

Village Assembly Meeting Minutes

September 15th, 2025



CALL TO ORDER/MINUTES APPROVAL

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Village of Ardencroft was called to order at 7:07pm on September 15th, 2025.

The minutes of the previous May 19th meeting were posted on the ardencroft.delaware.gov website. The minutes of the May 19th, 2025 meeting were approved with no corrections.

GUEST SPEAKERS

None

OFFICER'S REPORTS

Chair's Report

Jenn Abernethy reported. Ken Morrison is out of the country and will return next week. Delmarva will prune in areas indicated in the pictures on the next slide. The Chair will send an email out with a couple of pictures indicating where the pruning will take place. We will send an email to our distribution lists with those pictures. Delmarva is planning to sue Ardencroft due to our Transmission Line Infrastructure Ordinance now that the 90-day postponement of the annual impact fee is over. The easement agreement is still in effect, which will hold up in court. A motion to rescind Ordinance 12: Transmission Line Infrastructure will take place in New Business tonight.

Secretary's Report

Jenn Abernethy reported. Remember to sign up for paperless communication, and keep an eye on the website and bulletin boards.

Treasurer's Report

Don Lipari reported. He reported on the attached End of FY25 document. We are ahead \$2,171 at the end of the year. The budget shows what we took in for FY25, what we had budgeted, and what the remaining amounts are. Positive totals indicate that we have money remaining and negative totals indicate we overspent. We didn't overspend much; however, we ended up renewing the Treasurer's bond and bought it for two years, which resulted in \$75 overspending for this fiscal year but also savings for FY26. The big things include that we got more than we expected for grants, as a result of the DNREC application for the grant for the parks. We spent quite a bit on Parks and Recreation. We overspent \$3000 on trash, but we switched over from Trash Tech to Evergreen, and there was a phasing for how the bill was paid, so there is no concern there.

Don discussed the FY26 financial report from July 1st up until now. We got grants from the county of \$2,000 as well as the Ardencroft Association for \$1,500 to go toward the upcoming 75th Anniversary celebration for Ardencroft. We also wound up spending \$6,000 to repair potholes on our roads. We invested another \$2,900 for the sign at Pauline A. Young Park, which will be installed on September 25th. We received a grant for that, so we will get about half of that money back. Other expenses were expected, like trash, mowing, and admin expenses and insurance. Last time we reported that the directors' and officers' liability insurance was dropped, but we were able to renew that for \$52 less than budgeted. We were renewed for the same price for the liability insurance.

Village Assembly Meeting Minutes

September 15th, 2025



DIRECTORS' REPORT

Wyn Achenbaum reported. First, I don't think we've mentioned that the Ardencroft Association made a contribution to the Ardens Ready program to complete the purchase of a generator for the Candlelight Theater, one of three sites which would be gathering places in an emergency situation. We also issued a check for Ardencroft's share of the disposition of the Trash Tech lawsuit.

The remainder of this report will relate to the Tyler Tech assessments, Brandywine School District, and the taxes we'll be paying in November. If you're a numbers person, you may want to take notes. It has been a bumpy ride.

Ardencroft's assessments have been interesting to watch. The "tentative assessments," which each leasehold received, and which were the valuations one could appeal, were issued in the fall. About 3/4 of our leaseholds had land valuations, and there were zeroes for the other quarter. That was a first; in the past, all the taxable land has been treated as a single parcel. The sum of those parcel values was \$6.5 million, and I estimated the remainder at \$2.2 million, or a total of \$8.7 million.

The [so-called] "final" assessments, which came out in February, had zeroed out the individual leasehold land values, and showed land value of \$4.4 million, or half what I'd deduced based on the tentative assessments. Moreover, while the total valuation of the improvements – our individually owned homes (which had been about \$5.5 million on 2024's bill) – hadn't changed much, rising from \$25.2 million to \$25.8 million, the values of individual homes swung widely. Some of those might have been from successful appeals by leaseholders; the downward changes ranged from \$3,600 to \$182,000, with 6 being over \$100k (Thank you!!). But these were offset by increases ranging from \$2,000 to \$150k (of which only two over \$100k).

When the bills came out, in July, it was clear that some things had changed since prior year's billing practices with respect to the rebates that some of our leaseholders are entitled to. As you may be aware, those rebates are passed along to the eligible recipients shortly after we pay the taxes to NCC (normally late September). There are also \$500 State education rebates to seniors who have lived in Delaware for at least 10 years. [if anyone asks, this is because NCC will come after the rebates if the leaseholder dies before the due date] We suspect that this change may be unintentional, and will get corrected when someone figures it out.

To return to the oddly low increase in our land valuation from 2024 to 2025. It is possible that this is a matter of the old land valuation being too high. But more likely, somebody slipped a digit somewhere. Interestingly, Arden and Ardentown experienced the same thing. Land represented about 25% of Ardencroft's taxable value on 2024 tax bills, and now represents just 14%. While I know that elected assessors are under some pressure from real estate investors to assign more of the value to improvements and less to land value, because investors can depreciate the value of the improvements, I did not expect that a firm the size of Tyler Technologies would do this. I was anticipating that perhaps 50% of the new aggregate valuation would be land value, and the remainder building value. (As Henry George pointed out, land appreciates when population rises. But houses depreciate, and many of Ardencroft's homes are 60-75 years old. The assessments were ~40 years old, so the homes were relatively new in that 1983 assessment.)

