE:

On Tuesday, August 5th, from 9 am to 12 pm, Ruskin Hartley, CEO of DarkSky International will be the keynote speaker at DarkSky Fenwick Nurtures Nature.

Please join us for this exciting and educational opportunity. If you cannot make it live, you can attend via Zoom or telephone:

DarkSky Fenwick Nurtures Nature



Tuesday 8/5/25 9 am-12 pm
Fenwick Island Town Hall
OR
On Zoom:



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84231143351>
Meeting ID:84231143351

Call in: 1-301-715-8592

FENWICK ISLAND POLICE UPDATE:

The summer season is in full swing and our police force is out on our streets daily. We have officers patrolling by vehicle and by bicycle with an emphasis on enforcing pedestrian safety. So, please watch out for pedestrians when you are driving and be safe out there. We want every soul to get to and from the beach and their home safely.

The FIPD hosted a breakfast and a bonfire for the Little League Senior Softball World Series:



We are also working diligently on getting the police department accredited. We hope to have good news in the Fall. Chief Morrissey, with the assistance of the entire department, has done a wonderful job in getting us ready to meet the State's deadline for accreditation by 2026.

TOWN COUNCIL NEWS:

The new Town Council will be sworn in on August 12th at 2:00 p.m. at Town Hall. The Town Council will hold its reorganization meeting where the Mayor, Treasurer and Secretary will be voted on by Town Council. Incumbents, Natalie Magdeburger, Jacque Napolitano and Kurt Zanelotti, will serve another two-year term on Town Council as well as Lucy Wilder.

Lucy Wilder is a resident of the Town and has served on the Town's IT Committee, Board of Elections and Business Committee. Her most recent contribution to the Town was organizing the "Cruzin' Together In Fenwick" bike event to support our Town's businesses.

The Town Council is also considering consolidating the committee structure in order to be more efficient with staff time and less onerous for our volunteers.

Please consider serving on one of our committees.

BEACH COMMITTEE UPDATE:

The Beach Committee has been working all winter planning our Summer events, including Fenwick Flicks and the Annual Bonfire.

- On June 20th, the Fenwick Flicks had a showing of "Monsters, Inc."
- On July 5, 2025, the Annual Town Bonfire to Support FIBP which raised \$15,500.00.
- On July 18, 2025, the Fenwick Flicks hosted "Moana 2".
- **Fenwick Flicks August 15, 2025, at 8 p.m. at Bayard Street ("Up").**

Please bring your family and friends and join us for our final Fenwick Flicks of the season.

DUNE POLES AND ROPE REPLACEMENT BY DNREC:

DNREC has started the replacement of the poles and ropes along the beach crossovers, beginning at Atlantic Avenue and proceeding northward. We are also trying to straighten the crossings as much as possible to make it easier for people to walk over the dunes.

DNREC still has two streets to complete and then will be placing the roping. Unfortunately, their crew was called to Indian River bridge project.

Please note that pedestrian access to the beach will remain available throughout the duration of this project. Each dune crossover is estimated to take one day to complete. We appreciate your understanding and patience as we work to maintain and enhance the safety and accessibility of our beach areas.

FENWICK ISLAND BEACH PATROL UPDATES:

We are fully staffed and actively providing lifeguard services on the beach. Please remember that the ocean can be dangerous so please listen and adhere to the guards' instructions.

FIBP hours of coverage are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

The Fenwick Island Beach Patrol provides access to the beach with a vehicle used to transport people with disabilities, injuries, the elderly and other special circumstances on and off the beach. This service is provided between 10:30 AM – 3:00 PM from June – September ONLY. To utilize this service, you may call the beach patrol phone at **302-462-6942**

- One person at a time will be transported.
- Only the person in need of assistance will be transported (no additional family members).
- The Beach Patrol cannot help you get in or out of the vehicle. A family member can assist you.

Since we are limiting transport service to one vehicle, there may be waiting times between transports. Please be patient.

If you prefer, the Beach Patrol also has 3 beach wheelchairs available. To utilize the use of a wheelchair, please contact 302-462-6942 (June – September) or 302-539-3011 (October – May).

All dunes in town are equipped with Mobi-Mats that are designed to provide accessibility to our beaches for pedestrians, wheelchair users, strollers, and individuals with limited abilities.

There are four designated handicap parking spots in town which can be found in the beach end parking lots on E. Bayard St., E. Farmington St., E. Georgetown St., and E. King St.

TOWN SURVEY COMING TO YOU SHORTLY:

We have prepared a Town survey that will be in your tax bill mailed this week. Please take a moment to respond so we can hear what your priorities, interests and concerns are for the Town of Fenwick Island. Your voice matters.

REMINDERS:

Please remember that construction activity is not permitted on Saturday and Sundays during the summer season.

Trash service along Bunting begins at 6:00 a.m. and all other areas, including dumpsters and deliveries for businesses, at 7 a.m.

Parking requirements are in effect.

Please keep your dog on a leash and off the beach.

Enjoy your family.

Make friends with your neighbors.

Enjoy all that Fenwick Island has to offer.

COMING ATTRACTIONS:

- **DarkSky Webinar on August 5, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. at Town Hall (Zoom available).**
- **Town Council Swearing In and Reorganizational Meeting on August 12, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. (Zoom available).**
- **Fenwick Flicks presents "Up" on August 15, 2025, at 8:00 p.m. on Bayard Street.**
- **Infrastructure Committee Hosts "Fenwick and You: Our Shared Responsibility in Resiliency Preparedness, Planning and Implementation on August 21, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at Town Hall.**

- **Town Council Meeting on August 22, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at Town Hall (Zoom available).**

Please feel free to reach out to any Town Council member if you have any questions or concerns about things happening around Town and remember to check our website and Facebook pages for current information/events.

Regards,

Natalie Magdeburger
Mayor/President of Fenwick Island Town Council

+++++

We need your help to continue to keep you timely informed of Fenwick activities.

If you are getting our email updates, please make sure to “whitelist” our address as some internet providers like to mark the updates as spam and are sending our materials to your spam folder.

If you do not have an email address, please contact Town Hall and let us know to mail you the updates.

If you are not getting email updates and would like them, please contact Town Hall and provide us with your email address.

Also, follow us on Facebook at “Town of Fenwick Island-government” or our Town’s website at <https://fenwickisland.delaware.gov/>. If you want to stay informed, we update the happenings around Town frequently on those sites.