



TOWN OF BLADENSBURG COUNCIL MEETING | MAY 11, 2026

MAY 11, 2026 at 7:00 PM

4229 Edmonston RD, Bladensburg, MD 20710

MINUTES

1. Call to Order – 1 min

Mayor Pro Tem Council Member Kalisha Dixon called the Town of Bladensburg Council Meeting to order on Monday, May 11, 2026, at 7:00 PM.

A motion to excuse Council Member McBryde from the evening's meeting was made by Council Member Blount and seconded by Council Member Dixon. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Opening Prayer – 2 min

CM Brown led the opening prayer.

3. Pledge of Allegiance – 1 min

Mayor Pro Tem Dixon led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Agenda – 1 min

Mayor Pro Tem Dixon noted one modification to the agenda: items A, B, and C under Presentations (Item 6) would be reordered, with the swearing-in of the Interim Town Administrator moved to later in the meeting to accommodate Mayor James's arrival.

A motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Council Member Blount and seconded by Council Member Brown. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Presentations

A. Patriotic Committee – Renee Green

Patriotic Coordinator Renee Greene addressed the Mayor and Council to announce upcoming community events. She noted that the Memorial Day ceremony would be held on Monday, May 25, 2026, at 11:00 AM at the Peace Cross, followed by a luncheon at the American Legion. Ms. Greene also reminded attendees that fireworks are planned in July for the 250th anniversary of the country.

B. Mayor Takisha James presented a proclamation honoring Ms. Denise Gray, owner of Salon des Cheveau, located in the 3 Brothers Shopping Center. The proclamation recognized Ms. Gray for 34 years of dedicated service to the Bladensburg community since the salon's opening on December 14, 1991. The salon concluded its operations in Bladensburg on May 1, 2026. Ms. Gray expressed gratitude to the community, her family, the police officers who ensured her safety over the years, and the neighboring businesses she considered family.

C. The Mayor and Council recognized two employees for 10 years of service, both having started on April 17, 2016:

- Ivan Fuentes, Public Works Department — Public Works Supervisor Purnell Hall delivered remarks honoring Mr. Fuentes for a decade of dedicated and dependable service. Mr. Fuentes was presented with a certificate of appreciation.
- Corporal Duane Humphreys, Bladensburg Police Department — Interim Chief Daniel Frishkorn recognized Corporal Humphreys for his growth through the ranks from officer to patrol supervisor. Mayor James noted his participation in the department's community engagement efforts, including the police lip sync video series.

D. Domestic Violence Committee – Interim Chief Frishkorn

Interim Chief Daniel Frishkorn announced the establishment of a new internal Domestic Violence Committee within the Bladensburg Police Department, an initiative brought forward by Corporal Tanksley. The committee's purpose is to provide structured follow-up support to domestic violence victims and their families within 24 to 72 hours of an incident, with the goal of reducing repeat calls for service.

Swearing-In of Interim Town Administrator

E. Mayor James administered the oath of office to Brian Wood as Interim Town Administrator. Mr. Wood offered brief remarks, expressing enthusiasm for the community and his commitment to serving residents, business owners, and the vision of the Mayor and Council.

6. Approval of Minutes

A. Town Council Session Minutes April 13, 2026

A motion to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2026 Work Session was made by Council Member Brown and seconded by Council Member Blount. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Public Comments

Ms. Susan McCutchen Spring Road, urged civic engagement at the national level. Regarding the nonprofit community grant program discussed at the work session, she expressed support for requiring grant recipients to provide an accounting of how awarded funds were used, noting this practice had been done in

prior years. She also commended the new Domestic Violence Committee and encouraged that prevention and self-protection education be incorporated alongside victim follow-up services.

Gloria Albright, representing Delegate Furnell, extended an invitation to a Senior Breakfast and Health and Safety Awareness event hosted by District 47. The event will be held on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Kentland Community Center. Transportation by bus will be available from participating municipalities.

8. Unfinished Business

9. Financial Business

A. ORDINANCE 18-2026 | First Read of FY27 Budget Ordinance

Treasurer Vito Tinelli introduced the item and Interim Town Administrator Brian Wood conducted the first reading of Ordinance 18-2026, An Ordinance to levy real and personal property tax rates and appropriate and adopt the operating budget of the Mayor and Town Council of Bladensburg, Maryland for Fiscal Year 2027 (July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027).

The tax rates established in the ordinance are as follows:

- Residential single property: \$0.74 per \$100 of assessed value
- Commercial property: \$0.82 per \$100 of assessed value
- Industrial property: \$0.82 per \$100 of assessed value
- Apartments: \$0.85 per \$100 of assessed value
- Business personal property: \$2.50 per \$100 of assessed value
- Business personal property (public utilities and railroads): \$3.25 per \$100 of assessed value

The ordinance fulfills its first reading requirement on May 11, 2026. The second and final reading, along with budget adoption, is scheduled for the Town Council meeting on Monday, June 8, 2026.

Mayor James also announced that a public budget open house will be held on Saturday, May 16, 2026, at 9:00 AM at Town Hall, providing residents an opportunity to review the budget and offer direct input prior to adoption.

10. New Business

A. RESOLUTION 11-2026 | Bostwick House Adaptive Reuse as Event Space

Interim Town Administrator Wood read Resolution 11-2026 into the record. The resolution expresses the Town's strong support for the redevelopment and adaptive reuse of the Bostwick House as a multipurpose event space with a tasting winery, and designates the Amon Memorial Trust as an official partner in the project. The resolution further designates the Bostwick House redevelopment as a priority economic development

initiative and authorizes the pursuit of state and federal grants, historic preservation tax credits, federal new market tax credits, and public-private partnerships.

