



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
November 10, 2025***

Present: Mayor Nancy McAdams, Vice-Mayor Susan Seltzer, Councilman Gary Miller, Councilman Donald Trice, Chief Martin Willey, Councilman Gary Gallamore, Councilwoman Judy Evans and Mary Reza, Town Administrator.

Mayor Nancy McAdams officially opened the meeting at 7:00 pm
Lord's Prayer and The Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of minutes from the October 13, 2025 Town Council Meeting. Motion to accept in written form, by Vice Mayor, Susan Seltzer; Seconded by Councilman Gary Gallamore Motion passed.

Minutes from the October 27, 2025, Special Town Council Workshop. Motion to accept in written form, by Councilman Gary Miller; Seconded by Councilman Donnie Trice. Motion passed.

- Community Concerns
 - Property Taxes and Transparency
 - Multiple residents spoke at length about concerns over the dramatic increase in property taxes following new assessments
 - It was detailed that one residents' tax is jumping from \$301.65 to \$861.75 annually at the proposed \$0.45 per \$100 rate.
 - Questions were raised about the method for selecting the new tax rate, comparisons to neighboring towns (Seaford 0.32, Greenwood 0.45, Laurel 0.58, Bridgeville 0.6) and the history of budget shortfalls.
 - Request that revenue projections, use of funds and previous shortfalls be made public for residents' accountability
 - Concerns over trust in government and the need for clear, accessible information.
 - General Community Input
 - Resident emphasized the need for community involvement, business development, and an outreach committee to revitalize town life.
 - Accountability Issues: Discussion of prior years' mismanagement, missing funds (~\$500,000.00), and perceived lack of records. Request for old-fashioned pen-and-paper ledgers for visible accountability.
 - Council explained that there is a new PO (Purchase Order System) for tracking
 - Council/Mayor responded: Commitment to transparency; once the rate is finalized, full revenue and spending information will be provided. Frustration is acknowledged; new procedures being implemented for financial accountability.
 - Ongoing issues: Discovery of past unpaid bills (\$9,800 from grants, years 2023 and 2024)



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- Frustration expressed by residents about bearing the cost for prior mismanagement, even while nothing the current administration may not be at fault.
- Cemetery & Community Program updates:
 - Wreaths Across America reported as a success; enough funds this year to cover the surplus to start 2026 efforts.
 - Flags placed, fire departments with veterans' members included. Ceremony scheduled.
 - Reminders that orders for wreaths can still be placed for next year.
- Old Business:

Police Report – Monthly statistics submitted and read by Police Chief Willey.

- Tickets: 11 written (down 20 prior month), 0 parking tickets, 3 warnings
- Arrests: 1 person for 8 charges (4 counts of rape, 2 unlawful sexual contact, 1 enticement for sexual contact, 1 continual sexual abuse of child; all involving a minor)
- Complaints: 23 handled (vs.10 in Sept.) including burglary, mischief, fraud, disorderly conduct, welfare check, sex offense, and miscellaneous.
- No DUIs or accidents this month
- Scams: Residents warned about holiday phone scams (example received during a live committee meeting)
- Safety: Reminders to lock vehicles and homes due to increased holiday-season theft
- Deer Season: Advisory about increased accident risk

Community Engagement:

- Police Survey: Ongoing, collected Halloween event and after the meeting; anonymous, incentive (coffee mug)
- Drug Take Back: 11.8 lbs collected and destroyed on October 25th
- Trick-or-Treating: 290 Children Participated (up from 200+ previous year)
- Iron Legacy Motorcycle Group won the prize (Texas Roadhouse Gift Card)

Upcoming events/Programs

- Breakfast with Santa: scheduled for December 6th, 9:00am until 12:00pm (volunteers arrive at 8:00am). Free breakfast, gifts, and Santa Visit; fire and police department is teaming up.
- Police Academy: One candidate will begin January 11(21-week program, plus 12-week field training)
- Collaboration: Ongoing support from Seaford Police department for local backup