Village Assembly Meeting Minutes

September 15th, 2025



Then in late June came President Trump's decision to hold back \$9 billion in Federal aid to education, in order to scour programs for any hints or combination of Diversity, Equity or Inclusion. It had been rumored before the BSD School Board met to finalize their budget for the NCC billing. Two other school districts in northern Delaware availed themselves of the right to take increases of up to 10% in the year of a reassessment. BSD adjusted from taking only the second part of what the voters had approved in the February 2024 referendum, to also taking 1.07%, to make up for the funds that they'd been expecting from the Federal government. The new budget year was about to start, and contracts had been signed with providers of various kinds. So the NCC tax bills were issued with that slightly larger BSD number.

One of the effects of the reassessment was that while through 2024, countywide, Residential properties represented 66% of the total, most of the remainder being Commercial, the new valuations were 76% Residential. This meant that Residential's share of the total tax burden would rise, while Commercial's share would go down. One source, WDEL, reported that Commercial properties were 33% of the taxes in BSD last year.

In July, after the tax bills had gone out (with payment due in September), the Administration said that about \$8 billion was being released, and soon after, the remainder was released.

Delaware passed a bill permitting school districts to lower the millage rates for the Residential properties and therefore to charge the Commercial properties at a higher rate, to collect in total the new lower total revenue. The new bills would be due in November.

Brandywine School District lowered the tax rate for Residential from 67.61 cents per \$100 of valuation to 56.09 cents (or 17%), and raised the Commercial from that same 67.61 cents to \$1.0382 (or 54%). (The last-minute 1.07% increase is being returned as part of those numbers.) But this leaves Commercial paying a rate 85% higher than Residential. We don't know if this will be changed going forward, or left alone until the next revaluation, required to be 5 years after the current one. (I've not heard what year that will be.)

New bills will be issued soon, and taxes will be due in November, instead of September.

As I examined the original bills, I found some oddities that I've not fully figured out, but I think they may suggest a mishandling of some of the rebates. We received a spreadsheet from NCC with the County taxable values, which take into account several different rebates. 11 leaseholds received a county exemption, and they were all for the same amount, and I think in the past, there have been several different programs, at different levels. I'm guessing this was a result of changing over to some of Tyler's systems.

Finally, based on the original (July) bill, we had 7 leaseholds where the tax bill rose over \$1000, from 2024 to 2025. Some involved work done on homes, or newish homes being compared to other newish homes, instead of an estimate when they were built of what they'd have been worth in 1983. The largest change was from a large home that was no longer eligible for senior and other discounts after the death of the previous owner.

Village Assembly Meeting Minutes

September 15th, 2025



I suspect, from a combination of reading the Tyler contract closely and the powerpoint presentation they gave up front, that there might be a timing issue in the Residential vs Commercial assessments, with Residential's 30 months of sales coming from a period that barely overlapped with the two years of income and expense data collected from the Commercial properties during the COVID period.

I am hoping that the County Council will also seek the depreciation tables and other tables that Tyler developed, for Residential property. And I hope that future contracts with Tyler Technologies will be specific about such things. After 40 years, there will be a learning curve, both among NCC staff and among County Council members.

Ben Gruswitz referred to a spreadsheet he had sent the directors and officers, which indicated that some of the values were markedly different than before but the millage rate wasn't being applied consistently to all leaseholds. Ben asked if the Directors had looked into that. Ben indicated that the spike might represent an improper application of the millage rate to all leaseholds. He asked if in general, the Directors are seeing the same ballpark of less bill overall. Based on what the changes are said to be for the district, the total bill for county and school was 22% less for the Village than last year. Wyn replied that the total might not include the rebates for seniors. Ben asked if the Directors are seeing the same trend overall, and Wyn indicated that they are relieved at what they're seeing at the moment; however, there are some other things that need to settle before we can tell. Ben encouraged the Directors to check the math on the millage rate.

A resident asked for clarification about how federal money impacted our taxes. Wyn responded that originally, federal money was being withheld from the schools, which created higher local taxes as compensation. The federal money then arrived, which decreased the local taxes accordingly.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Coordinating Committee

Jenn Abernethy reported. The Coordinating Committee met on September 3rd. We discussed agenda items for tonight, in addition to plans for motions during the November Village Assembly meeting. Please utilize Committee email addresses for questions and feedback, which can be found on the ardencroft.delaware.gov website under Government → Officers and Committees.

Environment Committee

Lisa Surbrook reported. Scott Bowers is working hard to try and water the new trees that were planted due to recent dryness. The Environment Committee is also trying to keep the paths clear of weeds by the powerline area. Lisa referred to the Forest Stewardship Committee policy that is posted on the website and for which copies of the draft policy were provided at the meeting. The policy very closely follows Arden's Forest Stewardship Policy. The basic topics within the policy are boundaries of forests, erosion control around streams and through the woods, invasive plant management, trails, preserving trees, cleaning up the forest, procedures for all of these things, and use of the forest. The Committee asks residents to look at the policy and send feedback via email to environment@ardencroft.delaware.gov. The Committee members will receive that email and discuss feedback. A resident encouraged Lisa to discuss the work at the end of Upan Downs that the Committee has worked on. There is a small triangle-shaped area that is public land. At one point, it was overgrown like a residence next to it. The

Village Assembly Meeting Minutes

September 15th, 2025



Committee has stepped in to maintain it now that it's been designated public land due to land surveys. The area has been cleared of weeds. There are tarps on it now, but the Committee plans to plant wildflowers in that area. Wilmington Montessori School has bamboo that's encroaching a trail to that parking lot. The Committee hopes to take care of the bamboo on Ardencroft's side. WMS wants to keep the bamboo. A resident asked if bamboo is illegal. It's illegal to plant new bamboo; however, the existence of bamboo is not illegal. Delmarva staked the property lines by the WMS parking lot, which exposed some trees that we thought were ours that actually belong to WMS. Unfortunately, this most likely means that WMS will allow Delmarva to take those trees down.

