

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR OCTOBER 2025

Summer is over, fall has arrived, and it is a beautiful time of year for collecting memories of glorious sunsets and enjoying a more relaxed lifestyle.

The fall season is yet another reminder that we are lucky to call Fenwick our own.

TREASURERS REPORT:

The Town's overall cash balance as of July, the end of our fiscal year, was approximately \$4.0 million.

2025 operating revenues exceeded budget by \$464,000 which was primarily driven by building permits. Operating expenses were \$56,000 below budget. With RTT revenues and the stronger than budgeted operations, the Town beat its overall 2024-2025 budget by \$870,000.

Fiscal 2025 was a very favorable year financially for our Town and we achieved this without any additional taxes on our property owners. We are able to start the 2026 fiscal year with a nice unanticipated cushion which is incredibly positive in the event of a softer real estate market. Details regarding the approved 2026 budget can be found at: <https://fenwickisland.delaware.gov/files/2025/06/FY2026-Budget-Comparison.pdf>.

Property tax bills were mailed in early August.

RTT revenues totaled \$41,000 in August and revenues and expenses for the first month of the 2026 fiscal year are consistent with budget.

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 Charter & Ordinance Committee has also been asked to increase the parking fine for illegal parking, particularly on the beach ends.

INFRASTRUCTURE/FLOODING UPDATE:

Bayside flooding is one of our biggest priorities for the Town. We have installed and reinstalled check valves in drainage pipes throughout Town, cleared debris from pipes, established a maintenance schedule, created a drainage map, and wrote a grant to hire an engineering company to create a Master Resiliency Plan.

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, Town Council decided to proceed with creating a Comprehensive Engineered Master Resiliency Plan for the Town without federal funding and was able to negotiate a proposal with Straughan Environmental for a total cost of \$299,000.00 (approximately \$125,000 less than what was proposed with federal funding).

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 next set of tools and insight for taking the next steps for mitigating bayside flooding and planning for resiliency.

Public Works continues to maintain the valves that have been installed in the drainage pipes and to clear debris from pipes. If you believe that the valves are not working or that the pipes are not open, please contact Town Hall to report. You can access updates on maintenance/inspection and repairs to the pipes on our website, under the Departments-Public Works – Discharge Replacement Plan at <https://fenwickisland.delaware.gov/files/2025/09/DISCHARGE-REPLACEMENT-PLAN-2025.pdf>.

Please keep in mind, in the event of high tides, the valves and pipes cannot assist until the tide recedes. Our Town on the bayside is flat and almost at sea level so there is not enough “fall” for the pipes to be effective while the tide is high.

We have also repurposed some “NO WAKE SIGNS” that we place throughout Town in problem areas to remind drivers to travel slowly through the road to not create a wake that can enter homes.

The Infrastructure Committee, chaired by Council Member Susan Brennan, hosted their third resiliency symposium, **Fenwick, and You: Our Shared Responsibility in Resiliency Preparedness, Planning and Implementation** on **August 21, 2025**. To see all of the resiliency symposiums, go to <https://fenwickisland.delaware.gov/flood-information/>. All three clarify the challenges and the work the Town has undertaken and will undertake in the future as well as ideas you can incorporate to help.

While the Town is waiting on Straughan Engineering’s Master Resiliency Plan, we are independently beginning a project on Farmington Street to build a sandbag berm on the street end. Led by Resident Jay Ryan, a retired engineer and member of the Infrastructure Committee, volunteers, many living on Farmington Street, filled sandbags and Public Works will use the sandbags to build a berm. The Farmington Street Project site was selected because it is one of the street ends that floods and has retaining walls on both sides of the street that will allow us to connect the berm. If successful, this will give us another set of tools to consider when assessing methods of mitigation for other streets throughout Town. Thank you to Jay, the Infrastructure Committee, the resident homeowners who are allowing us to tie into their properties as well as the volunteers who filled the sandbags. As they say, it takes a village....



Figure 1--Resident volunteers filling sandbags for Farmington Street Berm Project

We will continue to update the community as the project progresses and we are able to assess its effectiveness.

Town Council also created a Resiliency Fund that we will begin building from RTT revenues (3% of RTT revenues) and RTT funds that had previously been allocated for the dredging project.

MARYLAND OFFSHORE WIND PROJECT UPDATE:

The Trump administration has rescinded all new lease areas. This order does not impact U.S. Wind's permit off our shores but may eliminate any new wind farm lease areas off Delaware. The Trump Administration is also revoking federal subsidies and other federal funding for associated offshore wind support.

In the federal action in which we are a party with Ocean City, Maryland, the government (BOEM – Bureau of Ocean Energy Management) filed a Motion to Remand and Vacate the permit that was issued by their agency. BOEM stated that their prior conclusions were in error and that there were deficiencies in assessing the ecological, economic, and national security impacts when the permit was issued.

In the filing, BOEM specifically stated that the windfarms would interfere with radar, sonar and search and rescue operations as well as causing harm to commercial fisheries in a manner which could not be sufficiently mitigated and, as such, was interfering with other reasonable uses of the ocean in violation of federal law.

