



Town of Bladensburg Council Meeting | June 8, 2026
Meeting Minutes 7:00 PM
4229 Edmonston RD, Bladensburg, MD 20710

1. Call To Order

Mayor Takisha James called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM on Monday, June 8, 2026, at 4229 Edmonston Road, Bladensburg, MD 20710.

2. Opening Prayer

The opening prayer was led by Council Member McBryde.

3. Pledge Of Allegiance

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval Of Agenda

The agenda was approved with a minor adjustment to the order of presentations, placing the Sheriff's Office guest speaker first at the request of Town Administrator Wood.

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. Sheriff's Office Presentation On Community Services

Walter Lee James Jr., former Mayor of Bladensburg and Director of Community Engagement for the Prince George's County Office of the Sheriff under Sheriff John D.B. Carr, presented an overview of community programs offered by the Office of the Sheriff, including:

- Sheriff's Athletic League – Saturday volleyball at the Bladensburg Salvation Army (10–11 AM), open to all ages, with a focus on youth mentorship.
- Silver Circle – Educational sessions for senior residents on fraud and scam prevention. A future session in Bladensburg is being coordinated; Mr. James committed to sharing the confirmed date with the council for distribution to ward residents.
- Youth Explorers Program – For middle and high school students interested in law enforcement careers.

- Sheriff Citizens Academy – An overview program educating the public on the roles and responsibilities of the Office of the Sheriff.
- Public Safety Food Basket Program – A collaborative, multi-agency holiday food distribution initiative held annually at Emerson House.

Mr. James provided his contact information: phone 240-286-6570 and email wjames@cocog.md.us. Mayor James noted a prior offer from an assistant sheriff to support warrant sweeps in partnership with the Bladensburg Police Department, and relayed that information to Interim Chief Frishkorn.

b. Language Interpreter Differential Pay

Interim Chief Daniel Frishkorn presented a proposed language interpreter differential pay program, developed in response to staff concerns raised at a recent all-hands meeting. The town has 12 bilingual employees, primarily Spanish speakers, with some Korean and Nigerian speakers as well.

The proposal would provide a pay stipend of \$1.00/hour for basic proficiency (spoken language) and \$1.50/hour for advanced proficiency (reading, writing, and speaking), with proficiency determined through third-party testing. The maximum annual cost, assuming all 12 employees test at the advanced level and work 2,080 hours, would be \$40,000, though actual costs are expected to be significantly lower. Mayor James noted that speed camera revenue could be used to offset the cost, as the program is public-safety related. Sign language proficiency, tested through Gallaudet University, was also included as an eligible language.

The council discussed the rationale for the pay tiers, the importance of third-party certification for court admissibility, and the use of professional development funds for employees wishing to learn a new language. Council directed Town Administrator Wood to return with a formal amendment to the personnel policy for a vote at the July meeting.

6. Approval Of Minutes

a. Approval Of May 11, 2026 Regular Session Minutes

Motion to approve the May 11, 2026 Regular Session Minutes was made by Council Member Blount and seconded by Council Member McBryde. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Public Comments

Three residents addressed the council (Susan McCutcheon, Anne Greenway and Mr. Marlo), all raising concerns about ICE activity observed on town-owned and fire department-owned property, including the post office parking lot, the international school, and the police department lot. Residents referenced photographs taken between May 20 and June 1 suggesting the locations were used for staging prior to or following immigration enforcement actions. Residents requested that the council review applicable county legislation, including CB006-2026, and explore policy avenues to limit federal immigration enforcement access to town property, consistent with steps being explored by neighboring

municipalities. Mayor James acknowledged the concerns and affirmed that the council would gather the facts, consult with staff, and take measured and lawful action.

8. Work Session Review

Town Administrator Brian Wood recapped the work session held earlier in the evening:

- 52nd Street Update – Partnership with the State Highway Administration discussed; next steps identified.
- 58th Street Community Garden – Challenges reviewed; potential partnerships and a path forward discussed.
- Mayor and Council Salary and Mayor's Vehicle – Actions for FY28 discussed; a resolution regarding the Mayor's vehicle will be brought forward at the July meeting.
- Mid-Year Budget Topics and Grants List – Deferred to the July work session.
- 57th Street Repairs – Addressed later in the agenda.
- Community Grants and Scholarships – Deferred to the July work session for final decisions.

9. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

10. Financial Business

a. Emergency Resolution For 57th Street Repairs

Town Administrator Wood presented Ordinance No. 18-2026, a fiscal year 2026 emergency budget amendment to appropriate \$14,100 in highway user funds for road repairs at 4219 57th Avenue performed by Resurface Inc. (Job No. 260207, May 13, 2026). The repair involved a 2-inch mill and overlay and full-depth base repairs covering 2,310 square feet, necessitated by a road section that had sunk approximately 4 inches. By coordinating with WSSC, which was already mobilized for work on the same street, the town saved an estimated \$4,000–\$7,000 compared to completing the repair independently later in the year. The repair qualified as a sole-source engagement due to the unique circumstances. The Town Administrator apologized for acting ahead of council authorization and acknowledged the expediency of the situation.