John Wenderoth spoke about climate change and the science behind it as well as the impact it will have on future generations. The climate will change more rapidly than we expect. John offered to put time into putting suggested reading on the website about climate change if people were interested, which many indicated that they are.

Finance Committee

No report.

Public Works Committee

Chris Raia reported. The interpretive sign is completed for Pauline A. Young Park. Julie Brewer, the curator of the Pauline A. Young collection at the University of Delaware, helped with the sign. A local company in Chester is producing the sign. It will be installed on September 25th, two days before the 75th Anniversary ceremony to dedicate the park. The sign is about 4' x 16", similar to the interpretive signs at national parks. It includes graphics, photography, and a written area. It's separate from the state historic marker that we will get for the park. Public Works may place that marker but is not in any other way connected to its creation.

Ken Morrison has been authorized to make several repairs including the Springhouse Path rails, the trash corrals, the revival of the Curtis Bridge, the Rocky Walk Bridge, and the bulletin board refresh. All of these items are part of the 75th Anniversary Revitalization projects. Chris mentioned the pothole repairs. If any other potholes pop up, residents are asked to email Public Works at publicworks@ardencroft.delaware.gov.

There is a failing stormwater drain at the end of Beech Lane that needs repairs. It will be repaired similarly to another one that was repaired two years ago. Public Works thanks everyone for not parking in front of the handicap-accessible areas at our parks. There may be a sign posted in those areas in the future. A resident shared his delight with the design of the parks now.

The Committee is short one member. Anyone interested in serving the remainder of the almost two-year term is asked to talk to Chris or email publicworks@ardencroft.delaware.gov.

A resident asked about a felled basketball hoop at the park. Chris said he'll get rid of it, but it's not something that belongs to the Village as much as was put up there by someone at some point. A resident asked if the Dane Miller sign by the park will be changed, since one of the dates is incorrect. There was some discussion about whether or not Public Works had originally created and installed the sign. Chris asked the resident to email him the correct dates, and that might be discussed.

Registration Committee

Linda Toman reported. Registration Committee Report: On May 19, 2025, our last town meeting, we had our 2025 Election. The ballots were counted on June 2, 2025 by Linda Toman, Annette Hearing, Michael Wood, and Barbara Cool. We counted them here in the Buzz Ware Village Center, in the afternoon. There were a total of 55 ballots and this is the result of that election:

For Town Chair, we had "write in votes", because we had no candidate at the time that ballots were sent out. Ken Morrison got 18 votes, Rob Stigler got 2 votes. Scott Bowers, one vote. Ben Gruswitz, one vote. Frank Vincent, one vote. Michael Wood, one vote. Jay Morente, one vote. Chris Raia, one vote. Because this vote was to fill the vacancy when Ben Gruswitz stepped down, this term will last only one year. For Secretary, Jenn Abernethy received 55 votes, two-year term, unanimous. For Treasurer, Don Lipari got 55 votes, two-year term, also unanimous. Environment Committee, two-year term, Scott Bowers received 55 votes, Lisa Surbrook 54 votes. Finance Committee, two-year term, Lorna Lee received 54 votes. Public Works Committee, two-year term, Chris Raia received 54 votes, Dave Detwiler received 53 votes, Chad Mix received 52 votes. Registration Committee, two-year term, Annette Hearing received 55 votes, Michael Wood received 54 votes. Safety Committee, two-year term, Jay Morente received 52 votes.

These results were posted on the website soon after they were reported to The Secretary. However, the Registration Committee has some news to report. Michael Wood will be stepping down from his IT position that he was just re-elected to, so that he can move to Pennsylvania. Later in New Business, I would like to nominate Nick Cocca, a resident that is willing to help with this vacancy. Hopefully he could serve the full term until the 2027 election. I am still planning on stepping down this next year, so we are looking for some names to fill the 2026 ballot for the Registration Committee.

In the meantime, please let our committee know if you have new neighbors move in next door, so that we can deliver welcome packets to them. Please also let us know if there are needs for Get Well or Sympathy cards for present ArdenCrest neighbors.

A resident asked the Committee to report researching *Robert's Rule of Order* and what is necessary when elections come up against what we did last election. For example, no one ran for the Chair position, then an email went out about a write-in candidate, but it did not go out to all residents. There was no clear movement forward for how the situation should be handled when there is no one on the ballot for a position, especially a necessary position like Chair. Another resident suggested that the concern be shared with the Coordinating Committee, since the role of the Committee is to fill the ballot.

Safety Committee

No report.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

75th Anniversary/Park Dedication

Dan Rubin reported. Flyers for the 75th Anniversary event were sent out with the *Arden Page* and provided at the meeting. The event on Saturday, September 27 will begin at 10:00am at the Pauline A. Young Park, with speakers to begin at 10:20am. There will be a dedication to the formal sign at the park, which will have been installed two days before

Village Assembly Meeting Minutes

September 15th, 2025



by that point. After the dedication, a program will begin at the Buzz at 11:30am. One of the speakers is Joan Anderson, a resident from when Ardencroft first officially became Ardencroft. She also was one of the first students to help desegregate Claymont High School. The Special Committee has put a lot of time into maps, photos, posters, pictures, etc. that will be available. The event will include food and beverages. All members of the Ardens are invited. It will end by 3:00pm at the latest. The Museum will include artifacts from this event in its exhibit, which starts in October. The event will also include a formal Ardencroft theme song.