In other filings in similar cases along the East Coast, BOEM has concluded that the national security concerns also include supply chain issues as many of the components used in the turbines are built by China and other countries. On another note, a general in Europe went on record stating that the windfarms interfere with the Patriot Missile System.

In response to BOEM's request to remand and vacate the permit, U.S. Wind filed an objection to the government's motion and further filed a request to have the court declare that the permit is valid so that construction can begin.

So, the legal fight is really on now and will be first decided by a Federal District Court judge in Maryland. We expect that there will be a great deal of legal filings and potential appeals before there is a final determination.

You may have seen flags flying on boats around Town: Stop Offshore Wind. If you would like one, please come to Town Hall, we still 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 and the proceeds go to assisting in the federal action.

At the state level, 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 on the Delaware actions is occurring 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." The Town Council unanimously voted to make a \$10,000 contribution to the fund.

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. As a reminder, this is how our beach will look if the Maryland Offshore Wind Project moves forward:

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE UPDATE:

The Environmental Committee is now overseeing Phase II of the Faucett Okie Family Nature Preserve. There are three new benches in the park. The committee is also planning to install a natural fence barrier to delineate boundaries and incorporate simple modifications along Bayard Street to create easier preserve access for our visitors. A permanent sign telling the story of how the Faucett Okie Family Nature Preserve came to the Town has been ordered, assisted by a generous donation by Resident John Nason. Members will be attending 5 training sessions with the Center for Inland Bays to learn to install a pocket forest. The Town received a grant called The Mid-Atlantic Environmental Justice Fund, Tree Canopy for Resiliency and Public Health: Tree planting and tree canopy improvements to address local public health, climate change, ecological and environmental concerns such as air pollution and storm water management was awarded through The Center for Inland Bays for training and plant materials to create or fortify a pocket forest. The committee will be planting in the spring.

The Environmental Committee partnered with the Barefoot Gardeners to host two children story hours at the Pollinator Park. Guest author and Fenwick Island resident, Cindy Deakyne, read her book, "Lily and Hank, An Unlikely Friendship," which is based on the adventures of a heron and their Labrador Retriever here in Fenwick. Thank you to Cindy, the Barefoot Gardeners and the Environmental Committee for returning the children's story hour to Fenwick.



Figure 2--Resident Cindy Deakyne reading her book in Pollinator Park.



Figure 3--guests at the Children's story hour at Pollinator Park

The Environmental Committee is also working on plans to improve the sidewalk plantings and review the median plantings.

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

DARKSKY COMMITTEE:

On Tuesday, August 5th, Ruskin Hartley, CEO of DarkSky International, was the keynote speaker at DarkSky Fenwick Nurtures Nature in A. If you missed the symposium, you can access it at <https://fenwickisland.delaware.gov/darksky/>.



Figure 4--lighting illustration used at DarkSky symposium detailing the different lighting choices available

The committee is also planning to assist in creating a list of DarkSky friendly lighting choices that can be distributed to residents and businesses when considering lighting for new builds and wishes to review the Town's lighting ordinances to suggest potential updates to help make Fenwick a more DarkSky friendly community.

FENWICK ISLAND POLICE UPDATE:

The FIPD have been busy working toward earning accreditation by the State of Delaware. Under Chief Morrissey's leadership with the assistance of Master Corporal Majewski and the rest of the department, we are close. We hope to hear that we are accredited by the end of October. The state is requiring all police departments to be accredited by 2028.

In keeping with reorganizing the department, four members of FIPD received promotions. Nate Hudson, Chris Story, and Steve Majewski were all promoted to the

rank of Master Corporal and all have taken on significant leadership roles within the department. Emily Truitt was promoted to the rank of Corporal and will serve as the department's quartermaster.

Master Corporal Nate Hudson also completed the FBI LEEDA training program which is a three-week intensive leadership and management program.

Using grant funding, all FIPD vehicles were equipped with a trauma kit and an AED.

The FIPD took the lead in helping bring home a lost adult who was suffering from health-related confusion. After an extensive two-day search that involved the Bethany Beach Volunteer Fire Department, Ocean View police, South Bethany police, Ocean City police, Coast Guard, search and rescue dogs, local media and countless civilians, the missing adult entered the Fenwick Shores and recognized herself on the fliers that FIPD had posted. While she does not recall exactly where she had been, she does think she got into a black and white house with a pool near the water (she was not sure whether it was the bay or the beach), so if you have a house that meets that description and see signs of entry, please do not be alarmed. It takes a village...and our village helped get her home to her family. Thank you to all who assisted in the search.

FIPD had a busy summer patrolling our streets, making DUI and speed arrests and enforcing pedestrian safety laws. We will continue to work on keeping our Town safe.

[TOWN COUNCIL NEWS:](#)

The new Town Council was sworn in on August 12th at Town Hall. At the reorganization meeting Natalie Magdeburger was elected to serve as Mayor, Bill Rymer was elected Treasurer and Jacque Napolitano was elected as Secretary. We also welcomed new Council Member Lucy Wilder and swore in Kurt Zanelotti for his second two-year term.



