



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

December 8, 2025 at 7 PM
Town Council Meeting
BVFC Banquet Room
200 E. Fifth Street, Blades, DE 19973

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

Meeting called to order by Nancy McAdams at 7:01 pm.

Lord's Prayer

The Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes from November 10, 2025, Town Council Meeting
Donnie Trice Motioned and Gary Gallamore 2nd

Approval of Minutes from November 17, 2025, Town Council Workshop
Gary Miller Motioned and Donnie Trice 2nd

Approval of Minutes from December 2, 2025, Special Town Council Workshop
Gary Gallamore Motioned and Susan Seltzer 2nd

➤ Community Concerns

- Tax Increase Process
 - Raised questions about the process for raising taxes, specifically the use of a resolution vs. Ordinance
 - Stressed the need for open hearing and formal process
 - FOA request submitted, attorney involved; confirmed current approach is compliant per the town solicitor and state authorities.
- Cemetery & Taxation
 - Former mayor recounted cemetery expansion and record keeping efforts. Referred to a website that was up to date.
 - Urged caution on selling older plots due to destroyed paper records after the 2005 hurricane that flooded the basement.
 - Advised council to closely follow the town charter regarding budget and tax increases, claiming recent budgets were balanced and property tax increases are not charter-permitted unless necessary for balanced budget.
 - Voiced concern over rumored property tax increase amounts, suggested surplus exists in town accounts, and inferred property taxes should not be raised if the budget is already balanced.
- Responses to concerns
 - Mayor and staff emphasized current and forthcoming financial responsibilities, major needs in water department, park updates and necessary repairs/upgrades.
 - Found unpaid bills and financial discrepancies from previous years
 - Highlighted raising salary needs to remain competitive for police officers and water operators (\$75-\$85k for operators; \$55k for officers needing to increase to \$65k for competitiveness).



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- Noted essential maintenance projects: sand filter repair, GAC filter recharging, fluoride system needing updated (\$8,000 pump), on-going grant-seeking and challenges with infrastructure ("500-meter pits" need installation).

Old Business:

Third Reading: Ordinance 439 Real Estate Property Tax Rate Change

Gary Miller Motioned and Susan Seltzer 2nd

Yay: Gary Gallamore, Gary Miller, Donnie Trice, Susan Selzer, Judy Evans

Nay: Zero

2026 Budget – Workshop

- Will be held on December 15th at 6:00 pm
- Public is invited to attend but there will be no open discussion.

Cypress Landing Update

- Working to test the water and sewer, make sure that everything is running properly. There is no cost to the town.

Children's Breakfast with Santa – Dec. 6th

- It was a wonderful morning and there were 191 attendees (59 children), and gift were distributed by Santa Claus!

Blades Drawbridge Update: Work to start January 8 with detour onto High St./Concord Rd.

- Police Report
 - November 2025: 1 Traffic arrest, 3 arrest on 12 charges (including felonies and sexual offenses), 17 complaints handled.
 - Ongoing issue with holiday scams; public advised to be vigilant and secure deliveries.
 - Community Event: December 6th "Breakfast with Santa" 191 attendees (59 children), with gifts given by Santa
 - Extra presents left for possible needy family; contact Chief if you know someone in need.
 - New Officer scheduled to attend Dover Police Academy starting January 11, 2026
 - Chief Willey set to retire due to state mandate effective December 20th. Chief commended for department development
 - Discussion of pay rates for officers and the chief compared with regional standards (\$85k-100K for Chiefs)
 - Police will monitor traffic and seek DOT support for portable lights during upcoming bridge closure.
- Report from Planning and Zoning
 - There were no items on the agenda, meeting was cancelled. Commission members asked to keep looking for ordinances for changes and updates, be prepared to bring them to the January meeting.



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➤ Committee Reports: There are no questions during reports.

▪ Housing

- Read the Code Enforcement report.
- Congratulated Seaford High School football team on their recent State Championship
- Nov 18th attended a leadership forum at Sussex Conservation District.
- Wrapped gifts for the breakfast with Santa and attended December 6th Breakfast with Santa 59 children attended.
- December 2nd attended the Council Special Meeting
- December 3rd attended a meeting with Mayor, Town Administrator, and Members of DRWA. Met with Mike McFadden from ERG about the Town Asset Management Plan.
- Wreaths across America day is coming up on Saturday, December 13th. Wreaths are due to be delivered to the Town on December 9th. Unboxing the wreaths and fluffing them, we will be at the town hall maintenance garage.
- Thanked and wished all residents a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Kwanzaa, and a safe and joyous New Year.

▪ Water

- Monday, November 17th attended a Town Council Workshop to work on the 2026 Water budget
- November 15th after 6 years of being unusable the Fire Hydrant at 134 Meadow Drive was replaced and it is now functioning. This completes the replacement of two previously reported nonfunctioning hydrants
- Still waiting for Blades Fire Department to begin flushing the hydrants. Pressure and flow determination and painting of the hydrant caps will be performed in the spring of 2026. Hydrant cap painting is required so the fire department will know the flow rate in each hydrant. The colors will be blue, green, orange, and red and the flow rates are from 1,500 GPM or greater down to 500 GPM.
- November 25th received the results of the water sampling for Hexavalent Chromium from Dr. Charles Powley, Senior Science Consultant at STRIDE center for PFAS Solutions. There continues to be no evidence of Hexavalent Chromium in our filtered water system.
- There was no reported E. Coli or Coliform bacteria contamination of our filtered water for November.