❖ Committee Reports:

- Housing/Code – Monthly statistics Report submitted by Code Enforcement Officer, Marcus Trammell and read by Vice-Mayor Susan Seltzer. 8 building permits, 1 Complaint, 3 abandoned boats removed, Ordinance 330- Trash- citations, Ordinance-416-2 Abandoned vehicles, 1 new construction, and 4 rental inspections.
- Vice-Mayor Seltzer's report as submitted:
 - Planning and Zoning – No zoning request; committee meeting held to discuss ordinance updates and assignments for next meeting in December.
 - Solicitation for public suggestions on ordinances.



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- Community Participation:
 - Active involvement in Halloween/trunk-or-treat, approx. 300 children
 - Outreach for food donations in town hall lobby to address food insecurity.
 - Special thanks to Blades Volunteer Fire Company for support during the Halloween and for toy drive participation.
 - Went with Mayor to the SCAT meeting in Bethany Beach.
 - Happy Veterans Day, thank you for your service and sacrifice.
- Water - Water data report and other relevant information, submitted by Councilman Gary Gallamore.
2025 October Water Report
 - October 1st attended Danny Short's monthly information meeting.
 - October 16th met with engineer for Davis, Bowen, & Friedel along with his expert water systems operator Jim Mooney from Delaware Rural Water, identified a defective water pressure gauge (\$2,00.00 to replace)
 - October 29th, Iron concentration sampling by Delaware Rural Water- at <0.001mg/L, well below the EPA limits; no pre-chlorination required.
 - Daily general water testing for coliform/e. coli: all negative.
 - November 12th PFAS testing scheduled.
 - Fire hydrants updates: New hydrant installed with protective bollards at Market Street; upcoming replacement at 134 Meadow Drive (out of service 5-6 years), with efforts to relocate closer to street and restore landscaping.
 - Multiple bids obtained for hydrant repair (\$7,000-\$35,000), lowest bidder selected.
 - Awaiting on EPA construction plan for the River Road water extension project.
- Streets– Report submitted as and read by Councilman Gary Miller:
 - Procurement of ice melt for winter: 4 pallets to be ordered post- New Year, \$4,000.00 awarded to Don Lee Margin. 2 pallets in stock.
 - Equipment inspection and preparation for winter (salt spreaders, plows).
 - Park winterized; older unusable equipment removed, planning for refurbishment based on future available funds.
- Parks and Cemeteries reported by Councilwoman Judy Evans:
 - Ongoing clean-up; limbs to be removed from memorial cemetery before December 13th ceremony (safety concern for visitors).
 - Inventory of assets and funds underway to prioritize new equipment purchases and refurbishments.
- Community Safety Reminders:
 - Reiteration to secure homes, cars and garage doors at night, especially in neighborhoods with recent activity (e.g., Little Meadows)
- Police – Report submitted as and read by Councilman Donald Trice.
 - I am in constant contact with Chief Willey every day either in person or by cell phone.



