

Village Assembly Meeting Minutes

February 16th, 2026



CALL TO ORDER/MINUTES APPROVAL

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Village of Ardencroft was called to order at 7:08pm on February 16th, 2026.

The minutes of the previous November 17th 2025 meeting were posted on the ardencroft.delaware.gov website. The minutes of the November 17th, 2025 meeting were approved with no corrections.

GUEST SPEAKERS

None.

OFFICER'S REPORTS

Chair's Report

Ken Morrison reported. Ken is not running again this year for Chair. He asked those in attendance to consider running and throw their hat in the ring. Ardencroft also needs a representative to the Buzz Ware Village Center Committee. Anyone interested can let Ken know that they're interested at the end of the meeting or via email at chair@ardencroft.delaware.gov.

Secretary's Report

Jenn Abernethy reported. Jenn reminded everyone to sign up for Paperless communication. One of the goals for this election is to have something on the website for candidates interested in running on the ballot. Those on the ballot should keep an eye out for Jenn's email about a blurb for the website. The blurb will be about the candidate and why they want to run for the position. Also, the ACRA Directory for 2026 is being updated. Jenn asked that attendees take information on how to update information as well as how to procure an advertisement for the Directory, if anyone is interested in putting in an ad. The deadline for updates is February 28, 2026. This information also went out from the Chair email account. If information is unchanged since 2024, then no changes need to be made. All information can be found at acracommunity.org under "Directory." The *Page* also ran some information about the Directory updates.

Treasurer's Report

Don Lipari reported. Don discussed snow removal costs for the two recent storms. The first is paid (\$895), and we're awaiting the bill for the second. There will be a lot of activity for the 75th Anniversary projects, completed through the Public Works Committee. The work has begun on some of them. We will eventually be reimbursed for almost all of it through two grants.

DIRECTORS' REPORT

Wyn Achenbaum reported. The Ardencroft Association, in addition to other parties involved, has been named in a lawsuit initiated by a leaseholder. We are currently collaborating with our legal counsel to formulate an appropriate response to address this matter effectively.

4 Lower Greenbriar, which for nearly 4 decades was Pauline A. Young's home, has been renovated, and is on the market. David Davis's former home, on Willow at Veale, is being

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renovated, and looks much better. The Jobsons' home at 1602 Harvey Road is on the market.

We welcome Susanne Paynter and Keith Myers to 1502 Evergreen Lane, to what was Michael and Linda Woods' home.

Finally, I'm happy to report that the Directors will not be raising the land rent this year. Bills will be sent shortly. As I described at our last village assembly, we found the assessments somewhat puzzling, and have no reason to be sure that the "split rate" – a higher rate for commercial property enabling a lower millage rate for residential – will continue for 2027.

There also are some things happening with the Louis Redding Consortium for Educational Equity which might play into our future school taxes. (Louis Redding, 1901-1998, a much respected civil rights attorney who grew up in Wilmington, was among Ardencroft's original tenants in 1950.) The Consortium voted 19-2 in December to pursue combining the 4 school districts north of the Canal into a single district. One of the two voting against it was the Superintendent of the Brandywine School District. It moves to the Delaware State Board of Education, and then perhaps to the legislature.

Wyn answered residents' questions about other properties and their sale status.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Coordinating Committee

Jenn Abernethy reported. The Coordinating Committee met February 4th to discuss tonight's meeting. The discussion centered mostly around the election. Based on who is running again, this is what we need to fill the spots: Chair (need at least 1 candidate); Environment Committee (needs 1 to be full); Registration Committee (needs 1 to be full); and all Committees need an additional candidate to have 1 more than necessary, which is a goal according to our Charter. The Buzz Ware Village center liaison position is not on the ballot but is needed as well.

Environment Committee

Lisa Surbrook reported. The Committee is working on the Tedi tree management. There's some deer protection that needs to be replaced, but about 85% of the trees that were planted have survived and seem to be doing well. The Earth Day cleanup this year will be coordinated with Ardentown. It should take place in April, and the Committee will email and post that information when scheduled. Volunteers pick up trash, pull ivy, and plant some trees for Arbor Day. The Environment Committee is researching costs to attend to the diseased beech trees in the Village. Most of the leaves in the Upsan Downs native plant sanctuary have been removed and everything was covered with tarps in the fall. The Committee is working on getting quotes to remove the bamboo or put a barrier up for it. On the Montessori side, Delmarva removed a lot of trees. They are supposed to replace the trees they took down by Wilmington Montessori. If anyone has extra native plants to donate to that area, let Lisa and the Committee know by emailing environment@ardencroft.delaware.gov. Lisa Surbrook and Scott Bowers walked through with Carol Larson to see which trees can be treated and which are too far gone.

