



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
September 9, 2024

Present: Mayor Nancy McAdams, Vice-Mayor William Stang, Councilwoman Sharon Alston, Councilman Gary Miller, Councilwoman Susan Seltzer, Councilman Donald Trice, Chief Martin Willey and Town Administrator Lisa Marks.

Mayor Nancy McAdams officially opened the meeting at 7:01 pm
The Lord's Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes from the August 12, 2024, Town Council Meeting. Motion to accept in written form, by Councilwoman Sharon Alston; Seconded by Councilman Donald Trice. A resident requested that the letter and survey she resubmitted to Council be added to the Minutes. Approval of the August 12, 2024, Minutes was Tabled.

Police Report – Submitted and read by Police Chief. Monthly statistics. In addition to the monthly statistics, Chief Willey announced the Police Department will be working with the Blades Fire Co. again this year giving out candy at the Blades Fire Co. on Halloween, GPS are being installed in all police vehicles at 10.00 per vehicle a month, the Police Department would like to hire another officer using County Grant funds of 40,000.00 and payroll that was allotted for an Administrative Assistant.

* A resident expressed his concerns about speeding on West Second Street, especially in the mornings, noon and in the afternoons.

❖ Committee Reports:

- P&Z –Councilwoman Susan Seltzer reported there was no Planning & Zoning Meeting in September.
- Housing/Code – Report submitted by Code Enforcement Officer, Marcus Trammell and read by Councilwoman Susan Seltzer - Monthly statistics – Councilwoman Susan Seltzer is also reviewing codes and may need to make some changes. GPS is being installed in the Code car.
- Water - Report submitted by Public Works Supervisor Frank O'Day and read by Vice-Mayor William Stang. Monthly statistics.

* A resident presented their used filter from their water system and stated the filter is taking out chemicals not sediment. – Vice-Mayor / Water Commissioner William Stang was aware of the carbon filter used in the resident's system. He had the water in the carbon filter tested. The test came back showing nothing, other than the filter had removed all of the chemicals we put in to keep the water safe. The water was clear after the carbon from the filter settled.



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- * A resident expressed concerns that he has not received results from the lead/copper testing he participated in 4 weeks prior. – The Town has not received the results; they will be mailed as soon as they are received.
- * Two residents informed the Council that the Town Ordinance states all plumbing must be done by a Master Plumber, therefore the Water Department/Public Works are not qualified to install/swap water meters. – The Water Department/Public Works Supervisor is a licensed Water Operator qualified to install/swap water meters. Installing/swapping water meters is not considered plumbing.
- Streets – Report submitted and read by Councilman Gary Miller. The 2024 Street Paving Project has been completed and we are working on the 2025 Street Paving Project. We are also looking into getting funding for a few patches. We are hoping to purchase portable speed bumps next year. The existing speedbump that interferes with a driveway will be removed. At some point, Delmarva Power will be addressing street lighting in Little Meadows.
 - * A resident asked if the new speed bumps will be higher and wider.
- Parks & Cemeteries – Report submitted and read by Councilwoman Sharon Alston.

“Good evening. I’ll begin my report by sharing that the highlight of the weeks since we last met was welcoming the students at Blades Elementary back to school. It was a joy to see our elementary students and their excitement at starting school. I hope that excitement for learning lasts forever!

Since our last Town Council meeting, I met with the Director of DNREC’s Office of Recreation, Parks, and Trails to learn about the grant process; and The Principal of Blades Elementary School to identify parents who would be potential thought partners in re-thinking our park design. I’m interested in getting as much community engagement and input as possible and want to thank Trisha Todd for being the first member of the community to volunteer to help with this project. If any of you are interested in working with us, please let me know.

This past Friday I attended Sussex County Association of Towns Steering Committee breakfast where they discussed a FEMA grant initiative with a proactive focus -- BRIC which stands for Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities. This represents FEMA’s effort to support states, local governments, tribes and territories proactively as they work to reduce their hazard risk resulting from catastrophic events that could impact essential services. These grants are available on a competitive basis with a 75:25 match.

The next few weeks promise to be busy ones. First, I want to share that Sharon DiGirolimo who is the Seaford School District Superintendent has invited me to join a new Community Outreach Council which she describes as a continuation/extension of the former Parent Advisory Committee. The focus of this group will be on creating a mechanism to understand where questions are arising in the community and how they can be best addressed at the district level. The plan is for this group to meet bi-monthly with the first meeting to take place later this month.



