



The Town of Elsmere

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mayor

Joann I. Personti

Town of Elsmere Honors Retired Major General Francis D. Vavala as Hometown Hero

Elsmere, Delaware — November 13, 2025

The Town of Elsmere proudly honored Retired Major General Francis D. “Frank” Vavala during its regular Council meeting on November 13, 2025, presenting him with a formal tribute and officially naming him an Elsmere Hometown Hero in recognition of his exceptional military service and lifelong connection to the community.

Mayor and Council opened their Veterans Day special presentation by inviting Major General Vavala to the front of the room, where a Council tribute was read detailing his nearly 50 years of service in the Delaware Army National Guard. Beginning his career in 1967 as a Private, Vavala rose to become Delaware’s longest-serving Adjutant General, leading the Delaware National Guard from 1999 to 2017. The tribute highlighted his leadership during periods of war, peace, and domestic emergencies; his advocacy at the national level; and his continued service to veterans following retirement through Delaware Technical Community College and his work with the USO Board of Governors.

The Town also presented Major General Vavala with a Hometown Hero banner, which will be proudly displayed on Kirkwood Highway near Filbert Avenue—close to where he grew up. Vavala shared that he was raised on Filbert Avenue before his family later moved to Marvillo Road in Elsmere’s Vilone Village neighborhood.

“Recognizing Major General Vavala is long overdue,” said Mayor Joann Personti. “He represents the very best of Elsmere, and we are honored to celebrate someone whose service, leadership, and character have brought such pride to our community.”

Surprised by the turnout, Major General Vavala expressed deep appreciation, noting that he initially believed he was attending to honor another veteran. He reflected on the significance of being recognized by his hometown and thanked the many colleagues, friends, and family members in attendance—including senior members of the Delaware National Guard and former state and local leaders.

“You really got me tonight,” Vavala said. “But my friends and colleagues who came here—they carried me. It was never about me; it was all of them. Being recognized in your old hometown means so much.”

1st District Councilwoman
Secretary of Council

Jane McDaniel

2nd District Councilwoman
President Pro-Tempore

Sally Jensen

3rd District Councilman

Brian Reinbold Jr.

4th District Councilman

John Holloway

5th District Councilman

Marc Henry

6th District Councilman

Erik Ellison

Town Treasurer

Paul Chalfant

City Solicitor

James McMackin

The Town of Elsmere extends its sincere gratitude to Major General Vavala for his decades of service to Delaware and the United States and proudly celebrates him as an Elsmere Hometown Hero.

For more information:

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