

## ODSC IDSC meeting 042623 - Notes

### Attendees:

Alicia Bristow  
Mark Thompson  
Ladd Lindsay  
David Chandler  
Chad Tolly  
Sam Miller  
Mark Thompson

The meeting began at 7:05pm.

Mike Weasner, Chair of the original Oracle Dark Skies Committee (ODSC), welcomed everyone to this first meeting to re-form the ODSC. He thanked everyone for their interest. He also thanked Alicia Bristow for hosting the meeting at her home.

Mike then explained that the purpose of this meeting was to hopefully re-form the ODSC to pursue the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) "International Dark Sky Community" (IDSC) designation for Oracle.

Everyone introduced themselves. There were local residents and some residents of Saddlebrooke and Saddlebrooke Ranch, some of who are amateur astronomers, IDA Dark Sky Advocates, and some were from the Oracle business community. Several people who had planned to attend the meeting were unable to do so.

Mike then discussed the recent Pinal County "International Dark Sky Week" Proclamation (see [http://www.weasner.com/co/Reports/2023/04/10/2023\\_04.05\\_International\\_Dark\\_Sky\\_Week\\_Proclamation.pdf](http://www.weasner.com/co/Reports/2023/04/10/2023_04.05_International_Dark_Sky_Week_Proclamation.pdf)) and acknowledged the work of Dave Coward and his group from Gold Canyon. This group is in the early stages of an effort to designate the Copper Corridor as an IDA "International Dark Sky Reserve". The County proclamation is of major importance. It acknowledges the harm done by Light Pollution and the importance of protecting the night sky. It also puts the Pinal County Board of Supervisors on record about these issues and strengthens the need for appropriate updates to the Pinal County Outdoor Lighting Code. An update to the Code is currently in review by the County and has not yet been released for public comment. An early draft of the update looks very good for protecting the night sky and addressing all the issues raised by bad lighting.

The Mission of the ODSC was then briefly discussed. The ODSC would prepare the "International Dark Sky Community" application, doing all the activities required by the IDA IDSC Guidelines (see <https://www.darksky.org/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2021/05/IDSC-Final-May-2021.pdf>). It would do public outreach to the community of Oracle. Once the IDSC designation

is approved by IDA, the ODSC would continue activities as required by the IDSC Guidelines (ongoing public outreach, annual updates to IDA).

Mike then explained the IDA IDSC process (see <https://www.darksky.org/our-work/conservation/idsp/communities/>). The process begins with an initial contact with IDA. IDA reviews the location to determine whether it would qualify as an IDSC (Oracle will) and suggests similar locations that have been designated. Julian, California, is one such location. The next step in the process is to pay a non-refundable fee of \$250 to IDA and begin work on meeting the IDSC requirements. It will likely take 2-3 years to complete all the steps involved (public outreach, lighting inventory, etc.). Once submitted to IDA, the application is reviewed by the IDA Dark Sky Places Committee. Once approved by the IDA Committee, the IDA Board of Directors then reviews the application and approves the designation. It is NOT required that all non-compliant lighting be retrofitted at the time the application is submitted to IDA. The community has 10 years to reach 100% compliance by residents and businesses. Progress is documented in the annual reports to IDA.

Mike discussed Dr. John Barentine, who was the IDA Dark Sky Places Program Director when the ODSC did the "International Dark Sky Park" (IDSP) designation for Oracle State Park in 2014. Mike worked with John when Mike was on the IDA Dark Sky Places Committee (2015-2020). John recently left IDA and formed a Dark Sky Consulting company and has been working with many groups, places, and governments in their night sky preservation efforts, including achieving IDA "International Dark Sky Places" designations. John, who lives in Tucson, is available to present a proposal to the ODSC (once it is re-formed) on what he could do in partnership with the ODSC. He has an hourly fee that the ODSC would need to pay to use his services.

There was then discussion of funding sources that could be available to the ODSC to accomplish its mission. OWN Oracle is one such source. Alicia Bristow (President of OWN Oracle) discussed how that could work. ODSC could be a committee under the umbrella of OWN Oracle, an IRS 501(c)(3) tax exempt non-profit. This would allow tax-deductible donations to be made to the ODSC and funds for outreach and lighting retrofits reimbursements to home and business owners to be dispersed. Other sources of funding include grants from Pinal County or other organizations. Mike discussed another potential source of funding: Pattern Energy (SunZia Transmission Line Project). Pattern Energy has stated that it would like to provide some funding to the community of Oracle to be used in the community's Dark Sky Preservation efforts. This is one of the many ways that Pattern Energy mitigates some of the environmental impacts of the Transmission Line. It will be up to the ODSC, once re-formed, to determine what funding sources will be utilized.

Mike then opened the meeting for discussion of selecting a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Ethan Finch, who was unable to attend the meeting, has volunteered to be the Treasurer. Ethan is a Park Ranger at Oracle State Park and has experience handling park revenue and donation money. Given that several people who had planned to attend this meeting were

unable to attend, it was decided to hold a second meeting to give them the opportunity to express their views.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 10 May, 7pm, at the home of Mark Thompson (1700 N. Sunset View Road, Oracle).

The meeting was adjourned at 9pm.