



# The Town of Fenwick Island

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## AD HOC DARKSKY COMMITTEE MEETING

February 4, 2026, at 3:00 p.m.

Town Hall

MINUTES

**Members' Present:** Rose Mary Hoy, Frank Conklin (Zoom), George Stone (Zoom), Steve Ross (Zoom), Megan Staczek (Zoom)

**Others Present:** Drew Bellinger (Zoom), Natalie Magdeburger (Zoom)

**Staff Present:** Kathy Grab

Flag salute and call to order at 3:02 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes from November 20, 2025.

**Motion: Approve the Minutes of November 20, 2025, with a correction of spelling Megan Staczek's name on the first page, item 1.**

**Moved by: Megan Staczek**

**Second by: Frank Conklin**

**Motion Passed Unanimously.**

2. Update of Motions from November 20, 2025.

a. 'Thank You' Communication to DarkSky International (Completed).

- Letter was drafted, reviewed, and sent to Natalie Magdeburger for signature.
- Rose Mary Hoy asked Natalie Magdeburger for the status, Natalie Magdeburger will go back and pull it from her email and will have it signed and sent by the end of the week.

b. Update of Fenwick Island Lighting Ordinance (Next Steps).

- Town Council approved the Committee's request to modernize the lighting ordinance (Chapter 102) while retaining relevant provisions and supporting DarkSky goals.
- Frank Conklin, with the assistance of George Stone is designated as lead for the effort.
- Natalie Magdeburger has provided guidance and emphasized coordinating with the Charter and Ordinance Committee, which oversees ordinance updates.
- Next steps include meeting with the Charter and Ordinance Committee and using the existing ordinance as the foundation for updates.
- George Stone asked for clarification on the timeline. Natalie Magdeburger advised that it does depend on the scope. Aligning the current ordinance with Dark Sky language could be completed by year-end. The process includes review and vote by the Charter and Ordinance Committee, followed by Town

Council first read, public hearing, and second read (approximately four months). Making the ordinance more stringent would require additional research and time, particularly due to grandfathering of existing buildings.

- George Stone asked whether the Charter and Ordinance Committee meeting would help clarify expectations for updating the lighting ordinance; Natalie Magdeburger advised that perspectives and limitations would become clearer through the process.
- Natalie Magdeburger expressed support for modernizing the ordinance with clearer, updated Dark Sky–friendly standards, noting that aligning existing language would be easier, while more stringent requirements may prompt additional discussion and debate.
- Frank Conklin asked if Charter & Ordinance Committee would need documentation. Natalie Magdeburger advised that the initial meeting would be educational and that providing identified areas for potential enhancements, especially if more stringent than current standards would help inform discussion, while simply updating existing language to modern standards is unlikely to face pushbacks.

3. Update on Resources in Development.

a. Resource for Fenwick Island Public Works: Guidance for Contractors/Developers/ Residents/Business Owners.

- George Stone discussed providing brief educational materials on the lighting ordinance to building permit applicants, including a draft one-page handout with DarkSky–compliant fixture information, and noted plans to coordinate further with Mike Locke.
- He also suggested improving the Town’s DarkSky webpage by adding educational resources and visuals, similar to other Town webpages, while acknowledging the need to work within existing website limitations.

b. DarkSky Home Outdoor Lighting Assessment: Self-Assessment Tool for Residents.

- George Stone highlighted the DarkSky Outdoor Lighting Self-Assessment as a valuable new educational tool and suggested exploring ways to share it broadly, such as through the Town website, handouts, or local businesses, to increase community awareness.
- Natalie Magdeburger asked for the link to include it in the Message from the Mayor.
- Steve Ross provided the link to the DarkSky assessment, <https://darksky.org/get-involved/home-lighting-assessment/>

4. Schedule for DarkSky Activities for 2026.

a. Fenwick Island Events (e.g., Earth Day, July Bonfire, Marine Science Camp (New), FI Yacht Club (New), DarkSky Symposia).

- Rose Mary Hoy asked Megan and Steve to coordinate development of a 2026 activity plan (committee will carry out the work; they will help organize and keep the group on track).
- Committee will use last year’s events as a template (e.g., Earth Day, bonfire, symposium) and consider repeating the successful symposium with new topics. Potentially reaching out at the Fenwick Island Marine Science Camp, the Fenwick Island Yacht Club, and other local organizations on nighttime lighting impacts both on the water and on land.

- Rose Mary Hoy will circulate the 2025 action plan; committee will begin a draft roadmap for 2026 and refine it over the next few months.
- b. Engaging with Local Communities and Organizations (Lewes, Rehoboth Beach, Ocean City, Freeman Companies, Sussex Preservation Society, Center for Inland Bays, etc.).
- George Stone asked if this is what Rose Mary Hoy would like to do in 2026. Rose Mary Hoy advised that this is something they should review and speak with Natalie Magdeburger and Town Council.
  - Rose Mary Hoy connected with her contact in Lewes regarding Rehoboth Beach's lighting ordinances, to keep up to date with them and consider a collaboration with them.
  - Megan Staczek asked Kathy Grab to clarify the current calendar of events on the website. Kathy Grab explained where to find the events on the calendar. Members felt there should be a list of events more accessible and more than one month at a time. Kathy Grab will look into this with the website managers and get back with an answer.
5. Old Business.
- a. None.
6. New Business.
- a. None.
7. Public Participation.
- a. None.
8. Future Meeting Date.
- a. March 4, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
- The committee has some scheduling issues and would like to discuss other options.
  - March 4th at 10:00 a.m.
9. Adjourn.

**Motion: Adjourn at 3:56 p.m.**

**Moved by: George Stone**

**Seconded by: Megan Staczek**

**Motion Passed Unanimously.**