

# City, KSB write dark-sky policy

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In early August, Sedona became just the world's eighth dark-sky community as designated by the International Dark-Sky Association.

As a way to ensure that distinction, the city has created a memorandum of understanding identifying and outlining the responsibilities of Keep Sedona Beautiful — which spearheaded the effort — and the city.

On Tuesday, Oct. 14, the Sedona City Council approved the policy 6-1 with Councilwoman Barbara Litrell the dissenting vote.

In anticipation of the dark-sky designation, at the June 24 meeting, council approved the Sedona International Dark Sky Community Policy and the Sedona Lightscape Management Plan for maintaining Dark-Sky Community designation through the IDA.

At that meeting, it was also discussed that a memorandum of understanding between the city and KSB would be brought back for review and approval. The purpose of this agreement is to outline the roles and responsibilities in order to maintain the IDA's Dark-Sky Community designation, a city document stated.

At its Sept. 18 board meeting, KSB approved the proposed



memorandum of understanding. Now approved by council, this memorandum will take effect immediately. Jan. 1 shall be its anniversary date and it will renew automatically each year unless either party provides notice of termination to the other by Sept. 30 of the prior year.

During the council's pre-meeting, Councilman John Martinez expressed concern that KSB may have too much say in regard to how the city proceeds with being a Dark-Sky Community.

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"It sounds like we're so tied in with KSB that it almost sounds like we report to KSB on dark skies," he said. "That's almost the flavor of this motion. It bothers me that the spirit was written that way. I would like it noted that if the city has to do something, KSB can't overrule what we need to do."

In regard to Martinez's concern, the policy does state that KSB has a major say in how the city approaches its lighting. For example, "All installations of new outdoor lighting fixtures, retrofit and replacement of existing outdoor lighting fixtures

or increases in light intensity of any existing light fixtures on city-owned infrastructure and property shall be in consultation with Keep Sedona Beautiful in order to ensure compliance."

It goes on to add, "The city shall also consult with Keep Sedona Beautiful when determining proper adaptive controls and curfews as described in this policy."

City Manager Tim Ernster assured Martinez that KSB has just an advisory role and that the city will have the final say in all matters.

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