



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

January 12, 2026
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 Gallamore, Councilwoman Judy Evans, and Town Administrator, Mary Reza

Meeting called to order by Mayor Nancy McAdams at 7:00 PM
Lord's Prayer
The Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes from December 9, 2025, Town Council Meeting
Gary Miller, Motioned and Susan Seltzer, Second, Passed

Approval of Minutes from December 15, 2025, Town Council Workshop
Gary Miller Motioned and Donnie Trice Second, Passed

Approval of Minutes from December 29, 2025, Special Town Council Workshop
Gary Gallamore Motioned and Susan Seltzer Second, Passed

➤ Community Concerns

- Homeless Encampment near Railroad bridge concern.
 - Ongoing issue with homeless individuals along the west 2nd street track line between Seaford and Blades. Issues of concern are fires, alleged crimes and drug activity.
 - There is confusion of who is the property owner, it is not within the corporate limits of Blades.
 - Mayor Nancy stated that she will contact Chief Craft to address the issue promptly. If you have an issue to contact and call the State Police.
- Concerns over Town Pay Increases and Tax Increases
 - Repeated calls for transparency and justification for a significant (12%) increase for employees pay from FY25 and FY26.
 - Request for clear fiscal management, detailed expenditure sheet, and explanation of the budgeting and property tax increase.
 - Longstanding confusion regarding reasons for tax increase since August 2025.
 - Mayor committed to comprehensive explanation later in meeting
- Recognition of Community Service - Linda Kelly
 - Public honoring of Ms. Francine Kay for her leadership coordinating the 2025 Wreaths Across America for the veterans buried in the cemetery.
 - Plaque donations were awarded; with a widespread appreciation.

Old Business:

- Christmas Decorating Contest
 - Kevin and Linda Parrish, 4 Summit Circle, Little Medows
 - 507 South Market St.
- 2026 Budget
 - Budget passed at the December 29, 2025 Special Meeting
 - Budget document to be posted on the town bulletin and town website
- Blades Drawbridge update:
 - Drawbridge closure to begin on January 15th.



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- Concerns expressed about concurrent closures impacting accessibility
- Responsibility falls with DelDOT; town has no direct control
- Police Report
 - December 2025 - 4 Criminal Arrest, 2 Theft Under \$1,500, 2 Criminal Trespass, 4 Complaints, 2 Theft, 1 Fraud, and 1 Assist Another Agency. Delaware State Police work paid job - 4 hours, 4 traffic arrests - handled, no complaints.
- Report from Planning and Zoning
 - New Business: Sweet Brew coffee trailer (located in Laurel) received zoning approval for setup at 35 North Market Street, pending logistics and back-lot site cleanup due to Brownfield status. Target to open: Spring 2026-bridge closure acknowledged as a possible impact.
 - Awareness that businesses (Seaford Florist, River Rise, Marina Shops) will remain open during bridge closure.
 - Discussion of needs to update zoning ordinances (anticipated at later meetings)
- Committee Reports: There are no questions during reports.
 - Housing
 - Read the Code Enforcement report.
 - ◆ Building Permits-2, Building without permit-1, New Construction- inspection 7th street, Ordinance-410- Weeds vegetation- 2, Ordinance 416 - Abandoned Vehicle - 1, Rental Inspections - 7.
 - Recognition for Marcus Trammell, Code Enforcement Officer, who has continued to support the water department with water meter checks, locates and seasonal prep (holiday lights, equipment). He assisted with static flow testing with Cypress Landing utility connections.
 - December 15th attended a developer meeting regarding the potential purchase of the land between Town Hall and River Rd.
 - Water System at maximum, future projects are pending timeline estimated at 7 years until new available capacity. Ongoing search for funding for infrastructure expansion.
 - Water
 - December 2nd, attended Town Council Workshop
 - December 4th met with Town Administrator to discuss the 2026 Water Budget
 - December 8th attended monthly Town Council Meeting
 - December 13th Meet with a locksmith to order all locks for the water plant to be re-keyed or replaced in order to further ensure the security of the water plant.
 - December 15th attended a workshop to continue working on the water budget for 2026
 - December 24th received a copy of the PFAS testing results from the November 12th sampling. Our water continues to conform to EPA standards with results in the non-detectable or below method reporting limits.
 - December 29th attended a Town Council Workshop to finalize the 2026 budget for water department.
 - Meter Replacement - four quotes received for remaining 280 water meters (from total of ~500) fifth quote is due January 14th.
 - Fluoride update: State mandates for water fluoridation; implementation complicated/delayed by equipment and safety concerns.
 - Street
 - Loss of street maintenance worker; 9 plus resumes received, interviews are underway for well-qualified candidate.
 - Supplies (ice melt) delivered pre-Christmas
 - Holiday lights installed/removed; sustained through assistance of Marcus Trammell.