▪ Street

- He has some health issues that he is working out
- Ice melt for the winter has been delivered
- Saturday breakfast with the children was wonderful.

▪ Parks & Cemeteries

- Attended the town workshop
- Breakfast with Santa, it was a great event
- Will attend the Wreaths Across America event

▪ Police

- Police candidate has passed everything that is needed for the Dover police academy and will start in January.
- Still advertising for military member who is currently serving or a veteran with previously served for the cops grant position.
- Set up Camera for speed collection information
- Chief Willey is working on more grants for the Police Department.
- Attended Special meeting about town taxes



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- November 8th attended the budget workshop.
- November 17th community outreach and went Christmas shopping for Kids Breakfast with Santa to be held on December 6th at the Blades Volunteer Fire Hall.
- November 21st Mayor, Town Administrator had a meeting about the Police Budget
- Advertising on the Police Association Website for months for the position of Chief of Police and only received two applications.
- Thank you to Delaware State Police and Seaford Police Department for their help.
- November 25th helped wrap over 200 gifts
- December 1st attended a workshop @ 6:00pm and a Special Council meeting at 7:00pm
- December 6th attended Breakfast with Santa Claus
- Police Department is offering a program for residents to voluntarily register their security cameras to assist investigations. This program is working well in other towns and helping the police department solve crimes in their neighborhoods. If you are interested in this program, contact the police department.
- Chief is busy with walk in complaints. Taking phone calls and handling the paperwork from DSP. He is also handling court cases and attending state and county meetings. Making sure that all maintenance on the police vehicles is done.

▪ Mayor's Report

- Increase FOIA request to Attorney General and solicitor, mayor encourages direct engagement at meetings for transparency and cost-effectiveness
- Blades newsletter to resume for non-digital and less-connected residents; seeking volunteers for distribution.
- Prize for best house Christmas decorations - judging to be held December 22 or 23.
- Plans for forming a community outreach committee 2026; volunteers to be recruited.
- Scheduled closure for rehabbing Blades Drawbridge: January 8th-April 2, 2026 (potential extension to April 30th) Detours via Concord Road/Route 13; pedestrian access to be maintained, with minibus shuttle for school children, if necessary.
- Handout/maps provided for residents detailing detours and responsibilities of DelDOT and contractors
- Important information about the drinking water was read to the community due to the discontinued use of fluoride treatment of public drinking water as required by regulation. This is not an emergency and the water is safe to drink.

▪ Town Administrator

- Current water bills went out on Thursday, December 4th
- Town received the 2024 Audited Financial Statement of information from Lank, Johnson and Tull on November 11th
- Attended a Meeting on November 13th at Delaware Rural water site in Milford. Met with Amanda Lacklen, Senior Environmental Scientist for the Division of Public Health. We discussed the \$8,000.00 emerging contaminants in small or disadvantaged communities grant that the town has been awarded. This is to continue to offset the cost for the PFAS testing. Also attended the PFAS in Delaware: Past Action and Future Goals class. Very informative.
- December 3rd attended a meeting with Mike McFadden from ERG about the Towns Asset Management Plan for the water department.
- Yearly reporting notice that will be mailed to all town members "notice of unknown service line material" The project is to identify if your water line is a PVC pipe, lead pipe, etc.
- December 5th attended the SCAT steering committee breakfast held in Georgetown. Tom Leigh presented at that meeting. Then he was scheduled to meet with the team at the town hall to discuss area of concerns within the town for water runoffs.



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New Business

- Christmas Decorating Contest Judging Sat., Dec. 20th.
- Town Workshop to complete 2026 Budget on Dec. 15 at 6 pm
- Notice of violation for failure to provide continuous fluoridation notice

Councilmen Donnie Trice motioned to adjourn the regular session the Blades Town Council meeting and move into Executive Session and seconded by Vice Mayor- Susan Seltzer at 8:27pm

Executive Session was started at 8:44pm

Councilman Gary Gallamore motioned to adjourn the executive session of the Blades Town Council meeting and move back to regular session and Susan Seltzer 2nd at 9:33 pm

Back to Regular Session and the following were voted on:

- Vote to accept the Police Administrator contract to keep Martin Willey on as a Part Time employee until a Police Chief is hired:
Motioned to accept: Gary Gallamore and Donnie Trice 2nd
Role Call Yay: Gary Gallamore, Gary Miller, Judy Evans, Susan Seltzer
No: None
- Vote to accept Jobs for Blue Police Coverage while we are recruiting new officers: will select 2 4 hrs. shifts a week different days and nights. This will be State Police coverage.
Motioned to Accept: Gary Miller and Gary Gallamore 2nd All were in favor
- Vote to terminate the employment of Chris Glasglow as of December 8, 2025
Motion to accept: Donnie Trice and Susan Seltzer 2nd All were in favor
Noted that they will start advertising for this position.

Councilwoman Judy Evans motioned to adjourn the December 8, 2025 Blades Town Council Meeting, seconded by Councilmen Donnie Trice

Mayor Nancy McAdams adjourned the Blades Town Council Meeting at 9:53 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Reza
Town Administrator