Aging in Place

No report.

Archives

Jenn Abernethy reported on behalf of Mary Brent Whipple. There have been four meetings of the Archives Board since the last Ardencroft Village Assembly. Since then on June 11th Beverly Barnett and Shari Phalan were guests who talked about the importance of passing on the knowledge of the three Arden's history from one generation to another. This was precipitated by the Delmarva plans to radically trim trees under the new transmission lines they plan to install, and how this conflicts with the idea of the Garden City plan for the Ardens. Curators from the Philadelphia Museum of Art are planning an Arts and Crafts exhibit in 2026 and will be using some of the Arden made objects in the exhibit. The Shakespeare Gild used the Bernie Schwab room for makeup and bathrooms during their production of "A Winter's Tale".

In July, there were discussions held with Simon Hammermesh about the differences between archiving materials from the offices at the BWVC and a museum mission. Suggestion made that records be stored in Dover. The history of the Soldiers Memorial was discussed with a former curator looking into its history and who will develop a statement about what she finds.

The first of the history walking tours of each of the villages was scheduled for 6/25/2025 for Arden, but was cancelled due to heat and the air conditioning being broken at the museum. It has since been rescheduled for October 26th from 1:30 to 2:30. Ardentown had its history stroll on 7/27/2026 and 45 people attended. After a presentation by Barbara Macklem, Rodney Jester led the walk with input from other residents followed by a reception at the museum.

In August, there was an Afternoon with the Artist with the featured artist being Megan King. The website for the Arden Craft Shop Museum was also launched this August after much work and planning.

In September, on the 7th, Ardencroft had its history stroll starting at the Pauline A Young Park in which 18 people participated led by Kathleen Jost and Mary Brent Whipple. Barbara Macklem gave a talk before the walk which gave the context for Ardencroft's founding and continuation of Georgist principles. There will be a new exhibit on Ardencroft's 75th anniversary of its founding titled "A Dream...Realized" opening on 10/19/2025 at 1:00 at the museum. Fund raising campaign letters will be sent out October 3rd and I urge you to support the museum with a contribution.

A resident encouraged everyone to visit the Philadelphia Museum of Arts exhibit.

Buzz Ware Village Center

No report.

Poultry/Livestock Policy

Annette Hearing reported. In November, a motion will be presented for a poultry/livestock policy that exempts Ardencroft from some of New Castle County's regulations. The policy is also meant to help us self-regulate. Residents are encouraged to visit the policy on ardencroft.delaware.gov and email feedback to the Committee at poultryliaisons@ardencroft.delaware.gov. Discussion ensued about whether or not the motion would be for a resolution and therefore only need one vote. John Cartier has indicated that he will support our desired exemptions via this policy. Ben Gruswitz suggested it be presented as an Ordinance, even if Cartier has referred to it as a resolution. We could start with a Resolution that sketches out what we're thinking and that officially tells John that we are on board; then we can get more detailed in an Ordinance. We would need an Ordinance to discuss compliance and what to do when residents are out of compliance. Ultimately, the policy will be read and agreed upon. Another resident emphasized the need for an Ordinance based on her background with County Ordinances. Ben suggested a Resolution that we want to be exempt from the codes that we then send to the County and an Ordinance that specifies the details that we vote on in February at its second reading. Another resident suggested a Resolution rather than Ordinance, due to the time needed to amend an Ordinance. Ultimately, everyone agreed to make sure the County okays the exemption first, so that we can move forward with more detail.

Transmission Lines

Jenn Abernethy reported. She repeated that Delmarva is planning on suing us over Ordinance 12. Lisa Surbrook spoke on behalf of the Delmarva (ad hoc) Committee, which has been trying to fight Delmarva. Discussion ensued about the leads that the Committee has exhausted within their means and the general disappointment and frustration that everyone feels about this litigious outcome. There's a possibility that the easement agreement can be modernized and updated. The current agreement lasts for 999 years and was signed a century or so ago.

Transportation Plan Monitoring Committee

Ben Gruswitz reported. Last meeting, Ben had told residents about the public workshop on June 4th. That event was well attended. The feature was the concept illustration report where a number of the different crosswalks and ideas within the plan were illustrated with pencil drawings. The concept illustration report is still available online at wilmapco.org/ardens. Meeting minutes, recordings, and presentations are available there as well. Larry Lambert and Ray Seigfried attended and heard a lot of feedback about residents' desire to improve safety and their enthusiasm for the plan. Last week's meeting included conversation surrounding grant applications and funding. The plan includes crosswalks for Veale Road as well as the concept to decrease the overpass to I-95 to one lane in either direction, with room to walk and bike, etc. That can be implemented by paint the next time DelDOT paves that area. Cost for paving, etc., is being discussed. A long-term plan could be a more protected path for walkers, etc. The concept illustration shows a picture of what that could look like on the overpass. Discussions include what to move forward on and where opportunities are, etc.