Further discussion took place of what trees Delmarva took down as well as how many diseased Beech trees there are in the Village.

Finance Committee

No report; however, the Finance Committee supports the Directors' decision not to raise land rent.

Public Works Committee

Chris Raia reported. The Committee met February 2nd, and the 75th Anniversary project status was discussed. Funding is valid until June 30th of this year, so the remaining projects need to be completed by then to receive reimbursement from the various sources. The update is as follows:

- Rocky Walk Bridge has been completed;
- The Village bulletin board has been upgraded with a cover to prevent wind blowing pinups—access to hang materials is not from its back side;
- The Sanctuary Path handrail is awaiting less hostile conditions for digging, which results in a delay until mid-March;
- The Curtis Bridge is next and will begin next week. Materials are being delivered tomorrow morning, so the bridge will be closed off during construction. We anticipate closure for about two weeks; and
- Trash corrals will be the last item to be completed.

We discussed a potential Beech Lane Park dedication again and interest remains, but the Committee is at the end of its funding for the year, so we aspire to look at that for next fiscal year.

We have two areas of runoff concern—one at the corner of Willow and Sunset and one on Beech Lane. For the former, we are soliciting a quote for some work to ensure that those areas are conducting water properly. For the latter, it's been neighbors and committee members doing manual cleanouts.

In New Business, Fire hydrant shoveling during snowstorms was discussed. In New Castle County, property owners with a hydrant on the parcel itself or its frontage are responsible for maintaining clear access to it. In Ardencroft, this responsibility extends to leaseholders. The Committee realizes that this can be difficult given storms like the recent one, so Public Works members are available to help shovel if called upon.

We have a large number of dead ash trees that require removal. One location is along Orchard Walk, and the other is in the woods near Veale Road and Perkins Run. All are being removed imminently. There is a third location with heavy deadfall piled up that requires removal as well. This effort will exceed the Public Works budget for the fiscal year by about \$2500, but it must be done as these are a significant liability—one ash recently came down and caused an eight-hour power outage in the neighborhood and traffic delays along Veale Road. The Committee is requesting funding assistance from the Directors to cover this gap. State grants were investigated but were not deemed viable given the urgency of the matter and the requirements for applications. The brush and limbs will be chipped and removed, but the firewood segments will be left for residents to cut, chop, and use as they wish.

A resident suggested that Public Works connect with ArdensReady regarding residents that need help with things like snow removal and ivy removal, etc., that are unable to do that themselves. Frank Vincent mentioned “the Ivy League” through Elaine Schmerling

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in Arden, which is a group of volunteers who get together and take ivy off of trees, etc. Carol Larson is also a great resource in Arden. A resident asked if there's a date for Ron's Tree Service, but his original date was moved back due to the snow. Chris will connect with him about another date. The muddiness after the snow is an issue now that the snow is melting. A resident asked that the plowers pay attention to the slope at the end of Upper Greenbriar so that the area is not as icy after plowing. Sunset Lane at Veale becomes icy as well during a lot of snow. Another resident asked about ice melt and whether or not we have access to those. Chris answered that Public Works salts the Willow Way slopes and Sunset Lane approaching Veale Rd. They're trying not to salt too much due to its environmental effects on Perkins Run nearby.

Registration Committee

Linda Toman reported. The registration committee of Ardencroft had a meeting on Monday, February 9th at the Buzz Ware Village Center at 3:00pm. Nick Cocca, Annette Hearing and Linda Toman were present. We first completed work on welcome packets, removing old information, replacing it with updated info. We have a few here tonight. If any new residents are here we would love to register you to vote in our Ardencroft annual election. We will need to get some information, like phone number and email addresses to put in our ACRA Directory. We welcome you as new residents of Ardencroft and will give you some freebies and the welcome packet.

We did a quick run through of voting roles once again, updating information on current residents: who's moved out, who's moved in, who's reached the age of majority (18), and able to vote in the election. This information is also part of the ACRA Phone Book project so we want the information to be as correct as possible, since the deadline for that is the end of February.

