



TOWN COUNCIL MEETING | JUNE 9, 2025

June 09, 2025 at 7:15 PM

4229 Edmonston RD, Bladensburg, MD 20710

MINUTES

Public Access Virtual via live stream of the Town's Facebook and YouTube pages:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoflhVTBeID3c9oH8GYSW0g>

<https://www.facebook.com/Bladensburgmd>

1. Call to Order

Mayor James called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

2. Opening Prayer

Council Member McBryde led the opening prayer.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Ethan Mendoza led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Agenda

Mayor James called for a motion to approve the agenda. Council Member Brown made the motion, and Council Member Blount seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4-0.

A. APPROVAL OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

Mayor James noted that Council Member Dixon was unable to attend the current meeting due to a flight delay. She also provided attendance updates from recent meetings as follows:

- **March 10:** Council Member Blount and Mayor James were absent.
- **March 8:** Council Member Blount departed early.
- **April 1:** Council Member Blount was absent.
- **April 14:** Mayor James attended only the work session.

- **April 29:** Council Member Dixon was absent.
- **May 9:** Mayor James was absent.
- **May 12:** Council Member Brown was absent.

Mayor James called for a motion to approve these absences as excused. CM Brown moved, CM Blount seconded. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

5. Presentations

Gloria, representing Delegate Diana Fennell's office, announced several upcoming events.

A. Patriotic Committee Update | Renee Green

Renee Greene provided an update on the Memorial Day celebration as well as information on additional upcoming events.

B. Eagle Scout Recognition | Ethan Mendoza

The Council presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Ethan Mendoza for creating the Pearl Harbor Memorial at Bladensburg Memorial Grove Park.

C. Eagle Scholarship | Presentations

Mayor James presented Soaring Eagle Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each to five recipients: Brianna Delsid, Rosa Cienfuegos, Gianna Burns Ferguson, Fadil Ojuola, and Gianna Parrish.

6. Approval of Minutes

A. Town Council Meeting Minutes | April 14, 2025

Mayor James called for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 14th Town Council session. Council Member McBryde made the motion, and Council Member Blount seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4-0.

B. Special Council Meeting Minutes | April 14, 2025

Mayor James called for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 14th Special Council session. Council Member Brown made the motion, and Council Member McBryde seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4-0.

C. Special Council Meeting Minutes | May 12, 2025

Mayor James called for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 12th Special Council session. Council Member Blount made the motion, and Council Member McBryde seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4–0.

D. Town Council Meeting Minutes | May 12, 2025

Mayor James called for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 12th Town Council session. Council Member Blount made the motion, and Council Member Brown seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4–0.

7. Public Comments

- A. Susan McCutcheon provided an update on the Maglev project and expressed concerns regarding related political issues.
- B. Residents from the Bladen Wood community requested assistance after being displaced by a recent fire.
- C. Ms. Terry McLoy and Ms. Mary, residents of Parkview, inquired about the funds allocated for senior activities.
- D. Lennox Bart requested the installation of a shelter at the park located at Barnum Street and 54th Place.

8. Unfinished Business

9. Financial Business

- A. BUDGET ORDINANCE NO: 01 – 2026 | AN ORDINANCE TO LEVY THE REAL PROPERTY AND PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX RATES AND APPROPRIATE AND ADOPT THE OPERATING BUDGET OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF BLADENSBURG, MARYLAND, FOR THE 2026 FISCAL YEAR OF JULY 1, 2025, THROUGH JUNE 30, 2026. SECOND READING**

Town Administrator Bailey Hedgepeth presented the FY2026 budget, highlighting how staff successfully reduced a \$1.5 million deficit to create a balanced budget. Key adjustments included: no cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) or merit increases for employees; increased employee contributions toward vehicle use and health insurance; significant cuts to the police department

budget made by Chief Collington; and increases to business personal property and public utility tax rates.

Residential property tax rates remain unchanged at 74 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

Commercial and industrial property tax rates are set at 82 cents per \$100, and apartment property tax rates at 85 cents per \$100. The business personal property tax rate increased from \$2.09 to \$2.50 per \$100, and the public utility tax rate increased from \$2.50 to \$3.25 per \$100.

Town Clerk Watson read the second reading of Budget Ordinance 01-2026. Mayor James called for a motion to adopt the budget ordinance. Council Member Blount made the motion, and Council Member McBryde seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4–0.

10. New Business

- A. RESOLUTION 30-2025** | A resolution of support for the Town of Bladensburg and port towns' applications for DCHD funding to the National Capital Strategic Economic Development Fund (NED) for business assistance through a façade improvement grant program and wayfinding and branding with the State Revitalization Fund Grants.

Town Administrator Bailey Hedgepeth shared details regarding Eco City Farms' FY2025 Green Equity Grant from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Following the presentation, Mayor James called for a motion to approve the resolution in support of the grant. Council Member Brown made the motion, and Council Member McBryde seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4–0.

