

City of Rockville

City Hall
111 Maryland Ave
Rockville, MD 20850

Approved: 
Attest: 
Approved Meeting No. 07-26
March 9, 2026



Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 23, 2026

6:30 PM

Meeting No. 05-26

WebEx

Mayor and Council

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Monique Ashton	Mayor	Present
Kate Fulton	Councilmember	Present
Barry Jackson	Councilmember	Present
David Myles	Councilmember	Present
Izola Shaw	Councilmember	Present
Marissa Valeri	Councilmember	Present
Adam Van Grack	Councilmember	Present

1. Convene

Mayor and Council convened in a Hybrid Open Meeting at 6:35 p.m. on Monday, February 23, 2026, in the Mayor and Council Chambers, City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland, and via Webex.

Staff Present: City Manager Jeff Mihelich, City Attorney Robert E. Dawson, and Executive Assistant to the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations Judy Penny

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Monique Ashton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Proclamation and Recognition - NONE

4. Agenda Review

Executive Assistant to the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations Judy Penny reported no changes to the agenda.

5. City Manager's Report

City Manager Jeff Mihelich recapped City events, including the Black History Month event, successful and well-attended Lunar New Year celebrations. City Manager Mihelich commented on the winter storm, some very stress calls in the Police Dispatch Center, and the recent active shooter school events; however, City staff were extremely prepared and handled all these incidents efficiently and professionally.

Mayor Monique Ashton thanked City staff and the Rockville City Police Department for their work during this month's events. Mayor Ashton also noted the passing of Rev. Jesse Jackson, his national and local activism, and for his creation of the Rainbow Push Coalition; and the Rev. Dr. Ruby Reese-Moone and her national, educational, and local activism.

Councilmember David Myles commented on the passing of Rev. Dr. Ruby Reese-Moone, who was committed to the students in Montgomery County Public Schools. Rev. Dr. Reese-Moone participated in multiple historic Civil Rights events and consistently advocated for the community.

Councilmember Adam Van Grack commented on the great work that all the local law enforcement agencies did, their professionalism, and their work in keeping the community safe. He also thanked Councilmember Myles for assisting him in reaching the Parent Reunification location during the Active Shooter event.

Councilmember Izola Shaw commented on Rev. Jesse Jackson and his creation of the Rainbow Push Coalition, and his lifelong work on housing and advocacy for people.

6. Boards and Commissions Appointments and Reappointments - NONE

7. Community Forum

NAME	TOPIC
In-Person Jamie N.	Rent Stabilization, Housing Justice, Junk Fees
In-Person Kathleen Kelly	Rent Stabilization, Reuse of the Marlow Building for Housing
In-Person Grant Sams	Rent Stabilization, Rental Pricing Algorithm
In-Person Christine Gelobe	Rent Stabilization, Housing Data Collection, Fee Restriction
In-Person Terrance Taylor	Property Manager in Rockville, Housing Policy

FURTHER DISCUSSION

February 23, 2026, Agenda item 7.

[Mayor and Council Meeting - February 23, 2026 \(No. 05-26\)](#)

Timestamp 09:01

8. Special Presentations – NONE

9. Consent Agenda

- A.** Authorize the City Manager to Award and Execute a Contract with Kittelson & Associates, Inc. for Planning and Engineering Services for the Safe Streets and Roads for All Vision Zero Intersection Safety Audit Project, Responsive to RFP #01-26, in an Amount Not to Exceed \$398,945.15
- B.** Authorize the City Manager to Execute an agreement with IPS Group, Inc. to continue the service of parking enforcement management and citation processing in the amount of \$85,000 per year through January 15, 2028, with the possibility of three additional one-year renewals.
- C.** Authorize the City Manager to Execute the Project Agreement with the State of Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to proceed with a grant agreement to apply for a \$1,500,000 grant to fund Phase II for grading, excavation as well as build pathways, bridges, deck overlook, and signage, at RedGate Park and Arboretum, consistent with the RedGate Park Master Plan.
- D.** Authorize the City Manager to Enter into Electricity Supply Agreements with WGL Energy Services, Inc. for a Term between December 2025 and September 2026

E. Approval of Minutes

February 2, 2026 (Meeting No. 03-26)
February 9, 2026 - Closed Session (Meeting No. 04A-26)
February 9, 2026 (Meeting No. 04-26)

Councilmember Izola Shaw moved to approve consent agenda items A, B, C, D, and E.

	RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Izola Shaw, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Marissa Valeri, Councilmember
IN FAVOR:	Mayor Ashton, Councilmember Fulton, Councilmember Jackson, Councilmember Myles, Councilmember Shaw, Councilmember Valeri, Councilmember Van Grack

10. Public Hearing - NONE

11. Action Items – NONE

12. Worksession

A. Chapter 18 Code Update (Rental Facilities and Landlord-Tenant Relations) - Work Session

Housing Programs Manager Jane Lyons-Raeder and Housing Specialist Trevor Stephens provided the Mayor and Council with an overview of the Chapter 18 Code Update.