Village Assembly Meeting Minutes

September 15th, 2025



UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Motion to rescind Ordinance 12: Transmission Line Infrastructure

Jenn Abernethy made a motion, "I move that the Village rescind Ordinance 12: Transmission Line Infrastructure."

Discussion ensued regarding the process for rescinding an Ordinance. The motion to rescind Ordinance 12 will be read another time and voted on at that time. A straw poll was conducted, for which all but one resident in attendance was in favor of rescinding the Ordinance. One resident abstained. This information will be shared immediately with our Village attorney. There may need to be a Special Meeting in advance of November's Village Assembly meeting, depending on the response from Delmarva's counsel.

B. Motion: Registration Committee vacancy nomination

Linda Toman made a motion, "I nominate Nick Cocca to fill the current vacancy on the Registration Committee, filling the remainder of the term, until June 30, 2027." ***The motion passed unanimously.***

GOOD AND WELFARE

- Amy Pollock discussed the CERT (Citizens Emergency Response Team) training offered to the community. Amy and a few others in Ardencroft went through the training. Amy is the only regular attendee from Ardencroft to the Ardens Ready meetings. They need additional people in Ardencroft who would be responsible to check in on a designated number of neighbors in an emergency and keep track of the needs of neighbors (oxygen, mobility, children/pets, etc.). The more people that step up for it, the more of a coordinated effort Ardencroft can put forth. Those interested do not have to be CERT trained.
- Amy Pollock shared that Ardens Ready will host its second annual open house at the Buzz on Saturday, November 1 from 12:00-4:00pm. There will be some speakers as well as food. DEMA, Claymont Fire, EMTs, Smart911, the Scouts, and others will be at the open house. The next regular meeting will be October 7th. Residents can reach out with any questions to Amy Pollock.
- The Village sends its condolences to Gina and Bill Hall on the passing of Gina's father.
- A house with an inground pool is for sale on Upper Greenbriar.
- Remember to attend the 75th Anniversary event on Saturday, September 27th.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:59pm.

Submitted,

Jennifer Abernethy

Jennifer Abernethy, Village Secretary

ATTACHMENTS

Village Assembly Meeting Minutes

September 15th, 2025



Page(s)	Item
11	9/15/25 Village Assembly Meeting Attendance
12	Ardencroft Financial Report - End of FY25
13	Ardencroft Financial Report - 7/1/2025 - 9/14/2025
14-18	Village of Ardencroft Forest Stewardship Policy
19	Ardencroft Poultry Motion Language for Feedback
20-21	Ordinance 12: Transmission Line Infrastructure

Village Assembly Meeting Minutes

September 15th, 2025



9/15/25 Village Assembly Meeting Attendance

Residents

1. Jenn Abernethy
2. Don Lipari
3. Dan Rubin
4. John Wenderoth
5. Annette Hearing
6. Linda Toman
7. Pat Toman
8. Amy Pollock
9. Bob Pollock
10. Lisa Surbrook
11. Scott Bowers
12. Wyn Achenbaum
13. Chris Raia
14. Polly Brown
15. Joe Achenbaum
16. Nick Cocca
17. Sammie Cocca
18. Frank Vincent
19. Janet Williams
20. Ben Gruswitz

Guests

Cris Larson

VILLAGE OF
ARDENCROFT

Ardencroft Financial Report 5/19/2025 - 6/30/2025				
CASH				
Operating Acct	42,051			
Restricted ARPA Funds	0			
Restricted DNREC Tree Planting Grant	0			
Available Operating Funds	42,051			
MSA Acct	68,763			
Interest on Savings	5,326			
Arden B&L	819			
Total Funds	116,959			
			FY25	
	This Period	Year to Date	Budget	Remaining
INCOME:				
Arden B&L	16	16	0	(16)
Ardencroft Directors	0	21,161	21,161	0
Directors for Trash Collection	0	28,158	27,300	(858)
Comcast Franchise Fees	0	1,757	2,054	297
MSA	0	5,868	6,020	152
Other Grants & Contributions	27,286	47,390	7,250	(40,140)
Tree Planting Grant (DNREC)	0	28,703	28,703	0
GoFundMe for Tree Planting (private donations)		999	1,000	1
Verizon Franchise Fees	152	644	620	(24)
TOTAL INCOME	27,454	134,696	94,108	(40,588)
ADMINISTRATION				
Administrative Expenses	0	(1,495)	1,600	105
Chair's Discretionary	0	(1,884)	1,500	(384)
Delaware League of Local Governments Dues	0	(525)	525	0
D&O Liability Insurance	0	(3,198)	3,250	52
Secretary Stipend	0	(1,125)	1,500	375
Treasurer's Bond	0	(175)	100	(75)
Treasurer Stipend	0	0	1,500	1,500
Website / email support	0	0	500	500
TOTAL ADMIN	0	(8,402)	10,475	
COMMUNITY				
ACRA	0	(880)	880	0
Arden Craft Shop Museum	0	(800)	800	0
Arden Library	0	(400)	400	0
Arden Page	0	(400)	400	0
Buzz Ware Village Center	0	(2,000)	2,000	0
Fire/Ambulance	0	(500)	500	0
TOTAL COMMUNITY	0	(4,980)	4,980	
COMMITTEES				
Environment Committee				
Tree Planting	0	(32,836)	29,703	(3,133)
Miscellaneous - Environment	0	(308)	500	192
Finance Committee	0	0	100	100
Public Works Committee				
Miscellaneous - Public Works	0	0	500	500
Park Mowing	(500)	(2,700)	2,700	0
Parks & Recreation	0	(42,981)	2,000	(40,981)
Snow Removal (MSA)	0	(2,775)	3,000	225
Streets & Signs (MSA)	(273)	(833)	5,000	4,167
Trash/Recycling Collection	(4,666)	(30,331)	27,300	(3,031)
Trees/Paths/Maintenance	(2,117)	(5,985)	7,000	1,015
Registration Committee	0	(394)	800	406
Safety Committee	0	0	50	50
TOTAL COMMITTEES	(7,556)	(119,142)	78,653	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	(7,556)	(132,524)	94,108	
NET	19,898	2,171	0	

