



The Town of Fenwick Island

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REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

Friday, July 24, 2026

MEETING HELD IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM

MINUTES

In Attendance

Town Council Members:

Mayor Magdeburger, Councilmember Brennan, Councilmember Zanelotti, Councilmember Wilder, Councilmember Wilson, Treasurer Rymer

Excused Members Absent:

Secretary Napolitano

Staff in Attendance:

Town Clerk Ellinger, Police Chief Morrissey, Administrative Assistant Grab, Beach Patrol Captain Rykaczewski, Finance Director Green (via Zoom)

Others in Attendance:

In addition to Town Council and staff, three participants attended via Zoom and eight attended in person, including a representative from IQ Fiber.

Call to order and flag salute at 1:00 PM.

Motion: To proceed as discussed in Executive Session.

Moved by: Natalie Magdeburger

Seconded by: Bill Rymer

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

1. President's Report – Mayor Magdeburger

Mayor Magdeburger thanked Beach Committee Chair Kurt Zanelotti, his wife Gail, Town staff, volunteers, the Beach Patrol, and everyone involved in the Town Bonfire. She reported that the event was well received and encouraged the community to attend the remaining Fenwick Flicks presentations, including Minions and the classic film Casablanca.

The Mayor reported positive community feedback regarding the new red pedestrian-crossing flags along Coastal Highway. She said the flags have improved pedestrian visibility and that the Police Department continues active crosswalk and speed enforcement. The Town received correspondence from DelDOT questioning aspects of the program; the Mayor and Police Chief will respond and continue working with

DelDOT. The Town intends to continue the flag program and may consider reflective tape or other visibility improvements.

Mayor Magdeburger also discussed the Town's prior request to coordinate traffic signals to slow vehicles through Town. She reiterated that pedestrian safety remains the Town's priority.

2. Approval of Minutes

a. Motion: To approve the minutes of June 26, 2026, Regular Town Council Meeting.

Moved by: Bill Rymer

Seconded by: Lucy Wilder

Result: Council identified two corrections, and the original motion was replaced with a revised motion.

Discussion:

Council identified two corrections: the Treasurer's Report date on page 3 should read April 30 rather than April 31, and the horticulturist's name on page 15 should be corrected to Gregg Tepper.

Motion: To approve the minutes of June 26, 2026, Regular Town Council Meeting with modifications.

Moved by: Natalie Magdeburger

Seconded by: Bill Rymer

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

b. Motion: To approve the minutes of June 26, 2026, Executive Session.

Moved by: Bill Rymer

Seconded by: Susan Brennan

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

c. Motion: To approve the minutes of June 18, 2026, Special Town Council Board of Elections Oath of Office meeting.

Moved by: Natalie Magdeburger

Seconded by: Colleen Wilson

Result: Motion passed by a vote of 4–0, with Bill Rymer and Susan Brennan abstaining.

3. Treasurer's Report – Bill Rymer

As of June 30, the town's overall cash balance was \$3.64 million which was a decrease of \$222,000 from May 31. This decrease was anticipated since we have a full lifeguard patrol and revenues slow down this time of year. Through June 30 and consistent with

previous months, overall revenues and expenses are in-line with expectations with the exception of higher than anticipated legal expenses due to the ACLU litigation.

YTD RTT revenues through June 30 total \$390,000 which is \$40,000 over the annual budget. Still expect one or two more transactions in July so those revenues will increase a little more for the full year.

The town remains on target with its forecasted cashflows.

Motion: To accept the June 2026 Treasurer's Report.

Moved by: Natalie Magdeburger

Seconded by: Kurt Zanelotti

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

4. Business & Residential Public Participation

The Mayor opened the floor for business and residential public participation on items listed on the agenda for discussion and possible action. No public comments were offered at that time.

5. For Discussion and Possible Action:

a. Review & Approval of the FY2027 Fee Schedule

Treasurer Rymer reviewed the proposed FY2027 Fee Schedule. The real estate property tax rate reflected the four-cent increase approved during the budget process, resulting in a rate of \$0.214015 per \$100 of assessed value. He also identified two corrections: the Emergency Medical Services fee should be \$66 and the Waste Management fee should be \$310.

