



Town of Blades  
OFFICE OF MAYOR & COUNCIL  
20 W Fourth Street  
Blades, Delaware 19973-4122  
(P) 302.629.7366 (F) 302.629.0199

***Town Council Meeting  
BVFC, East Fifth Street, Blades, DE  
7:00PM  
January 8, 2024***

Present: Mayor Rev. Dr. Pierre Gaither, Sr., Councilman William Stang, Councilwoman Nancy McAdams, Councilman Donald Trice, Councilman Garold Miller, Police Chief Martin Willey, Police Administrative Assistant Loretta Lynch, Town Solicitor Craig Eliassen and Town Administrator Lisa Marks.

Mayor Rev. Dr. Pierre Gaither, Sr. officially opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Joe Donahue requested a moment of silence instead of an opening prayer. Denied by residents and Council.

Opening Prayer by Mayor Rev. Dr. Pierre Gaither, Sr., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

CDBG Annual Public Hearing – Brandon Hamilton from Sussex County Community Development and Housing informed Council and residents of the upcoming opportunities for the Community Development Block Grant Program.

Minutes from the December 11, 2023, Town Council Meeting: Councilman Donald Trice requested that the resignation of Mayor Robert Atkinson be added to the minutes. It was explained that would not be possible since Mayor Atkinson's official written resignation did not occur until December 13, 2023, two days after the meeting. Motion to accept in written form, after correcting wording from comparing to preparing in the Parks & Cemetery Committee Report by Councilman William Stang; Seconded by Councilman Donald Trice. Motion passed, Councilman William Stang – Yes, Councilwoman Nancy McAdams – Yes, Councilman Donald Trice – Yes, Councilman Garold Miller – Yes. Carried

Police Report – Submitted and read by Police Chief. Monthly statistics and handed out 2024 Blades Police Department Survey.

P&Z – No meeting in December.

❖ **Committee Reports:**

- Housing/Code – Report submitted by Code Enforcement Officer, Marcus Trammell and read by Mayor Rev. Dr. Pierre Gaither, Sr. - Monthly statistics
- Water report - Reports submitted by Public Works Supervisor Frank O'Day and read by Councilman William Stang. Monthly statistics
- Streets – Report submitted and read by Councilman Garold Miller. Christmas lights were up and are now ready to come down. We are waiting on Seaford Public Works to assist us with their equipment. Banners are old and were not put up this year. We are pricing new ones for next year. We are assessing streets for the 2024 Street Project. We have enough salt for one storm. Storage area has been cleared to purchase and store two to four more pallets of salt.



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- Parks & Cemeteries – Report submitted and read by Councilwoman Nancy McAdams. Parks & Cemetery are low maintenance this time of year. Water and Streets are first and second focus. Continuing to work on grants for handicap equipment. Kids are playing at the park, even though there are leaves and pine needles on the ground. We are waiting for permits from the County to begin Hardin Hall.
- Police – Report submitted and read by Councilman Donald Trice. Due to my knee operation, I have been out of circulation for about two weeks, but still stayed in contact with Chief Willey and Lori in the office.

The candidate that is attending the Dover class is doing very well. We get a report on him from the Dover Police Academy every week. The candidate calls Chief Willey every Friday and they go over the week.

I would like to thank the Seaford Police Dept. for the help that they have provided during Chief Willey's injury. I would also like to thank the Delaware State for their help.

Paperwork has been started for next year's grants. We got the two grants we applied for. One for security cameras for the Police Dept., this is required for our certification. The other grant is for security cameras at the park.

The Chief is planning another Meet & Greet with the residents of Blades on January 31<sup>st</sup>, at the Blades Fire Company. The last one we had went very well. Refreshments will be served.

The Police Dept. would like to thank Council in supporting us with our third officer.

Chief Willey and I are looking into adding a fourth officer this fall. To do this we will be applying for the COPS Grant this year. This grant will pay 75% of an officer's pay for three years. We would have to come up with 25%. We feel that between other grants and working with Council and our State Officials, we can do this. This will be based on getting the COPS Grant.

When Chief Willey was hired, he said that he was going to rebuild the Police Dept. from the ground up and I think he has done that. We are moving in the right direction by the improvements we have made in the Police Dept. It makes me feel good to see new applications come in and that the applicants are already police certified.

