

WHEREAS, the aesthetic beauty and wonder of a natural night sky is a shared heritage of all humankind, and the experience of standing beneath a starry night sky inspires feelings of wonder and awe and encourages a growing interest in science and nature, especially among young people; and

WHEREAS, the greatest number of Dark Sky Parks east of the Mississippi are located in Virginia, including Sky Meadow State Park and Rappahannock County Park, close to Vienna, and Virginia's national, state, and local parks – including Northside in Vienna – are home to dozens of species who rely on undisturbed night environments to hunt, mate, and thrive; and

WHEREAS, 80 percent of the world’s population, including many people in Vienna, lives under a dome of light pollution – excessive artificial lighting at night that disrupts natural darkness – and may never experience the visual wonder or ecological and health benefits of living under a dark sky; and

WHEREAS, light pollution has scientifically-established economic and environmental consequences, which result in significant impacts to the ecology and human health of all communities and Virginia’s environmental goals for years has included the reduction of light pollution; and

WHEREAS, light pollution represents a waste of natural resources amounting to roughly \$3 billion per year of wasted energy in the United States and contributes to diminished energy security and significantly reducing light pollution would save Virginia residents tens of millions of dollars per year; and

WHEREAS, the International Dark-Sky Association is the globally-recognized authority on light pollution, and has created International Dark-Sky Week to raise awareness of light pollution, and provide free education, resources, and solutions to the public to encourage the protection of and enjoyment of dark skies and responsible outdoor lighting with the help of Virginia residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Linda J. Colbert, Mayor of the Town of Vienna, Virginia, on behalf of all citizens of the Town of Vienna recognize April 21-28, 2025 as

INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY WEEK

and I call this observance, as well as the proximity and night sky programs at Turner Farm Park Observatory and George Mason University Observatory, to the attention of all Vienna residents Let us all celebrate the pristine and undisturbed dark skies throughout our Town and take a moment to ponder our role in protecting this valuable resource and our connection to our environment now and for future generations.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Corporate Seal of the Town of Vienna, Virginia, to be affixed hereto this 7th day of April, two thousand twenty-five.

Linda J. Colbert
Mayor

ATTEST:

Melanie J. Clark, MMC
Town Clerk