Motion: To approve the FY2027 Fee Schedule with the corrected Emergency Medical Services and Waste Management fees.

Moved by: Natalie Magdeburger

Seconded by: Susan Brennan

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

b. Faucett Okie Family Nature Preserve: Discussion of natural fence

Council discussed the natural fence, also known as a dead hedge, constructed from branches and bamboo removed from the Preserve. Although Councilmembers expressed support for the appearance and environmental benefits of the fence, neighboring property owners had raised concerns that the dried material could present a fire hazard, particularly if exposed to discarded cigarettes.

Council discussed possible alternatives, including living plant material, metal fencing similar to that used at the Pollinator Park, use of the existing material as mulch, and continued boundary protection. The Environmental Committee had not yet met to consider the concerns.

Motion: To refer the matter to the Environmental Committee for a thorough discussion, including an invitation to adjoining property owners, and for a recommendation back to Council.

Moved by: Natalie Magdeburger

Seconded by: Bill Rymer

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

c. IQ Fiber Discussion

Council reviewed IQ Fiber's proposal to install a fiber-optic network within Town rights-of-way. Council discussed competition, customer service, upload and download speeds, system resiliency, seasonal service, construction impacts, aging water infrastructure, equipment locations, and the level of Town coordination that would be required.

An IQ Fiber representative clarified that the company would install its main infrastructure within the Town rights-of-way and would extend service from the roadway to an individual home only after the property owner subscribed. The IQ Fiber representative described underground directional drilling, utility locating and test pits, restoration practices, redundant network architecture, service options, and the company's experience in other coastal and historic communities.

IQ Fiber reported that construction within Dewey Beach was expected to begin in September. Council agreed that observing that installation would provide useful information about disruption, coordination, and restoration. Council also expressed interest in obtaining additional community feedback and potentially visiting the Dewey Beach project.

Motion: To table the discussion and return the matter to the agenda for the November 2026 meeting, after the Town has had an opportunity to evaluate the Dewey Beach construction and gather additional community input.

Moved by: Natalie Magdeburger

Seconded by: Bill Rymer

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

6. Committee Reports - Audit, Beach, Budget & Finance, C&O, Dark Sky, Environmental, Infrastructure, Planning Commission

Audit – Bill Rymer

No report.

Beach – Kurt Zanelotti

The July Fenwick Flicks presentation was canceled because of poor air quality and may be rescheduled for September. The Committee will review future scheduling to avoid placing the movie, bonfire, and July 4 activities too close together.

The rescheduled Town Bonfire was successful. Councilmember Zanelotti thanked volunteers, administrative staff, Public Works, the Police Department, and the Beach Patrol. The silent auction and direct donations raised close to \$10,000 before expenses for Beach Patrol activities. A limited number of bonfire T-shirts remain available at Town Hall for \$25.

Upcoming films are “Minions” on August 14 and “Casablanca” on August 21. The next Beach Committee meeting will be on August 7 at 9:00 AM.

Budget & Finance – Bill Rymer

No report.

C&O – Natalie Magdeburger

The Committee is awaiting DarkSky Committee recommendations concerning lighting regulations and Strong Engineering's recommendations concerning infrastructure, bulkheading, and freeboard before proceeding with related ordinance work.

DarkSky – Mayor Magdeburger on behalf of Rose Mary Hoy

The Committee continues working on lighting ordinance recommendations. A night-sky raft-up, in partnership with the Fenwick Island Yacht Club, was scheduled for the following evening.

Environmental – Colleen Wilson

Horticulturist Gregg Tepper toured the Faucett Okie Family Nature Preserve and identified notable native plants and trees. He will provide suggestions for future work and potential involvement by the Barefoot Gardeners Garden Club. Mayor Magdeburger plans to invite Mr. Okie to visit the Preserve in the fall.

The Pollinator Park is progressing well and recently received an offer of a donation. The Committee continues to evaluate the Coastal Highway plantings and requested additional weeding and maintenance. The Committee will not meet on August 12; its next meeting will be in September.

Infrastructure – Susan Brennan

The Committee met July 14. The Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities grant application had been submitted, and the Flood Mitigation Assistance grant application was due August 7. Straughan Environmental was in the pre-final design

phase for the two selected flood-mitigation projects and continued work on the Town's comprehensive engineering/environmental report.