Village Assembly Meeting Minutes

September 15th, 2025

Ardencroft Financial Report - 7/1/2025 - 9/14/2025

Ardencroft Financial Report 7/1/2025 - 9/14/2025				
CASH				
Operating Acct	35,779			
MSA Acct	53,768			
Interest on Savings	5,885			
Arden B&L	819			
Total Funds	102,251			
			FY26	
	This Period	Year to Date	Budget	Remaining
INCOME				
Ardencroft Directors	0	0	34,866	34,866
Directors for Trash Collection	0	0	29,140	29,140
Comcast Franchise Fees	431	431	1,600	1,169
Verizon Franchise Fees	157	157	660	503
MSA	0	0	5,779	5,779
Other Grants & Contributions	3,500	3,500	0	(3,500)
Interest from Saving Account	559	559	1,200	641
TOTAL INCOME	4,647	4,647	73,245	68,598
ADMINISTRATION				
Administrative Expenses	(247)	(247)	1,600	1,353
Chair's Discretionary	0	0	1,500	1,500
Delaware League of Local Governments Dues	0	0	525	525
D&O Liability Insurance	(3,198)	(3,198)	3,250	52
ESRI - ArcGIS Creator Subscription	0	0	700	700
Chair Stipend	0	0	1,500	1,500
Secretary Stipend	(375)	(375)	1,500	1,125
Treasurer's Bond	0	0	100	100
Treasurer Stipend	0	0	1,000	1,000
Website / email support	0	0	500	500
Legal Advice / Representation	0	0	2,500	2,500
TOTAL ADMIN	(3,820)	(3,820)	14,675	10,855
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	(1,300)	(1,300)	2,700	1,400
Parks & Recreation	0	0	2,000	2,000
Snow Removal (MSA)	0	0	3,000	3,000
Streets & Signs (MSA)	(8,995)	(8,995)	5,000	(3,995)
Trash/Recycling Collection	(4,666)	(4,666)	29,140	24,474
Trees/Paths/Maintenance	(575)	(575)	7,000	6,425
Registration Committee	0	0	600	600
Safety Committee	0	0	50	50
75th Anniversary Committee	0	0	1,500	1,500
TOTAL COMMITTEES	(15,536)	(15,536)	53,590	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	(19,355)	(19,355)	73,245	
NET	(14,708)	(14,708)	0	

Village of Ardencroft Forest Stewardship Policy (page 1)

Village of Ardencroft Forest Stewardship Policy

I. Objectives and Principles

A. Ardencroft's Objectives

The Village of Ardencroft has two objectives in its stewardship of the village forests:

1. Preservation of a natural ecosystem including appropriate wildlife habitat
2. Enhancing interaction with and enjoyment of this natural environment by residents

B. Principles

These general principles have guided the development of the stewardship policy and should be taken into consideration in interpreting and applying them:

1. Ardencroft desires to allow nature to be the principal creator of change within the forests.
2. The Ardencroft forests are too small in size to resist naturally the invasive action of the surrounding developed environment.
3. Human actions associated with enjoyment of the natural environment can impact negatively on it.
4. Management of the forests to achieve the two objectives may require intervention to balance the priorities of these principles.
5. The designated empowered committee is the village governmental body with overall responsibility for care and management of the forests.
6. Moneys required for these activities are included in the annual village budget and oversight of this budget is the responsibility of the empowered committee.
7. The empowered committee shall report regularly to the Village Assembly.
8. The forests in Ardencroft are part of a larger natural system made up of tracts belonging to Ardentown and Arden as well as the Hanby Trust and private landowners in Indian Field, Wilmington Montessori, St. Edmunds and Windy Bush. Ardencroft desires to cooperate with all of these stewards to maximize the effectiveness of the overall stewardship program.

II. Management Guidelines

A. Boundaries

1. Policy

Village of Ardencroft Forest Stewardship Policy (page 2)

- **a.** The Village of Ardencroft has set aside large tracts of land for public use and enjoyment. Private use of these lands for purposes other than individual enjoyment of nature is not allowed without specific authorization.
- **b.** Residents are not allowed to encroach on the public lands adjacent to their leaseholds in any way that is inconsistent with Ardencroft's forest objectives.
- **c.** Neighbors living outside of Ardencroft and adjoining the forests are not allowed to encroach in any way on the Village forest lands adjacent to their properties.

2. Responsibilities

- **a.** The empowered committee is responsible for monitoring encroachment into the forests from either leaseholders or neighbors.
- **b.** The Directors of the Ardencroft Association and the empowered committee have joint responsibility for enforcement of the encroachment policy.
- **c.** Leaseholders planning construction on a leasehold adjacent to the forest must present plans and obtain approval from both the Directors of the Ardencroft Association and the empowered committee before applying for a county building permit.