- B. RESOLUTION 31-2025** | A Resolution authorizing the declaration of items surplus and the disposition of these items by the Police Department

Town Administrator Bailey Hedgepeth and Deputy Chief Dickerson presented details regarding Resolution 31-2025, which declares certain items as surplus. Mayor James called for a motion to approve the resolution. Council Member Blount made the motion, and Council Member Brown seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4–0.

- C. Community Presentation** | Introducing the Bladensburg Community Garden: A Project of ECO City Farms

Town Administrator Bailey Hedgepeth provided information on the Bladensburg Community Garden project. Eco City Farms was awarded the FY2025 Green Equity Grant from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. The project will develop a 10,000-square-foot community garden at 5801 Emerson Street, featuring 8 to 10 large garden plots and 5 to 6 smaller plots. A community engagement process is scheduled to begin this spring and summer, with construction planned for the fall and spring, and the official launch targeted for next summer.

- D. CONTRACT APPROVAL** | Approval for a Contract with Calvert Ready Mix, an amount not to exceed \$65,115.80 for Sidewalk and Curb Repairs using CDBG PY 50 Funds on Taussig Road.

Public Works Supervisor Hall and Town Clerk Watson explained the process used to select the company awarded the contract for sidewalk and curb repairs. Mayor James called for a motion to approve the contract. Council Member Blount made the motion, and Council Member McBryde seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4–0.

- E. CONTRACT APPROVAL** | Approval of a contract for repairs to Bostwick House with Colossal Contractors, Inc.- Wash House Stabilization, using MNCPPC Historic Preservation funds.

Town Administrator Bailey Hedgepeth shared details regarding the Bostwick House wash house stabilization contract, which is to be awarded to Colossal Contractors for \$49,500. Mayor James called for a motion to approve the contract. Council Member Brown made the motion, and Council Member Blount seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4–0.

- F. CONTRACT APPROVAL** | Approval to enter an agreement for Phase 2 of the 57th Avenue Lighting Project using CDBG PY 49 R Funds, Lighting Maintenance, Inc., in the amount of \$107,950.91.

Town Administrator Bailey Hedgepeth shared details regarding the Phase Two street lighting project contract, which was awarded for \$107,950.91. Mayor James called for a motion to approve the contract. Council Member Blount made the motion, and Council Member McBryde seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4–0.

- G. CONTRACT APPROVAL** | Approval to enter into an agreement for Green Mechanics Benefit LLC to construct two green bus shelters using Maryland Energy Administration Funds for up to \$60,000.

Town Administrator Bailey Hedgepeth shared details regarding an agreement with Green Mechanics Benefit LLC for the installation of two green bus shelters. Mayor James called for a motion to approve the contract. Council Member Brown made the motion, and Council Member McBryde seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4–0.

- H. Award of Funds** | Council approval of FY 2025 Community grants for \$2,000 to non-profit organizations serving Bladensburg residents.

The Council approved six community grants in the amount of \$2,000 each to the following organizations: CARECEN (Central American Resource Center), Eco City Farms, We Lead by Example (youth taekwondo program), Global Health and Education Project (diaper program), Good Intentions (youth mentorship), and This Goes Boom (July events). Mayor James called for a motion to approve the grants. Council Member Brown made the motion, and Council Member McBryde seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4–0.

- I. DISCRETIONARY FUNDS FY 2025** | Town Council Awards – June 2025

The Council approved discretionary awards to Bladensburg Elementary School, Chloe's Room, and the NOW Foundation. Mayor James called for a motion to approve the awards. Council Member Blount made the motion, and Council Member Brown seconded it. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4–0.

11. Staff Reports (3 minutes each)

Treasurer; Public Safety and Code Enforcement; Town Clerk; Public Works; Town Administrator

- **Town Treasurer:** Reported that revenue is falling short of the budget, particularly in the area of automated traffic enforcement. The full financial report is available online.
- **Public Safety:** A community walk is planned for June 12, and the Citizens Police Academy graduation will take place on June 18.
- **Code Enforcement:** Issued 76 grass violation notices and is currently delivering updated business licenses.
- **Town Clerk:** Reported attending the 79th Annual IIMC Conference with the Deputy Clerk, describing it as very informative and beneficial. Election packets are ready for distribution. The full report is available online. Additionally, the Juneteenth celebration will be held at the park on June 20.

- **Public Works:** Building repairs have been completed, and staff attended a sustainable stormwater maintenance class.
- **Town Administrator:** Expressed appreciation to staff for their dedication and efforts in beautification initiatives. The full report is available online.

12. Mayor and Council Reports (3 minutes each)

- **Council Member Brown** announced the next community meeting, scheduled for July 19 from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., and noted participation in several recent events.
- **Council Member McBryde** expressed gratitude for the Town's ongoing beautification efforts and also attended multiple events.
- **Council Member Blount** announced a health fair for seniors to be held on June 17 at Emerson House and offered to collaborate with Parkview residents.
- **Mayor James** highlighted attending the Maryland Municipal League (MML) Board Meeting in Frederick and the recent Bostwick community event.

13. Adjournment

Mayor James called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Brown made the motion, and Council Member McBryde seconded it. The motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.