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- Parks & Cemeteries
 - Thank you again to Francine Kay for the Wreaths Across America coordination
- Police
 - Transition: Chief Willey resigned/retired (December 28, 2025) due to state police injury policy; rehired as police administrator (non-sworn, part time)
 - Staffing
 - Council/interviewed on candidate in October (withdrew before offer)
 - Another candidate identified, undergoing interview process-hopeful to appoint new chief by end of March 2026
 - Patrolman Emmett Kroeger resigned as of December 29, 2025 (accepted higher offer)
 - State Police are covering patrols via contract; two part-time officers contacted about supplemental coverage.
 - Police recruitment: 6 new candidates applying; testing scheduled for February at Seaford PD.
 - Ongoing efforts in grant applications and officer schooling.
 - Candidate started Dover Police Academy on January 11th.
- Mayor's Report
 - Mayor's presentation (PowerPoint summary) of the Tax increase information
 - ◆ Discussed how it became that calculation
 - ◆ Essential to raise revenue for deferred maintenance water system upgrades, meter replacements, street repairs, etc., need to offer competitive pay for staff retention, additional funds sought via federal/state grants, but not guaranteed. Need to fund 280 water meter replacements, water plant revitalization, ensure safe and reliable staffing.
 - Residents on a low/fixed income urged to contact Town Hall directly for possible assistance or hardship consideration
 - Previously available reduced-tax ordinance exists but income threshold set at only \$4,500. (written in 1970) may need updating.
 - Clarification on reassessment's frequency (every 5 years)
 - River Rise Update: Delays due to ADA compliance and Fire Marshal Requirements, owner is working to resolve issues; expects paving and fixture work to be completed once weather permits. Restaurant will be associated with Bethany Diner, gourmet pizzas and plans for breakfast service. Town and Business community looking forward to opening; will use space for meeting
- Town Administrator
 - Attended SCAT Committee Breakfast on December 5th in Georgetown.
 - Attended a meeting on December 15th with Mayor Nancy and Vice Mayor Susan with a developer of potential development in the future.
 - Attended workshop on December 15th to continue to work on the FY 2026 budget.
 - December 11th sent out a mailing titled "Notice of Unknown Service Line Material" We need the towns help, if you received one of these letters please notify the Town Hall and we will update this information.
 - Out of the office for a pre-planned vacation from December 19th until January 5th; thank you to our office staff and Marcus Trammell for operational support.
 - Water bills were mailed on January 12th.



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New Business

- Town Employee Policy “Floating Holiday”: Annual floating holiday effective January 1, with pro-rated eligibility and specific usage requirements. Must be used within the calendar year, no carry-over, not transferrable or payable at separation. Town Council took a vote, Councilman Donnie Trice motioned to approve, Councilwoman Judy Evans, 2nd, passed with one opposed.
- Town of Blades Clean up Ordinance 441 - First Reading
- Roll Back Rate explanation was explained via a PowerPoint passed out to all residents in attendance of the meeting.

Councilmen Donnie Trice motioned to adjourn the regular session of the Blades Town Council meeting and move into Executive Session and seconded by Vice Mayor - Susan Seltzer at 8:46 pm, all in favor.

Executive Session was started at 9:02 pm

Councilman Donnie Trice motioned to adjourn the executive session of the Blades Town Council meeting and move back to regular session and Gary Gallamore second at 11:06 pm, all in favor.

Back to Regular Session and the following were voted on:

- Vote to accept the hiring of New Police Chief Anthony Toto and present formal offer of employment. Motioned to accept by Councilman Gary Gallamore and second by Councilwoman Judy Evans
Role Call Gary Gallamore - Yay, Gary Miller - Yay, Judy Evans - Yay, Susan Seltzer - Yay, Donnie Trice – Yay. No Nays

Councilmen Donnie Trice motioned to adjourn the January 12, 2026 Blades Town Council Meeting, second by Councilwoman Judy Evans.

Mayor Nancy McAdams adjourned the Blades Town Council Meeting at 11:10 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Reza
Town Administrator