B. Erosion Control

1. Policy

- **a. Intermittent water flow**

- The first line of defense against erosion is control of the source of water causing the problem. Intermittent water flow into the forest from roads, leaseholds or sources outside the village property should be recharged into the ground where feasible, stored and released into the forest over time, slowed as much as possible before entering the forest, etc.
- The second line of defense, where problems from intermittent flows cannot be stopped at the source, is to diffuse the water entering the forest in such a way that erosion is no longer a problem.
- The third line of defense will be to create coffer and weirs to reduce water velocity in the erosion channel to minimize further loss of soil through erosion.

- **b. Stream surges**

- The first line of defense is similar to the case of intermittent flows – control of the source, spreading out the surges over time and recharging aquifers as much as possible. Cooperative efforts within the context of the Naamans Creek Watershed Association or political associations such as CCOBH are expected to be most effective in dealing with this problem.
- Failure to deal with the water surges at the source will require a decision to allow a stream bank to widen or to reinforce the bank and channel the water flow. This decision will be made by considering the specific location and the expected impact of stream widening.

Village of Ardencroft Forest Stewardship Policy (page 3)

2. Responsibilities

- **a.** The empowered committee is responsible for monitoring the forests for erosion problems.
- **b.** Residents are expected to control the water coming from their leaseholds. The empowered committee as a part of their monitoring responsibility will notify any leaseholders of problems associated with their leaseholds. The Directors are responsible for dealing with any unresolved leaseholder problems.
- **c.** The empowered committee handling public area maintenance is expected to control water coming from roads or commons.
- **d.** Neighboring residents and their civic organizations are expected to control runoff from their streets and properties. The empowered committee with the cooperation of the Directors of Ardencroft Association will deal with any problems arising from improper actions of neighbors.
- **e.** The Village of Ardencroft will seek active cooperation of its Directors and the other Arden villages in dealing with outside agencies, associations and political groups to work on controlling water surges in the Naamans Creek watershed (including Perkins Run). The empowered committee is responsible for organizing this cooperation.

C. Invasive Plants (maintaining plant diversity)

Local cultivation of many species of plants from foreign ecosystems has resulted in inadvertent introduction of plants into our forests for which there is no locally-evolved population control. Some of these propagate rather slowly and do not tend to move far from their original location, but others are quite invasive, move and propagate aggressively, displacing the native plants and creating a monoculture of the invasive plants.

1. Policy

The policy of the Village of Ardencroft is to prevent the infestation of the forests by invasive plants and to reduce and control those which have crept in over the years.

2. Responsibilities

- **a.** The empowered committee has primary responsibility for monitoring the forests for invasive plants. They will maintain a list of plants which should be prevented from spreading into the forests. Publicity of this list and action needed by residents should be done by the empowered committee.
- **b.** Leaseholders are responsible for preventing the infestation of the forests by the identified plants coming from their leaseholds.

D. Trails and areas of repose

1. Policy

- **a.** Fulfilling Ardencroft's objective to enhance residents' interaction with and enjoyment of the natural environment requires public access to the forests. Walking trails and

Village of Ardencroft Forest Stewardship Policy (page 4)

appropriate resting places are provided to meet this objective.

- **b.** Since maintenance of trails can be in conflict with the objective to preserve the natural ecosystem, judgments and priority setting will be routinely required.
- **c.** The following guidelines will be used in resolving these conflicts:
 - Adequate trails should be maintained to provide access to all large areas of the forests.
 - Trails are not necessarily maintained to all weather standards or suitable for walking in normal street shoes.
 - Trails should be clearly defined so that walkers are encouraged to use them.
 - Poison Ivy or other dangerous plants should be discouraged from growing near the trails.
 - Trails should be cleared of undergrowth or fallen timber so that a person can pass without difficulty.
 - Trails should be routed and constructed to avoid creating erosion problems in the trails or stream bank destruction.

2. Responsibilities

- **a.** The empowered committee handling public area maintenance has responsibility for planning, building and maintaining the trail system, including bridges.

E. Preserving Trees

1. Policy

- **a.** Since the objective of the Village is to preserve a natural ecosystem in the forests, trees may not be pruned, removed or harvested from the Arden Forests except as indicated below.
- **b.** When trees fall naturally in the forest, the general policy is to leave all wood where it falls. Trees that fall in a way that obstructs trails or creates potential erosion problems will be cleared to prevent these problems. Fallen trees may be harvested by residents for lumber or firewood.
- **c.** Fallen branches and leaves should be left on the ground or neatly piled for habitat or compost where possible, including on leaseholds, to return vegetative matter to the earth and provide habitat for animals and insects. As an exception, residents and leaseholders may send leasehold fallen branches and leaves as yard waste with the Village trash pickup.
- **d.** Trees that pose a danger to people or leasehold property may be removed at the discretion of the empowered committee. A tree on public land that is a clear and present danger may be removed by the village. In other cases when a leaseholder demonstrates a reasonable expectation of future danger, the Committee may give a leaseholder permission to remove a tree that is on public land adjacent to their leasehold. Any tree removal by residents or leaseholders must comply with Ardencroft's Tree Removal Ordinance.

2. Responsibilities

- **a.** The empowered committee has all responsibilities for decisions, implementation and monitoring of the harvesting of wood from the forests as described in this policy.
- **b.** Leaseholders must obtain agreement from the empowered committee before any work

pg. 4

Village of Ardencroft Forest Stewardship Policy (page 5)

that could impact the Forest. See section A.2.c. above.