The Committee is developing content for the August 21 Bayside Resiliency Planning and Flood Mitigation Strategies Forum. It is also pursuing tidal-monitoring and data-collection partnerships with MARACOOS, the University of Maryland, the University of Delaware, South Bethany, and Ocean City. The Town's ArcGIS system is operational and will support the collection, mapping, analysis, and sharing of geographic and infrastructure data.

The next Infrastructure Committee meeting is August 11 at 10:00 AM. The public resiliency forum is August 21 at 1:00 PM.

Planning Commission – Susan Brennan

No report.

7. Department Highlights

Beach Patrol – John Rykaczewski

The Beach Patrol Captain reported 13 rescues, 49 assists, 94 minor first-aid cases, 9 major first-aid cases, 6 lost-person incidents, and 106 beach-access transports. Captain Rykaczewski discussed upcoming lifeguard competitions, including participation by younger guards with appropriate consent, medical, travel, and conduct documentation. Council commended the Beach Patrol's professionalism, community service, and strong support of the Town Bonfire.

Police Department – Michael Morrissey

Chief Morrissey reported continued aggressive pursuit of grants and highway-safety enforcement, including DUI, speed, occupant-protection, and pedestrian-safety initiatives. The Office of Highway Safety awarded the Department \$19,719 for 21 portable pedestrian signs and bases, upgrades to four vehicle radar units, one handheld laser unit, and LED flare kits.

Additional awards included \$23,890 from the Fund to Combat Violent Crime to pay remaining body-camera costs; \$4,406.51 in State Aid to Local Law Enforcement for equipment upgrades; \$3,735.98 in emergency drug funds, primarily for overtime reserve; and \$45,000 in Sussex County revenue-sharing funds. Total grant and revenue-sharing funding received during the prior month was \$96,752.11. The Department was still awaiting a decision on an \$11,000 request for two additional signs.

The Chief and Mayor reiterated that highway and pedestrian safety are the Town's highest priorities. Crosswalk and speeding violations are being actively enforced. The Town will continue discussions with DelDOT regarding signal synchronization, speed

limits, crosswalk improvements, and the Route 1 sidewalk project, which is expected to include flashing beacons at crosswalks not controlled by traffic signals.

Public Works – Mike Locke

Public Works staff were recognized for supporting the July 4 parade and Town Bonfire and for maintaining the beaches, beach ends, parks, and Town Hall grounds during the busy summer season.

Administration – Erin Ellinger

Town Clerk Ellinger reported that Lifeguard Appreciation Day would be recognized the following week. She also announced that the Town's new BRYX community notification system was finalized and ready for use. The next Message from the Mayor will be distributed through BRYX, and messages may include a poll question.

Residents previously receiving Town notices through CodeRED will need to sign up for BRYX notifications. A simplified contact and notification sign-up form will accompany the property tax bills and will also be available on the Town website. Recipients may select the types of notices they wish to receive. The annual cost of the new system is \$500.

8. Old Business

Councilmember Wilson reported on the Beach & Bay Cottage Tour, which included three Fenwick Island properties: the historic Hodges cottage, the Breeden residence, and the Barrett renovation. She thanked the Police Department, St. Matthew's by the Sea, Tim Simpson, Ronald Williams, participating homeowners, and other volunteers for their assistance. Mayor Magdeburger contributed a history of Fenwick Island for the tour publication.

9. New Business

No new business was presented.

10. Upcoming Events and Meetings:

July 31	Tax Bill Mailing	8:00 AM
August 5	DarkSky Committee	10:00 AM
August 7	Beach Committee	9:00 AM
August 11	Infrastructure Committee	10:00 AM
August 14	Town Council Swearing-In	9:00 AM
August 14	Fenwick Flicks Minions	8:00 PM
August 21	Bayside Resiliency Planning & Flood Mitigation Strategies Forum	1:00 PM
August 28	Town Council Executive Session	11:00 AM
August 28	Town Council Regular Meeting	1:00 PM

11. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 2:35 PM.

Moved by: Colleen Wilson

Seconded by: Susan Brennan

Result: Motion passed unanimously.