We will also be putting in a notification in the March *Arden Page* with the very important dates and instructions to be aware of for the 2026 election. We plan to have our ballot finalized by Friday, March 13th.

Our next Registration Committee meeting will be on Monday, April 13, 3:00pm at the Buzz to put the ballot mailings together. We'll get them in the mail hopefully by April 15th. If a new resident moves in to Ardencroft, that resident needs to be moved in and registered to vote by Friday, April 17th to be eligible to vote in this upcoming election.

We talked about the election at our meeting. Thankfully, Jennifer Abernethy has gleaned most of the information from the Coordinating Committee to put together the draft ballot. We would be happy to take some nominations from the floor at this time.

Nominations from the floor: Chris Raia offered to run for Village Chair. If he is elected; however, he might need to vacate his current Public Works position.

Those willing to run should call Linda Toman or contact the Coordinating Committee at coordinating@ardencroft.delaware.gov.

Safety Committee

No report.

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SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Aging in Place

No report.

Archives

Jenn Abernethy reported on behalf of Kathleen Jost. The ArdenCROFT 75th Anniversary exhibit is ongoing until mid-September. Please plan to see it if you haven't had a chance yet. The ArdenCROFT 75th anniversary committee did extensive research for this exhibit. The Arden Craft Shop Museum is open to the public on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 9 pm and on Sunday afternoons from 1 to 3pm.

A new mini exhibit on the Ardens' connection to American Folk Music is also on exhibit currently thanks to help from an intern from UD's Museum Studies program. The exhibit includes artifacts like Frank Stephen's banjo and musical clips by artists who performed in Arden, like Pete Seeger and Leadbelly.

February's Afternoon with the Artist on Sunday February 8th featuring the work of Shay Seaborne was well attended and was followed by a special event at the Buzz related to the exhibit on the subject of Art therapies. The next artist afternoon featuring artist Lee Hoover will be in May.

The Biggs Museum of Art in Dover has asked ACSM to select an item related to our community from their collection to display in a new exhibit celebrating the 250th anniversary of the US. The item selected is a beautiful chair handmade by Don Stephens and Barbara Macklem was asked to write something about the piece and to attend the opening in January 15th. A similar chair from the ACSM collection as well as an Arden sideboard from the Biggs will be lent to the Philadelphia Museum of Art for a major exhibition later this year.

ArdensReady

Amy Pollock reported. ArdensReady meets once a month. Each month, a sub-group tests walkie talkies to make sure everything works when the need arises. The ongoing participation and focus of the group is so that if there were a natural disaster, there would be people in town that had gone through the training and would be available to help. When Amy did the CERT training, which is Citizens Emergency Response Training, the average attendee age of CERT training was 62. Some in the training were unable to do CPR. As a result, Amy reached out to Leo Lupidi who has agreed to be on the ArdenCROFT ArdensReady Special Committee along with Sam Cocca. There should be more of a report from the three members at the next Village Assembly meeting.

A resident asked if a hub center had been opened during the recent power outage/cold weather. Amy clarified that a Resilience Hub is a center that residents can go to in case of an emergency. A Resilience Hub, like the Buzz Ware Village Center, does not have showers. Gild Hall might have a different level if the showers for the pool were open. The Buzz, the Gild, and the Candlelight are at different levels of having battery backup operations. All three buildings would be opened up and utilized as the need arises. The goal is to have different people among ArdenCROFT to check in with people in emergencies. ArdensReady has a form for people to fill out wherein they can indicate medical issues, etc., as well as what they have that might be borrowed in times of

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emergency (machines, etc.). More people are needed (i.e. someone on each street) to check in with neighbors and coordinate with ArdensReady when there is an emergency. A resident asked if any hub centers were open during the recent storm. The outage was limited, so the hubs were not opened; however, they could have been if requested.

Buzz Ware Village Center

No report. We are awaiting a new liaison for the position. Reach out to Ken Morrison at chair@ardencroft.delaware.gov with interest. There is work going on at the Buzz that will upgrade the roof with solar panels.

Poultry/Livestock Policy

No report. Ken Morrison will follow up about the Village's most recent request to Councilman Cartier to be considered for an exemption that we can then turn into an Ordinance.

Transmission Lines

No report.