Staff recommends that the Mayor and Council receive the presentation, discuss, and provide direction on updates to City Code Chapter 18, Rental Facilities and Landlord-Tenant Relations. The feedback received will guide staff's recommendations for: 1) Background check restrictions, 2) Relocation assistance, 3) Penalties, 4) Programmatic actions, and future code amendments.

During the previous Mayor and Council work session on Chapter 18, members of the body asked staff for additional research on fees, two-year lease terms, and eviction assistance. Staff recommends prescribing what types of fees are allowed to be charged and, in certain cases, setting maximum amounts that may be charged.

Fee restrictions could have similar drawbacks to rent caps by limiting a landlord's ability to generate revenue and thus paying for services they must provide. However, fee caps as proposed are generally limited to the actual cost to the landlord. Staff also propose the ability for landlords to levy optional fees that must be consented to by the tenant, providing additional flexibility. Staff believe that any short-term adjustments in the rental market will be worthwhile to have a fairer rental fee regime that is easy for both landlords and tenants to understand.

There was discussion regarding a need for certain exceptions requiring landlords to offer tenants a two-year lease term, rather than one year as it is currently. However, staff have determined that the current code language regarding reasonable cause for the landlord not offering a one-year term is sufficient to address Mayor and Council's concerns.

Additional information was requested on how to help households facing evictions. One resource is the Rockville Emergency Assistance Program (REAP) to assist with paying off households' rental arrears so evictions can be avoided. Households in need can also combine funds from Montgomery County and other emergency assistance providers to pay off significant amounts of rent debt and avoid eviction. Over the past two years, demand for REAP has grown exponentially. Other strategies to prevent evictions are: 1) emergency rental assistance, 2) security deposit assistance, 3) access to legal counsel, 4) investments in affordable housing, and 5) investments in preventative programs.

When tenants are provided legal counsel, they are two to three times more likely to stay in their homes. Currently, tenants earning 50% of the state's median income are provided access to legal representation in eviction and subsidy termination cases. The household income of the median REAP recipient is \$20,800. Investments in job training, financial empowerment programs like Bank On Rockville, service navigation, and other social services can help households to achieve financial stability and upward mobility so that they are able to weather emergencies more easily and stay current on rent. The Department of Housing and Community Development staff have taken steps to expand such programming by providing service navigation and restarting the City's Bank On coalition.

Eviction and incarceration operate as twin, compounding systems of exclusion. With the Fair Housing Act of 1968, the government hoped to eliminate discrimination by landlords against individuals based on race, gender, religion, national origin, and disability. Despite this, these same obstacles to housing continue to exist today based on structural inequalities, such as through exclusionary zoning practices and urban renewal, and there emerged gaps that negatively impact individuals in certain racial and socioeconomic groups.

Background checks are a tool for landlords to screen potential tenants on their rental, criminal, and credit histories prior to renting out their homes. Ideally, these checks provide protection for landlords against high-risk tenants. The results of these checks, however, can prove to be a barrier to securing housing for individuals with red flags on their record.

Staff recommends adopting code provisions to reduce discrimination based on both criminal and eviction history. Compliance would be assessed during the rental license renewal process by collecting standard applications.

Staff also recommends establishing a requirement for landlords to provide tenants with temporary and permanent relocation assistance in certain circumstances. Assistance would be provided on a per-household basis, not a per-tenant basis. Timing of payments and notice requirements will be further fleshed out once code language is drafted. Temporary relocation assistance would be required when the City has deemed that a rental housing unit cannot be occupied. For tenants in a six-month or longer lease, permanent relocation assistance would be required when specific conditions are met.

To hold landlords and tenants accountable for following the requirements of the code and disincentivize code violations, there needs to be appropriate consequences set in place. There are multiple forms of penalties that can include: municipal infractions, lawsuits, and license penalties. Of these, the most commonly employed method across the nation is the imposition of fines via municipal infractions. Currently in Rockville, the maximum fine that can be levied against landlords for a violation of Chapter 18 is \$100. Staff recommends amending the fee resolution to allow for a range of fees up to \$5,000, with varying fees depending on the violation.

Feedback received from the Mayor and Council will be incorporated into the staff's final recommendations for the comprehensive update to City Code Chapter 18, which is tentatively scheduled for May 18, 2026, for consideration and adoption. Staff will conduct additional outreach and engagement to receive feedback from landlords, tenants, and other community stakeholders on the initial draft of the new chapter.

FURTHER DISCUSSION

February 23, 2026, Agenda item 12A.

[Mayor and Council Meeting - February 23, 2026 \(No. 05-26\)](#)

Timestamp 28:20

13. Mock Agenda

There were no changes to the Mock Agenda.

14. Old / New Business

There was no Old/New Business.

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

MOVER:	RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS] Barry Jackson, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Kate Fulton, Councilmember
IN FAVOR:	Mayor Ashton, Councilmember Fulton, Councilmember Jackson, Councilmember Myles, Councilmember Shaw, Councilmember Valeri, Councilmember Van Grack