The Police Dept. would like to thank the Town Council, Blades Fire Co. and the Blades residents in supporting us. If we all work together as a TEAM, we can achieve our goal for the Town of Blades.

- Mayor's Report – Report submitted and read by Mayor Rev. Dr. Pierre Gaither, Sr. Mayor Gaither gave a brief report of his meetings and public appearances during the month of December, including speaking and meeting with Town Administrator Lisa Marks and Administrative Assistant Crystal Gregor in order to approve/sign documents and get daily updates. Mayor Gaither attended the SCAT Breakfast Friday, January 5, 2024.



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- Town Administrator Report – Report submitted and read by Town Administrator Lisa Marks. Ms. Marks reported December door hanger and shutoffs for past due accounts. The Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Trails Grant Application has been approved by the Parks and Recreation Council in the amount of \$977.00, representing 75% of the total project cost of \$1,302.93. We are waiting for the executed Grant Agreement from the Secretary of the Delaware Parks and Recreation Council (DPRC). These funds have been awarded in order to replace 4 unsalvageable BBQ grills in the park. The USDA ECWAG Grant final draw has been received to close out the PFOS/PFOA Water Treatment Plant Project. Closing the project at \$1,686,217.10. (State of Delaware Department of Health and Social Services – \$973,641.00 and USDA ECWAG – \$712,576.10.) The 2024 tax bills were sent out January 2<sup>nd</sup>. In observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Blades Town Office will be closed Monday, January 15<sup>th</sup>.

❖ New Business:

- Council Reorganization – Motion to accept Mayor Robert Atkinson’s resignation made by Councilman Donald Trice; Seconded Councilman William Stang. Motion passed, Councilman William Stang – Yes, Councilman Donald Trice – Yes, Councilman Garold Miller – Yes, Councilwoman Nancy McAdams – Yes. Carried

Motion to name Rev. Dr. Pierre Gaither, Sr. as Mayor and President of Council made by Councilman William Stang; Seconded by Councilman Garold Miller. Motion passed, Councilman William Stang – Yes, Councilman Donald Trice – Abstained, Councilman Garold Miller – Yes, Councilwoman Nancy McAdams – No, Tie breaking vote (in accordance with Town Solicitor Craig Eliassen) by Rev. Dr. Pierre Gaither, Sr. - Yes. Carried

Motion to appoint Councilman William Stang as Vice-Mayor and Vice-President of Council made by Mayor Rev. Dr. Pierre Gaither, Sr.; Seconded by Councilman Garold Miller. Motion passed. Motion made to appoint Councilwoman Nancy McAdams as Vice-Mayor and Vice-President of Council made by Councilman Donald Trice: No Second. Councilman William Stang – Yes, Councilman Donald Trice – No, Councilman Garold Miller – Yes, Councilwoman Nancy McAdams – No, Tie breaking vote (in accordance with Town Solicitor Craig Eliassen) by Rev. Dr. Pierre Gaither, Sr. - Yes. Carried

❖ Old Business:

- Christmas Light Contest – Announce Winners  
1<sup>st</sup> Place – Carlos & Mary Reza, 209 South Market Street  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Rolley Marvel, 118 East Fifth Street  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place – David & Susan Seltzer, 200 Meadow Court

❖ Good of the Community

Several residents complained about publishing names and addresses of those making comments in the minutes.



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A resident questioned the meetings being recorded. – Under Delaware law, there is no need to attain consent where there is no reasonable assumption of privacy.

It was suggested that the Comprehensive Plan could have been more public.

Progress of Cypress Landing was questioned. – Preliminary Plans were approved by Planning & Zoning. A parking variance was approved by the Board of Adjustments.

Other items brought up by residents: Nanticoke Cleaners, a flag pole that was donated 7 years ago, the necessity of water readings in reports, including attending staff in meeting minutes under “Present”, Hardin Hall, the possibility of a newsletter, a dog park, multiple people in a single residence, speedbumps and brighter streetlights in Little Meadows, weekend water testing and meters being replaced.

Entered into Executive Session: 9:21pm  
Exited Executive Session: 9:30pm

Councilman Donald Trice motioned to adjourn the January 8, 2024, Blades Town Council Meeting, Seconded by Councilman Garold Miller.

Mayor Rev. Dr. Pierre Gaither, Sr. adjourned the Blades Town Council Meeting at 9:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lisa Marks  
Town Administrator