Transportation Plan Monitoring Committee

No report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

GOOD AND WELFARE

- The Village welcomes Suzanne Paynter and her partner Keith Myers who moved to the end of Evergreen Lane where Michael Woods used to live.
- The Village would like to recognize and thank John Wenderoth for his tireless service, including his unparalleled tree knowledge. He is not running again for Public Works or Environment committees.
- The Village sends birthday wishes to Jim Schwaber.
- Residents are reminded to update their information in the ACRA Directory by filling out the form on the acracommunity.org website (under "Directory") and/or emailing acradirectory@gmail.com.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.

Submitted,

Jennifer Abernethy

Jennifer Abernethy, Village Secretary

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ATTACHMENTS

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11	Draft Ballot, as of 2/16/26

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2/16/26 Village Assembly Meeting Attendance

Residents

1. Jennifer Abernethy
2. Ken Morrison
3. Don Lipari
4. Ken Rosenberg
5. Chris Raia
6. Frank Vincent
7. Pat Toman
8. Linda Toman
9. Dan Rubin
10. Suzanne Paynter
11. Lisa Surbrook
12. Scott Bowers
13. Annette Hearing
14. John Wenderoth
15. Wyn Achenbaum
16. Joe Achenbaum
17. Joe Kimberg
18. Kirsten Kimberg
19. Bob Pollock
20. Amy Pollock
21. Janet Williams
22. Vaughn Byarm

Guests

Cris Larson

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Ardencroft Financial Report (Part 2) - 11/17/2025 - 2/15/2026

COMMUNITY					
ACRA	0	0	880	880	
Arden Craft Shop Museum	0	0	800	800	
Arden Library	0	0	400	400	
Arden Page	0	0	400	400	
Buzz Ware Village Center	0	0	2,000	2,000	
Fire/Ambulance	0	0	500	500	
TOTAL COMMUNITY	0	0	4,980	4,980	
COMMITTEES					
Environment	0	0	2,000	2,000	
Finance Committee	0	0	100	100	
Miscellaneous - Public Works	0	0	500	500	
Park Mowing	0	(2,200)	2,700	500	
Parks & Recreation	0	0	2,000	2,000	
Snow Removal (MSA)	(895)	(895)	3,000	2,105	last storm not yet billed
Streets & Signs (MSA)	0	(8,995)	5,000	(3,995)	pot hole repair and PAY sign
Trash/Recycling Collection	(7,243)	(16,738)	29,140	12,402	
Trees/Paths/Maintenance	(12,863)	(13,538)	7,000	(6,538)	repairs to bridges and bulletin board - ORPT & CTF grants to reimburse almost all costs
Registration Committee	0	0	600	600	
Safety Committee	0	0	50	50	
75th Anniversary Committee	0	(2,474)	1,500	(974)	
TOTAL COMMITTEES	(20,801)	(44,840)	53,590		
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	(21,518)	(50,069)	73,245		
NET	(20,313)	(36,001)	(0)		

Draft Ballot, as of 2/16/26



2026 Ballot

Prelim Draft

A write-in candidate line is provided below the list of candidates. As with the published names on the ballot, if you choose to write-in a candidate name you must also indicate with an or that you are voting for that write-in candidate.

Officers

vote for 1 Chair [2-yr term]

- [Chris Raia](#)
- _____
- _____

Secretary [Term ends 2027]

*Jenn Abernethy**

Treasurer [Term ends 2027]

*Don Lipari**

Committee Members

vote for 3 Environment [2-yr term]

*Lisa Surbrook**

*Scott Bowers**

- [Kevin Nemeth](#)
- [Roberta Brandao](#)
- [candidate](#)
- [candidate](#)
- _____

vote for 2 Finance [2-yr term, TEY]

*Lorna Lee**

- [Lindsey Mix](#)
- [Ken Rosenberg](#)
- [candidate](#)
- _____

vote for 2 Public Works [2-yr term]

*Chris Raia**

*Dave Detweiler**

*Dan Rubin**

- [Rob Stigler](#)
- [Kevin Nemeth](#)
- [candidate](#)
- _____

vote for 1 Registration [2-yr term]

*Annette Hearing**

*Nick Cocca**

- [candidate](#)
- [candidate](#)
- _____

vote for 2 Safety [2-yr term]

*Jay Morente**

- [Jeff Tindall](#)
- [candidate](#)
- [candidate](#)
- _____

* Person was elected last year and will serve another year to complete their term