

Black Canyon Astronomical Society (BCAS)

Monthly Meeting Minutes

September 3, 2020 Program meeting via Blue Jeans Online Video Conference

Minutes Summary:

The BCAS September program meeting was held Thursday September 3 starting at 7pm featuring the topic Dark Sky Preservation in the North Fork Valley by Aaron Watson from Paonia. The meeting was held online with 22 participants from 19 online log-ins. Aaron provided an overview of the progress that is being made toward the Town of Paonia's goal of being designated a Dark Sky Community by the International Dark Sky Association (IDA). The most significant news was that DMEA started to replace the non-complaint IDA Town street lights with 2700K CCT (correlated color temperature) shielded LED lights and fixtures.

A business meeting was not held.

Program Topics Details:

Concerning astronomy news Bryan highlighted recent reports of a halo of ionized gas around the Andromeda galaxy (M31). After some discussion on the recent news, Bryan introduced BCAS member Aaron Watson, who is also the Western Region coordinator for the Colorado Chapter of IDA.

Aaron discussed in some detail the Town of Paonia's progress toward satisfying IDA criteria for Dark Sky Community designation. Recent major accomplishments included:

- Aaron and his organization Dark Skies Paonia did hold a number of public outreach events in 2019 including a showing of the documentary film "Saving the Dark".
- A draft lighting ordinance tailored from Ridgway's was prepared and presented to the Town's planning department for review and consideration. The draft lighting ordinance has been pre-coordinated with IDA and does include the additional IDA requirements documented in the 2018 version of IDA's Community Guidelines.
- Finally, Aaron reported that DMEA has started to replace non-compliant Paonia street lights with 2700K CCT shielded LED fixtures.

Aaron did point out that the 2018 IDA Community Guidelines are very restrictive with a summary of the requirements outlined as follows:

- Prohibit or strictly limit unshielded lighting
- Requires CCT of 3000K or less
- Strict limits on new public lighting
- Places additional requirements of adaptive controls and curfews on public lighting
- Adds restrictions on lighted signs and athletic field lighting
- Finally requires an amortization period not to exceed 10 years to bring non-compliant town and private lighting into compliance

After a number of questions from the online audience, the meeting concluded at approximately 8:00 pm.