

## **Dark Skies Meeting Minutes January 14, 2026**

Present: Frank Clark, Buzz Constable, Sherry Haydock, Ken Hurd, Susan KatzSliski, Ginny Lemire, Kathleen Lomatoski, Craig Nicholson,

The minutes for the January 7th meeting were approved

The Select Board meeting held on January 12 was discussed. A member of the Board expressed concerns about town owned buildings and the cost of bringing lights into compliance. The Committee stated that they were still waiting on data from the DPW to assist with cost estimates. Buzz explained the advantages of pursuing general bylaws over zoning bylaws, including the ability to address grandfathering issues and the requirement of a majority vote rather than a 2/3 vote. There will be a follow up meeting with the Planning Board on January 27 to review the updated general bylaws. The committee will seek the endorsement of the Planning Board at that meeting.

Louise shared the recently updated general bylaws with Margaret Olson who raised the question of whether or not the committee should focus on updating the zoning bylaws rather than passing general bylaws. Her other comments on specific items will be considered as the bylaws continue to be updated.

Ken thought it would be helpful to know how many towns use general bylaws versus zoning bylaws for Dark Skies compliance.

The public information meeting on the Dark Skies Committee initiatives will occur on January 15 at 7:30 at the Donaldson Room in the Town Office Building. This meeting will be in person and available via Zoom. The presentation will be similar to the one presented to the Select Board. An effort will be made to obtain email addresses of those who attend the presentation so that ongoing information regarding Dark Skies compliance could be shared in the future

Ginny and Sherry will meet on January 20th to finalize the document that will be presented to the building inspector regarding noncompliant lighting at the Commons. The Commons complaint is being submitted on behalf of the Dark Skies Committee.

The process of addressing the use and modification of street lights in Lincoln will remain separate from the bylaws. Data gathering regarding hardware specifications, electrical cost of lighting and conversion of lights is ongoing. Sherry has re-contacted Steve Olson to set up a follow up meeting. Roy Harvey

has volunteered to join the meeting and has provided the DS committee with some preliminary cost data.

There was discussion on the two lighting questionnaires that had previously been circulated by Kathleen to members of the DS committee. Both documents were reviewed and feedback was provided to Kathleen prior to the meeting. Kathleen will merge the two documents and recirculate a single questionnaire. She is working with multiple members of her committee to distribute this questionnaire electronically. Susan brought up the issue of nuisance lighting and how to deal with lighting not addressed in the bylaws. It was determined that this was best handled by a focus on education which would hopefully result in voluntary lighting changes.

The Lighting Complaint Subcommittee has produced a document outlining the process for dealing with lights that are determined to be problematic. Ginny will circulate this document to all members of the DS committee. Sherry will circulate a shorter version of the letter for consideration and Sherry will ask Diana to circulate a copy of the letter that will be sent to owners of the lighting which appears to be problematic. The emphasis of this process will be on education. Use of the building inspector should only be involved in cases of obvious noncompliance.

The issue of whether or not to proceed with passing general bylaws versus modifying the existing zoning bylaws was again discussed. Sherry proposed moving forward with refined general bylaws as they require only 50% approval at town meeting compared to the 2/3 needed for zoning. Craig reported that the Planning Board was open to either option with the possibility of cleaning up the zoning by law after the passage of the general bylaw to avoid confusion. The committee decided to pursue the passage of general bylaws.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Haydock