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I will also be working on Wreaths across America. This year the National Wreaths Across America Day is December 14th. I know that last year several of our residents stepped up to volunteer to lay wreaths. I have your names and will be contacting you. We will also be looking for more volunteers as well as individuals who are willing to purchase veteran's wreaths. I'm learning more about this program and will have more information by our next Town Council meeting.

Finally, I'll also be participating in a seminar organized by the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration. The topic is "Understanding the Role of Local Government Officials in Delaware." So, this is part of my learning and onboarding process as I am new to the Council.

That concludes my report. Thank you."

* A resident noted that an area of plexiglass needs to be replaced on a piece of playground equipment.

* A resident requested copies of reports and offered his assistance with anything the Town may need.

* A resident voiced concerns about the dead trees in the cemetery and the costs if they fall and damage headstones and the cost of having them cut down. Is there anything budgeted for that? – Not at this time.

- Police – Report submitted by Councilman Donald Trice and read by Councilman Donald Trice.
 1. "The Chief and I have been meeting almost every day."
 2. "The Chief and I had a meeting with the Council on what we want to do with Lori position. The Chief and I propose to the Council that we would like to advertise for another officer. The Mayor and Council agreed to our proposal. We started advertise for this position."
 3. "The Delaware State Police still helping us out."
 4. "I spent about 2 hours at the hospital with the Chief making sure Officer Krager was ok."
 5. A. "August 27, I attached welcome back kindergarten students at Blades Elementary School."
 - B. "Went to Dover for a meeting."
 - C. "Attended our monthly Police Department meeting with all of our officers."
 - D. "Attended a Workshop at Town Hall."
 6. "The Chief, Mayor and I had a meeting with Representative Danny Short. The meeting went very well for the Police Department and for the Town."



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7. "Paperwork has been started for next year grants. We receive a grant for \$40,000 from Sussex County Council,"

8. "The up coming event will be October 31st Halloween. We will be working with the Blades Fire Co. again this year giving away candy at the Blades Fire House. Come out in have a good time with the kids. Candy donation for this night will accept at the Police Department."

9. "The Chief is still working on credibility certified thru the State. We are working with other Police Departments and we are trying to have it done my the end of this year or the 1st part of next year."

10. "We needed the Town Council supporting and the residence of Blades support. So, we can do our job in keeping this town a safe place to live. If we all work together as a team we can achieve our goal. Making the Town of Blades a better and safe place to live."

- Mayor's Report – Report submitted and read by Mayor Nancy McAdams.
"Good Autumn evening to all Town residents. I am so glad to see you and I hope you are sincerely interested in the growth and improvement of our town. We have a great deal of fitting to do."

As your approved Mayor, I have been busy:

August 15, 2024

I was called by the Delaware State Auditor's Office in Dover where Sharon Alston and I heard their recommendations:

- No more spending – all spending must be made by the Town Council
- No credit cards for 3-6 months
- No calls to the Town Solicitor
- Have a CPA check the Town finances each month

August 19, 2024

Don Trice, Chief Willey, and I met with Dan Short, our State Representative. Please vote for him tomorrow if you can as he greatly helps our little Town and is wealth of knowledge.

He suggested:

- We consider re zoning
- Having a CPA check the Town finances each month
- Create detailed itemized budgets for each committee with discussion an approvals by all Councilpersons to be then included in the Town Budget
- Legitimize the voting process asap

August 27, 2024

On the first day of school for Blades Elementary, Chief Willey, Police Officer Emmett Krager, Sharon, Susan, Don and I greeted the beautiful students with welcomes, high fives, hugs, and smiles.



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A WONDERFUL WAY TO BEGIN THE DAY AND THE SCHOOL YEAR.

August 30, 2024

Sharon Alston and I visited Blades Elementary School to get suggestions as to what we can do to involve more parents, grandparents and children in activities in the Park and to hear their suggestions.

August 19 and 27, 2024

The Council and I had two Workshops to begin work on updating the Charter and economizing time and money. All of your suggestions and welcome and are appreciated if on paper. Give them to any Councilperson or me.

The monthly Team Meeting of all employees, Council and Mayor was held on September 3, 2024.

Susan and I attended the SCAT dinner on September 3, 2024. We met many candidates running for offices.

