

CITY OF DOVER
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MINUTES
September 17, 2025

A Regular/Hybrid Meeting of the City of Dover Board of Adjustment was held on Wednesday, September 17, 2025, at 9:00 A.M. in person in the City Council Chambers and using the phone/videoconferencing system Webex. Members present were Vice Chairman Senato, Mr. Coburn, Ms. Brinkley and Mr. Wagner (arrived at 10:12 A.M.) Mr. Swalm was absent.

The Board welcomed new member, Ms. Carylin Brinkley.

Staff members present were City Solicitor Mr. Griffith, Mrs. Melson-Williams, Mrs. Duca, and Mrs. Mullaney (Acting Secretary).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Coburn moved for approval of the agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Brinkley and unanimously carried 3-0. Mr. Wagner and Mr. Swalm were absent.

It is noted that consideration of previous Meeting Minutes, a Special Recognition, and other items of Business will be scheduled for the next meeting of the Board of Adjustment. This Meeting is intended as a Training Session.

Vice Chairman Senato asked if there were any questions. There were none.

COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS

Mrs. Melson-Williams mentioned that the next Board of Adjustment Meeting is Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 09:00 am. We have received at least one Application that will be scheduled for that meeting. Vice Chairman Senato mentioned that he will not be in town on that date. She was not sure if any other members had any conflicts on that day. I would have to check with the Applicant that has filed if they would wish to defer to the next meeting of the Board. The regular meeting date for November is November 19, 2025.

City Solicitor Griffith asked if we proceed in the absence of the vice chair and would the vice chair be permitted to appoint another member of the Board to serve as a presiding officer at that October meeting. Mrs. Melson-Williams replied, "I think" I would generally say yes. At this point there has not been a Chair elected since our previous Chair, his term has ended. So, I think that in the absence of that election occurring, that could certainly be done. In other Boards, they may take the individual with ranking seniority, but in this case that's about all the next three as all were appointed about the same time.

Vice Chairman Senato mentioned he believes we do have one member with senior ranking at this time.

Mrs. Melson-Williams mentioned it is a decision that could be made and then you could keep a meeting on October 15th. I certainly want to give the Applicant an opportunity to weigh in on this if the City Solicitor feels that's appropriate.

City Solicitor Griffith mentioned that he does think it's helpful to make sure that these Applications are processed, timely. So, I think if there's a matter in which we can have in the absence of a Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Board, a ranking member or presiding officer that is the preferable way to go and keep the October meeting.

Mr. Senato asked Mr. Coburn if this was to come about, would you be willing to, as a ranking member as far as the Board is concerned, would you be willing to handle that meeting in October? Mr. Coburn replied yes. Mr. Senato mentioned that he appreciates that very much. That way the Applicant meeting won't be postponed, and the process will be a lot faster. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that it's her understanding that the concept now is to continue with the October meeting with hopefully a contingent of the rest of the members.

As previously noted, the Planning Staff mentioned that Chris Salzano, who had been serving as a Planner II in our office, has left employment with the City. So we are again looking for that position. For Planning Staff, we do have consultant services that assist us, but we've got a lot going on.

Mrs. Melson-Williams noted that two of the Board of Adjustment members were missing. Mr. Swalm and Mr. Wagner. Mr. Wagner arrived at 10:15am during the Workshop Training Session.

WORKSHOP TRAINING SESSION

The Workshop Training Session was conducted and presented by Dawn Melson-Williams, Principal Planner of the Planning Office and City Solicitor Dan Griffith. The workshop involved presentations, and questions and discussion from the Board of Adjustment members.

1. Training Session Topics:

- City Ordinances and State Code Provisions
- Role and Responsibilities of Board of Adjustment Members
- Conduct of Meetings
- Discussion of DRAFT Rules of Procedure

The Board of Adjustment was provided copies of the following documents:

-Zoning Ordinance, Article 9 – Board of Adjustment

-Delaware Code, Title 22, Chapter 3 Subchapter II

- Dover Code of Ordinances, Chapter 30-Standards of Ethical Conduct and Ethics Commission
- Copy of Superior Court of Delaware case: Middle Cap Associates, LLC v. Town of Middletown
- Draft Rules of Procedure of the Board of Adjustment of City of Dover Delaware.

PUBLIC COMMENTS OPPORTUNITY

Vice Chairman Senato stated that as an open meeting, the public is given the opportunity to provide comments the Board of Adjustment. He asked if there was anyone who wished to speak?

Mrs. Melson-Williams noted that the audience in the room is all City Staff, and there are no virtual attendees today. I do not believe we have any public wishing to speak.

Mr. Coburn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Mr. Wagner and unanimously carried 4-0.

The meeting/training adjourned at 11:00 A.M.

Sincerely,
Maretta Savage-Purnell/km
Secretary/Acting Secretary