Mr. Sam Parker, former Chairman of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and Mr. Jared Hawkins, the Town's Economic Development Director, both addressed the council on the importance of retaining the specific language. They explained that the wine tasting designation distinguishes the Bostwick House in a competitive funding environment, appeals to private investors who require a clear and derisked concept, and positions Bladensburg within a growing regional and statewide market for vineyard and wine tourism.

Interim Town Administrator Wood offered context from his own experience with Virginia wineries, noting that such facilities attract a broad range of programming—from children's birthday parties to weddings—and that the language helps paint an evocative picture of what the activated space could look like.

Council members ultimately reached consensus to retain the resolution language as written. Council Members Brown and Dixon acknowledged the strategic rationale for the specific terminology, while requesting that staff and partners continue to ensure all event programming, including family-friendly activities, remains central to the site's vision. The resolution was adopted.

A motion to approve Resolution 11-2026 was made by Council Member Brown and seconded by Council Member Blount. The motion carried unanimously.

11. Staff Reports (3 minutes each)

- A. **Treasurer-** Treasurer Tinelli reported that the Town is on budget overall and is 83 percent through Fiscal Year 2026. Revenues stand at approximately 72 percent of budget, with the variance attributable to large capital items such as bond bill proceeds and federal funding that have not yet been drawn down and were intentionally excluded from the FY27 budget until further information is available. Public Safety is slightly over budget, primarily due to increased pension costs and overtime, partially offset by grant revenues. Public Works is on budget, with a capital variance related to truck and equipment purchases following the winter snowstorm, covered under the Highway User Revenue (HUR) fund. The Town remains within approximately one percent of the overall budget with two months remaining in the fiscal year.
- B. **Public Works** - Public Works Supervisor Purnell Hall reported that the department is focused on seasonal grounds preparation, including planting and landscaping maintenance. He noted that the severe winter weather caused numerous potholes throughout Town, requiring patching and sub-surface repair before any milling and overlay work can proceed. Supervisor Hall indicated he would be coordinating with Interim Administrator Wood on prioritizing upcoming road projects within the budget. He also noted that Washington Gas has a sunken valve on 57th Street that must be addressed before the Town can complete

road restoration in that area. Hall also recognized recent minor beautification improvements to Town Hall exterior using small amounts of material funding.

C. Public Safety - Interim Chief Frishkorn reported the following highlights:

Violent crime is down approximately 49 percent year-to-date, and down 70 percent between March and April. Property crime is down approximately 48 percent year-to-date, and down 83 percent between March and April. The department attended career days at Port Towns Elementary and Templeton Elementary. The Citizen Police Academy begins May 21, 2026. The Bladensburg Police Department's boxing program kickoff is anticipated for June 13, 2026, at the Rookie Rumble hosted by the Police Athletic League at 7600 Barlow Road. A new red light camera at Annapolis Road and Edmondston is now operational; a second camera at the same intersection is expected to be operational by June 15, 2026. A recent domestic violence incident involving a deadly weapon, which was a repeat call to the same address, reinforced the importance of the new Domestic Violence Committee.

D. Interim Town Administrator - Interim Town Administrator Brian Wood provided a brief report, noting that his first week was focused on gaining familiarity with Town operations, staff, and ongoing initiatives. He attended several events with the Mayor and met with neighboring community leaders. He identified active grant applications in final phases that require close-out attention, and noted several grants entering second or third phases that the office will be monitoring. He also identified work to be done through the Prince George's Gateway Development Authority.

12. Mayor and Council Reports (3 minutes each)

A. Council Member Trina Brown – Ward 1 thanked Town staff for their continued support of community events. She reminded residents of the Mental Wellness Event on Thursday, May 13, 2026, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the Public Playhouse, focused on "Kids and Crisis." She also encouraged residents to attend the public budget meeting on May 16, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

B. Council Member Kalisha Dixon – Ward 1 recognized law enforcement during Police Week, expressing appreciation for officers' service and sacrifice. She reported attending the PGCMA meeting, the Council of Governments (COG) meeting on homelessness in the Washington metropolitan area, and the Town's Health Fair on April 18, 2026.

C. Council Member Carrol McBryde – Ward 2 was absent and excused.

D. Council Member Marilyn Blount – Ward 2 reported that the BCC&E committee is progressing well and exploring a combined community event to raise its public profile. She raised a question about available space at the police satellite facility for social worker meetings with families, which Interim Chief Frishkorn confirmed could be accommodated. Council Member Blount expressed interest in

coordinating with providers and Jolene Ivy to bring social services outreach—including representatives from the Department of Aging and other agencies—into the community through a roundtable format.

E. Mayor Takisha James reported on a busy April, including attendance at Elizabeth Seton's annual social entrepreneurship pitch competition, where high school students presented active businesses and competed for \$25,000 in prize funding. She also attended the 330th Anniversary celebration for Prince George's County, where she had productive face-to-face conversations with county agency leaders, including Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission Chairman Barnes, regarding the Port Towns Sector Plan and the need for a swimming pool at the Bladensburg Community Center. Mayor James expressed interest in reestablishing a regular county social services outreach presence at the police station, similar to a program that had previously existed, to help residents navigate access to services.

13. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Council Member Dixon and seconded by Council Member Blount. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.