F. Buildings or other construction

1. Policy

- Buildings or similar types of construction are not generally consistent with Ardencroft's objectives of forest stewardship and are not allowed except as indicated in paragraph II.F.2. below.

2. Responsibilities

- **a.** Construction, which is deemed necessary to the proper stewardship of the forests or other village property may be proposed to the Village Assembly.
- **b.** Any proposal for construction within the forest boundaries would require special approval of the Village.

G. Cleaning up the forests

1. Policy

- **a.** In keeping with the desire to maintain a natural setting in the forests no littering is allowed. All trash will be removed.

2. Responsibilities

- **a.** Users of the forests will take with them all trash they generate in the woods. They will also be encouraged to remove any other trash they can conveniently carry at same time.
- **b.** Committees will work jointly to organize a woods clean-up in the spring, when community volunteers participate in a morning of collecting whatever trash has accumulated over the past year.

H. Procedures

The empowered committee will develop and maintain procedures, including a calendar, spelling out the actions needed to fulfill its responsibilities as defined in this policy.

I. Use of the Forests

The empowered committee has been given responsibility by the Village for making rules associated with use of the forests.

Ardencroft Poultry Motion Language for Feedback

I move that:

The Village of Ardencroft asks New Castle County, through Councilman John Cartier, to exempt the Village from NCC ordinance Sec. 4.02.004.A and that the Village establish their own regulations.

I move that:

If the request for exemption is approved, the Village establish the following regulations regarding poultry and livestock:

- at this time, only female chickens be allowed on any leasehold, excluding the keeping of roosters.**
- a maximum of six hens be allowed on any leasehold**
- access to appropriate predator-resistant shelter from adverse weather conditions be provided, properly ventilated and with an outdoor fenced-in area**
- chickens must be confined to prevent them from coming into contact with wild animals or their excrement**
- an agreement that the chicken coop will be cleaned on a regular basis**
- the Village of Ardencroft reserves the right to revoke permission to keep chickens on any leasehold. Complaints and issues are to be submitted to the Village Chair.**

These regulations do not impact the ownership or laws regarding dogs, cats, or other household pets as defined by New Castle County.

I move that:

The Village considers allowance of other poultry and/or livestock upon application to the Village and appropriate consideration by the Village of the specifications of the request. When needed, the Village shall establish an ad hoc committee to evaluate any such application.

Ordinance 12: Transmission Line Infrastructure (page 1)

Ordinance 12

Transmission Line Infrastructure

Purpose

High voltage electrical transmission lines and towers are, at least for now, a critical component of modern infrastructure that supports our way of life. However, the current alignment of transmission lines has caused years of unnecessary harm and avoidable risk in our municipality.

Findings

1. Environmental Impact:

- The construction and maintenance of transmission lines bisecting our forest ecosystem invite non-native and invasive species.
- The use of pesticides by power companies can be harmful to the ecosystem and the health of residents, pets, and wildlife.
- Existing transmission lines have contributed to extremely high levels of lead in surrounding soil, and new construction may disturb these contaminated areas.
- Materials used in the new towers may have unforeseen harmful impacts similar to the use of lead paint on the existing towers.

2. Health and Safety:

- Due to the proximity of existing transmission lines, residents are exposed to electromagnetic fields with intensities far above typical background levels, potentially harming their health.

3. Financial and Maintenance Costs:

- The proximity of transmission lines and towers to residences can depress property values due to associated risks.
- Maintenance costs for the village increase due to the presence of these transmission lines.

4. Legal and Compliance Issues:

- Delmarva Power has demonstrated willful disregard of their existing transmission line easement agreement in the village and backpedaled on prior agreements in a neighboring village.

5. Alternative Routes:

- Alternative routes exist consistent with nearly all the transmission line siting along the former B&O railway alignment that minimize proximity to residences and impact only the edges of low-quality forest areas already bisected by the railway clearing.
- Other alternative routes may also exist.

Ordinance 12: Transmission Line Infrastructure (page 2)

Ordinance

Now therefore, in order to protect residents along with our treasured forest ecosystems, it is hereby ordained by the Village of Ardencroft as follows:

1. Prohibition

- No new electrical transmission lines and tower infrastructure are permitted within the corporate limits of the Village of Ardencroft.
- Additionally, no new electrical transmission lines and tower infrastructure are permitted within 500 feet of Ardencroft residential housing units.

2. Definitions

- "Transmission lines" refer to high voltage electrical lines designed to transport electricity over long distances.
- "Tower infrastructure" refers to the supporting structures, including poles and towers, for transmission lines.
- "Residential housing units" refer to any buildings or structures used for residential purposes within the village boundaries.

3. Annual Impact Fee:

- An annual impact fee shall be levied by the Village of Ardencroft on Delmarva Power's, or their successors', existing transmission line facilities based on the total square footage of area 40 feet from the center of their easement within the corporate limits of the Village of Ardencroft, an estimated 50,267 square feet, based on geospatial data. A survey can be conducted to replace this estimate.
- The impact fee will be based on the current base rate for land rent in the Village.
- Impact fees are made payable to the Village of Ardencroft by June 1st of each year.

4. Enforcement:

- This ordinance shall be enforced by the Village Assembly and any designated officers or agents.
- Any violation of this ordinance shall be subject to monthly penalties according to the village's ordinance on municipal fine structure.

5. Severability:

- If any provision of this ordinance is found to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

6. Effective Date:

- This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its adoption and publication as required by law.