Motion to approve Ordinance No. 18-2026 was made by Council Member Blount and seconded by Council Member McBryde. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Budget Reading (Second Reading)

Treasurer Vito Tinelli presented final adjustments to the proposed FY2027 budget ahead of the second reading. Revisions totaling a \$240,000 reduction in revenues were made to reflect: lower-than-expected personal property tax revenues due to state-issued business credits; reduced admission and amusement tax projections; a reduction in the business license revenue line; and the removal of \$20,000 in police overtime grant funding that will

not be renewed. These reductions were offset by compensation savings, primarily within the public safety command structure. Two COPS-funded officer positions were retained in the budget. Council Member Dixon commended Treasurer Tinelli for producing a clear and clean budget. Town Administrator Wood read the ordinance title.

Motion to approve proposed FY2027 Budget Ordinance No. 18-2026 was made by Council Member Blount and seconded by Council Member McBryde. The motion carried unanimously.

11. New Business

There was no new business.

12. Staff Reports (3 Minutes Each)

Public Works – Town Administrator Wood noted, on behalf of Public Works Director Hall who was absent, that the new street signs recently installed are complete and visible throughout Ward 1, with installation continuing in Ward 2.

Public Safety and Code Enforcement – Code Enforcement Officer Rinehart reported an average complaint closure time of approximately 3 days via the new GovPilot application. Stop work orders were issued at 5003/5014 Taylor Street and 5106 Upshur Street for unpermitted construction. Three abatements were completed in coordination with Public Works. A new quarterly code enforcement newsletter, developed by Officer Kellye, was introduced and will be distributed through the town newsletter, at town hall, and with violation notices.

The council noted that the prior My Bladensburg app has been replaced by GovPilot, which is available on both Android and iOS and allows residents to report code issues, potholes, and other concerns with photo attachments.

Treasurer – Treasurer Tinelli reported that the town received a \$71,000 workers' compensation dividend, up significantly from \$18,000 the prior year, reflecting a safer work environment. Revenue trends show service charges and automated traffic enforcement above budget. The town is operating at a net loss through May, which is expected, as property tax, highway user revenue, and traffic enforcement receipts tagged to FY26 will not arrive until July–August.

Town Administrator – Town Administrator Wood highlighted that bond bills for town hall conceptual renderings and waterfront development have been approved at the state level and cleared the Public Works Board, with reimbursement draws expected within a few months totaling approximately \$300,000–\$500,000. Additional highlights included: the Financial Empowerment Program (in partnership with Prince George's Community College) scheduled for June 24, 25, and 27, with up to 40 participants eligible for a \$200 Giant voucher upon completion; and a potential summer intern, possibly one of the police explorers, with an internship policy to be brought forward in July. A July work session will also cover internal policies including procurement and fund balance.

Public Safety – Interim Chief Frishkorn reported that violent crime is down 75% and property crime is down 24% between April and May. A crime suppression detail targeting a trend of vehicle thefts resulted in 3 arrests near 57th Avenue. Notable upcoming events include Coffee with a Cop on June 10 at 3801 Kenilworth Avenue, the kickoff of the Bladensburg Police Department Boxing Program on June 13 at 7600 Barlow Road (supported by two grants totaling approximately \$528,000), and the first session of the Citizens Police Academy on June 25. Acting Lieutenant Goans resigned to accept a position as Chief of Police for the Oxford, North Carolina Police Department. Sergeant Ramirez launched a new Walk with a Cop initiative allowing officers to engage residents in neighborhood conversations. Council Member Blount requested increased officer presence in senior building parking lots; Chief Frishkorn confirmed this and encouraged all officers to conduct regular visits to senior facilities as part of community policing.

13. Mayor And Council Reports (3 Minutes Each)

Council Member Trina Brown – Ward 1 thanked staff for their budget work and reminded residents that early voting runs June 11–18 and Election Day is June 23, noting that same-day registration is available.

Council Member Kalisha Dixon – Ward 1 thanked Acting Lieutenant Goans for his service and wished him well. She reported attending the Prince George's 250 Block Party and Maryland 250 Citizens Academy Awards, where she represented Bladensburg in receiving a grant for the Bladensburg Citizens Academy Program, which will educate residents on local government, public safety, and planning. She also attended the Memorial Day ceremony, a PGCMA mental health event, and a CBC/CRF event.

Council Member Carrol McBryde – Ward 2 reported assisting with a fundraiser for Delegate Fennell and Julian Ivy at the Bladensburg Recreation Center.

Council Member Marilyn Blount – Ward 2 reported attending a Port Towns meeting, noting Bladensburg is the largest municipality in the Port Towns collaborative. She also attended a BCCE meeting, noted that photos for the upcoming BCCE newsletter should be sent to Ray, and referenced a senior gathering planned for September.

Mayor Takisha James- Reported on several items including: continued work of the Prince George's Gateway Development Authority, which received state funding to be distributed among member municipalities, providing Bladensburg a share of \$300,000 for projects such as the Bostwick House reuse plan; progress toward a potential aviation mechanics trade school partnership with Advine Aero Services, with site visits completed at DCA and a planned visit to BWI; attendance at the bill signing for HB1142, MML's priority bill to restructure municipal sales tax revenue sharing for the first time in over 60 years; and the alignment between the council's Bostwick House resolution and two recently passed Prince George's County bills supporting agritourism and rural promotion, demonstrating legislative synergy.

14. Adjournment

Town staff reminded residents of the July 2nd Fireworks Celebration, 6:00–9:30 PM at the Waterfront Park, with entertainment and vendors. Attendees were encouraged to arrive early.

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

The meeting was adjourned.