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- The new candidate has passed all onboarding for the Dover Police Academy; the Police department and the Town council has offered her a conditional hired contract.
 - Dover Police Academy starts in January 2026. We are still advertising for Military member who is currently serving or a veteran with previously served for the cops grant position.
 - The Chief schedule 3 for testing and again only one showed up. We will be doing retesting by the end of the month It will be too late to get them in the January class.
 - Set up a camera for speed collection
 - Chief Willey is working on a grant for the police department
 - Had a meeting with mayor with Sussex county member Matt Llyod and discussed the need of the town and the police department.
 - October 20th meeting with Mayor about the property on Market Street.
 - Meeting with Mayor about the budget
 - Attended the special meeting about increase taxes.
 - Thank you to Seaford Police Department for the use of their meeting room and Seaford High School for the use of the school track for testing.
 - Thank you to Delaware state Police and Seaford Police Department for their help. They are there when needed
 - We have been interviewing for New Chief and additional officers
 - I would like to thank Mountaire Farms their support in our programs by giving out candy and all the volunteers that help with the Halloween truck or treat event. We had 296 trick or treaters
 - New event will be Breakfast with Santa Claus on December 6th. Free Breakfast for the Kids that live in Blades these events are sponsored by the donations that have been received.
 - Police department is offering a program for resident to voluntarily register their security cameras to assist with investigations. The program is working well in other towns and helping the police department solve crimes in their neighborhoods. Contact the police department if you are interested.
 - Chief Willey is busy with walk in complaint. Taking phone calls and handling paperwork from DSP. He is handling court cases and attending State and County meetings. Make sure that all maintenance on all police vehicles is completed.
 - If you see something in your neighborhood that looks suspicious call 911.
 - The police department, Town Council and residences are working with the Blades Volunteer Fire Company. We are making a difference in the Town of Blades.
- Mayor's Report – Report submitted as and read by Mayor Nancy McAdams.
 - Most of the month has been devoted to our Challenges in the Town office. Thank you, Terri Gleeson! She has amazingly volunteered her expertise, time and energy to help in the office. Trisha, Part Time Clerk, is beyond valuable she has does task which are new as well as her usually responsibilities including helping Mary. They are a good Team.
 - As of November 3rd, Mary Reza is officially on as the Town Administrator. She is learning fast, aims for improved communication and process clarity.
 - Accounts receivable/billing process improved (water bills out timely)
 - Closure of office on Fridays was due to staffing but Town Hall will be opened on Fridays going



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forward.

- Adoption of robust purchase order system for all expenditures; monthly accounting reconciliation.
- Discovery and payment of unpaid grant- related bills from prior year; records continue to be reconciled.
- Opening of a 7-month CD a 4% interest; regular savings remain for emergencies.

Tax Rate change Ordinance:

- Explanation of transition from resolution to ordinance for enforceability.
- First reading held at this meeting; two more readings required; public vote and adoption scheduled for December meeting.
 - Property tax details:
 - \$0.45 per \$100 assessed value
 - Front footage tax: \$60 per foot.
 - Capitation tax: \$8 per resident
 - Administration fee: \$30 (reduced from \$50).
 - Extended payment schedules more time for residents to pay
 - Commitment to publish full tax and budget details; personal appointments offered by Mayor for residents needing tax bill help.

Outreach and Representation

- Meeting with Sussex County councilman Matt Llyod and county officials to discuss local needs to garner support.
- SCAT (Sussex County Association of Towns) participation; mayor and council members updating town on state legislative affairs.
- Special Town Council meeting explained the property tax rate and why it is necessary and long overdue.
- Opened a Certificate of Deposit earning 4% rate of interest for 7 months. Still have plenty in the regular savings for emergencies.
- Visited Charlie Anderson to learn how to notify the state and how to print tax bills through state facilities.

Business Development Outreach

- Meeting with new business prospect for Blades (October 30th)
- Ongoing search for qualified water system operator.

Town Administrator Report –Mary Reza, Town Administrator.

- Made it through the 1st week as the Town Administrator.
- Has learned a lot so far and there is so much to learn.
- Trish as been very helpful and we are learning the water billing system.
- Did stay in the office until 6:00pm to get the water bills done as accurately and they were mailed Friday morning.
- A lot of projects going on and still getting acclimated with the office.



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New Business:

- Council Workshop meeting, November 17, 2025 about 2026 Budget. Open to the public.
- Halloween Council Prize was awarded at the Truck or Treat
- Fireman to flush and report pressure of hydrants, because we don't have enough staff to do so on our own. It takes at least two people. This will happen in the spring time.
- There is a Toys for Tots box at the fire house. David is selling 31 days of Christmas tickets for the Blades Fire Department fundraiser.

Councilman Donald Trice motioned to adjourn the November 10, 2025 Blades Town Council Meeting, Seconded by Vice-Mayor Susan Seltzer.

Mayor Nancy McAdams adjourned the Blades Town Council Meeting at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mary Reza
Town Administrator