Figure 5--2025-2026 Town Council members – from left-Treasurer Bill Rymer, Secretary Jacque Napolitano, Mayor Natalie Magdeburger, Council Member Susan Brennan, Council Member Colleen Wilson, Council Member Lucy Wilder and Council Member Kurt Zanelotti

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 also consolidated the committee structure to be more efficient with staff time and less onerous for our volunteers. Standing committees include Audit, Budget and Finance, Charter & Ordinance, Beach, Environmental and Infrastructure. We also have an Ad Hoc DarkSky Committee. Assignments for the 2025-2026 have been made but if you wish to join a committee, please contact Town Hall.

Town Council will also host a series of “Coffee With Council” to allow residents and business owners a more casual way of accessing Council members, raising concerns or asking questions.

We will also hold public participation at the beginning of our Town Council meetings to allow individuals to voice their comments.

The Town was awarded grant funding to purchase new computers for the staff. Thank you to Town Clerk Erin Ellinger for spearheading this endeavor.

BEACH COMMITTEE UPDATE:

The Beach Committee, chaired by Jacque Napolitano, worked all winter planning our Summer events, including Fenwick Flicks and the Annual Bonfire. Thank you to all who helped as our summer events were well attended and enjoyed.

The Beach Committee are now moving forward with planning **2026** events which will include:

- Fenwick Freeze to be held on January 1st at Bayard Street with registration beginning at 9:00 a.m. to 10 a.m. and the “freeze” promptly at 10:30 a.m.
- Annual Town Bonfire on Saturday, July 11, 2026, to Support FIBP.
- Fenwick Flicks –June 19th, July 17th, August 14th and an additional “classic” movie night of August 21st.

Please mark the dates now. Also, if you would like to volunteer to help plan these activities, please contact Town Hall. Even if you cannot join the committee, all volunteers are welcomed and appreciated.

The Beach Committee also help purchase a new Lifeguard shed which will be equipped with electricity. We expect delivery shortly and it will be up and running for the 2026 season.

FENWICK ISLAND BEACH PATROL UPDATE:

Captain Ryk and FIBP members represented us with members of the Sussex County Lifesaving Association at the USLA National competition and our team earned 1st place nationally!

Our own Captain Ryk won 1st place in the Beach Flags, Lt. Josh Strine came in 6th place in the Beach Run, Alex Breschi came in 13th place in the Open Beach Run and Danielle Stewart came in 8th place in the Woman’s Open Rescue Race.



Figure 6--Lt. Strine and Captain Ryk at Nationals

The FIBP held their annual Lifeguard Awards Banquet at The Station. Will Keeler was named Lifeguard of the Year, Danielle Stewart received the Captain's Award and Alex Breschi was named Rookie of the Year.



Figure 7--2025 Fenwick Island Beach Patrol

During the Summer of 2025, the FIBP made 83 rescues, responded to 141 minor medical events and 6 major medical events, found 18 missing persons and transported 268 individuals with mobility challenges onto our beach.

Thank you Captain Ryk and Lt. Strine for operating such a professional group of lifeguards and thank you FIBP for keeping us safe.

TOWN SURVEY:

We have prepared a Town survey that was in your tax bill. We have received over 200 responses and there is still time to send it in if you have not already. 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.

ARTESIAN WATER COMPANY OF WATER TESTING:

During testing, the customer may experience low water pressure or discolored water. If this occurs, please use cold water until pressure resumes and discoloration clears. If you have any questions, please call Artesian at 302-453-6930.

BE ALERT FOR FALL HURRICANES/STORMS/TOWN UPDATES:

We will post any updates on the Town's Facebook account at <https://www.facebook.com/TownofFenwickIsland>.

If you have not already done so, please consider signing up for Code Red at <https://public.coderedweb.com/CNE/en-US/BF1B2F004421>.

ZOOM SECURITY MEASURES:

We had some unwanted participants at several of our Zoom meetings this summer, a lot of sound and some unsettling graphics. As a result, we instituted several new layers of to our Zoom security. We still will offer Zoom connection to our meetings and events but we will require that you identify yourself either through your device or by asking you to do so at the meeting. Also, audio from your device into the meeting will be blocked until we open your line after being recognized. It should not affect your participation but we want to do all we can to make sure we do not experience the same intrusions. So far, we have been successful.

REMINDERS:

Please remember that construction activity is not permitted on Sundays.

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

Parking passes are no longer needed but please park on the white lined spaces marked.

Dogs are welcome on a leash on the beach after September 30th but please clean up after them.

Check out our Town businesses and restaurants – we have a new one, Fenwick Social, at the old Crab House – the barbeque was very good and a lot of our year-round restaurants have great specials.

Enjoy your family.

Enjoy all that Fenwick Island has to offer in the fall season.

COMING ATTRACTIONS:

- **Town Council Meeting on October 24th at 1:00 p.m. at Town Hall or via Zoom.**
- **Tree Lighting Ceremony at Town Hall on December 5th at 4:00 p.m.**
- **Town Council Meeting on December 5th at 1:00 p.m. at Town Hall or via Zoom.**
- **Various Committee meetings can be found by going to the Town’s website at <https://fenwickisland.delaware.gov/>.**

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

+++++

*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.

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.