This morning September 9, 2024, Sharon and I met with Hunter Creek, the contractor for Hardin Hall to finalize the next order of décor to try to stay within budget.

Please be patient: we are learning rapidly and working diligently.

We need help researching troublesome situations!

We need donations and help to continue Town events such as at Christmas, Easter, Blades Night Out, winter fun in the park and movie or game nights for all ages! PLEASE HELP!"

* A resident questioned the monthly audit by a CPA. - Response was that some departments are overdrawn.

* A resident questioned the reason for meeting with the State Auditor's Office – The State approached the Town because of a couple of Towns in the state. They are making sure small towns are doing okay; which we are.

* A resident questioned the age of the old lawn mower and what happened to it. – It is running and being used.

* A resident again requested copies of reports.

- Town Administrator Report – Report submitted and read by Town Administrator Lisa Marks. Ms. Marks reported July door hanger and shutoffs for past due accounts. Community Cleanup is October 12, 2024, at Blades Park from 7a, to 12pm. Household trash, branches and limbs will be accepted, logs and tires will not. The EPA has been in Town doing soil borings for their River Road Project. Hardin Hall is in the rough-ins phase. Property files continue to be reorganized by



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street address instead of owner's name. Ten properties with past due taxes now have liens attached.

❖ New Business:

- Charter Discussion - The Mayor and Council are going to begin work on updating the Charter.
 - * A resident inquired when and where the two monthly Workshops will be held. Amending the Charter needs involvement.
 - * A resident asked if the residents will have a voice. – Yes.

❖ Old Business:

Good of the Community Guidelines – Mayor Nancy McAdams requested from the public:

- Only one opportunity to speak
- Only speaking from the podium: no speaking from the audience
- One topic: no repetition of previously stated facts or opinions
- No comments from the Mayor or Councilpersons, except to report
- Silence during the speeches of others

❖ Good of the Community

- A resident is concerned about hearing gunshots on several occasions, especially around 7-8 and 10-11. – A resident suggested it could be from the shooting range on Oakles Road. Another resident suggested it wasn't gunfire, but a farmer scaring away the geese.
- A resident questioned if Blades is going to pass a Kids Curfew; younger kids are out late at night.
- A resident expressed how nice it is to meet the new Mayor.
- A resident stated that questions are not always answered.
- A resident voiced concerns about signs being covered up and that they need to be visible. – Councilman Donald Trice stated that he had addressed the trees around the signs to the Public Works Department, but they aren't doing their job. (Previously, when this was brought up, Councilman Gary Miller responded to the concerned resident that the tree branches are being discussed with the property owners. See August Minutes)
- A resident stated that Sixth Street is washing out on the other side of the speedbump.



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- A resident stated that some sidewalks are under water when it rains.
- A resident stated that their neighbor's house becomes multi-family after hours; it is zoned R-1.
- A resident stated there is no regard for the speed limit. Kids are out playing. Safety is #1.
- A resident congratulated Mayor Nancy McAdams on doing a great job.
- A resident inquired about getting information out to residents, mail a letter asking for sponsors. – Councilman Donald Trice mentioned the electronic sign at the BVFC. Councilwoman Susan Selter mentioned the Community Board in the park, but it was vandalized. A resident suggested handouts at the school. Councilwoman Sharon Alston mentioned a newsletter at the schools. A resident stated that businesses should have information boards.
- A resident voiced concerns about a rumor of a Sober House opening in Blades. – Unfounded.
- A resident stated that homeless is not just in Blades and Seaford, it is everywhere. The resident questioned; What is the Town going to do? – Chief Willey responded that the homeless behind the Police Department/Town Hall are out of Blades jurisdiction. They don't do anything while walking through town. We can ask them to leave the railroad tracks. The railroad company can be notified and they can ask them to leave.
- A resident would like to meet with the mayor about homelessness.

Entered into Executive Session: 9:17pm

Exited Executive Session: 10:35pm

Councilman Donald Trice motioned to adjourn the September 9, 2024, Blades Town Council Meeting, Seconded by Councilman Gary Miller.

Mayor Nancy McAdams adjourned the Blades Town Council Meeting at 10:39pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa Marks
Town Administrator

Reviewed and amended by:
Nancy W. McAdams
Mayor, Town of Blades

Town Council Meeting Minutes