



# TOWN ADMINISTRATOR MONTHLY MEMO

## November 2024



Dear Town Council, Residents, Business owners, and Employees of the Town of Bladensburg;

As the time changes and the weather begins to cool, it hard to believe that it is already falling. Here are a few things that I want to keep you updated on the following matters.

- **Bridge Repairs:** . After revising the project scope, we will repair bridges on Varnum, Upshur, and Spring Road starting on November 13, 2025. This project will address some long-standing issues identified during a previous inspection. These repairs are in part being paid for with CDBG PY 48R Funds from Prince George’s County Department of Community and Housing Development.
- **57<sup>th</sup> Avenue Lighting Update:** The bases of the lighting fixtures have been installed and the new lights should be completed before the end of December. We will continue to keep the community informed as the project progresses. As a phase 2 to this project, the Town was recently notified that we are being funded for another \$180,000 to fund more street lighting in this same area.

We appreciate your patience as these improvements take shape and look forward to delivering these enhancements to benefit all residents.

**Board of Supervisors of Election (BOSOE) Meeting Update |** The Town of Bladensburg has Board of Supervisors (BOSOE) convened several times over the last few months to address crucial topics related to election management and campaign regulations. Here are the key highlights:

**Final review and updates to Internal Procedures and Documentation:** The board completed its thorough review of internal procedures and documentation. Revisions were proposed for the candidate handbook and the BOSOE process document to enhance clarity and efficiency in election operations. These updates were done to prepare for an update with the Town Council on recommended improvements to the Candidate Documents and Internal Procedures.

The recent meetings have underscored the board's commitment to ensuring a smooth and compliant election process. For further details or to access updated documents, please visit the town website or contact the Board of Elections Supervisors. Stay informed and engaged as we approach these crucial milestones in our election cycle in 2025!

**COG Updates** | The town participates in the Washington Council of Governments, and as town administrator, I participate in the CAO committee. This month we met two times. We discussed the Time to Care Act and its implementation in the District of Columbia in late October. This act has been passed in Maryland to allow employers to grant time to take care of loved ones. The law does not go into effect until 2026 in Maryland, but for local governments, we have struggled with what this will mean for benefits costs and how this works for our employees. So, hearing the experiences from Washing to DC was helpful.

I also recently attended the regularly scheduled CAO Meeting on Wednesday, November 6, during which we were updated on the drought status in the area. As you may know, we were in drought status earlier this summer, and then we had some rain that brought the region back. However, over the last 30 days, an extended drought has put us back into drought watch. There are several warnings regarding burning and outdoor fires, but the reserve water supply is adequate, and with a time of the year the conservation measures do not need to be taken at this time. These meetings are an excellent opportunity to share information and updates in the greater Washington region.

**Holiday Food Distributions** | **Sign up Today!** Town staff continues to move forward with NOW Foundation and VBC on the two events. These are scheduled for the following dates at Bladensburg High School.

- Saturday, November 23
- Saturday, December 7

The event is open to the public from 10 AM to noon, this event is focused at Town residents and people are encouraged to sign up in advance due to a limited number of baskets that will be available for needy families.

**Join us for the Town Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving Morning!** |

I am excited about the Town's upcoming Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving Day. The event will be fairly simple, and we are asking people to join us as we get a quick walk around Bladensburg Waterfront Park, the event starts early at 7 AM for the early birds.



**Event Details:**

- Date: Thursday, November 28
- Time: 7:00 AM - 9:00 AM
- Location: Meet at the Bladensburg Waterfront Park Ropewalk Pavilion (4601 Annapolis Road)
- Distance: Anacostia Riverwalk Trail - Approximately 1 mile (2 miles trotting back)
- Refreshments will be served.

**The first 20 registrants will receive a free Turkey Trot shirt!**

Gobble up and join us for a fun and active Thanksgiving morning!: [REGISTER HERE](#)



**Green Update | Sustainable Maryland Certified:** The Town of Bladensburg proudly announces its achievement of Bronze Certification in the Sustainable Maryland program as of November 2024. This designation, awarded by the Environmental Finance Center at the University of Maryland, highlights the town’s dedication to environmental stewardship, community sustainability, and commitment to improving residents’ quality of life. Through a range of green initiatives—including waste reduction, energy efficiency, and sustainable landscaping—Bladensburg has demonstrated leadership in fostering a sustainable future.

This certification recognizes the collective efforts of town officials, staff, and community members, all of whom contributed to meeting program standards. The town will continue building on these accomplishments to pursue even greater sustainability goals, benefiting both current residents and future generations.

**Bostwick House | Updates and Action Items:** I will present project updates at this November 18 council meeting. Below are some of the updates.

- WMG has restored and completed the window repair work at the site.
- Encore has developed two sets of floor plan schemes for potential uses.
- The Town has worked with the vendor to secure the lower-level windows to reduce the issues with vandalism
- The Urban Land Institute (ULI) is drawing to a close of the Final Report on the House which was started in April 2024



We will inform the community as we progress with these exciting developments at Bostwick House.

I encourage all residents to attend the November 18th Council Meeting to learn more about these actions in the Town and how they benefit Bladensburg. Your input and participation are vital as we move forward.

Have a happy and safe Thanksgiving!

Best Regards,

*Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth*

Michelle Bailey-Hedgepeth, Town Administrator