

City of Rockville

City Hall
111 Maryland Ave
Rockville, MD 20850



Approved: *[Signature]*
Attest: *[Signature]*
Approved Meeting No. 15-26
June 1, 2026

Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 18, 2026

6:30 PM

Meeting No. 14-26

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	Absent
Adam Van Grack	Councilmember	Present

1. Convene

Mayor and Council, and Mini Mayor Kiera Newell convened in a Hybrid Open Meeting at 6:34 p.m. on Monday, May 18, 2026, in the Mayor and Council Chambers, City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland, and via Webex.

Staff Present: City Manager Jeff Mihelich, Acting City Attorney Cynthia Walters, and City Clerk/Director of Council Operations, Sara Taylor-Ferrell.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Monique Ashton and Girl Scout Cadette Troop # 333140 led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Proclamation and Recognition - NONE

4. Agenda Review

City Clerk/Director of Council Operations reported consent agenda item D was added to the agenda earlier today.

5. City Manager's Report

City Manager Jeff Mihelich reported the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) provided the City of Rockville a \$80K grant to assess placing a bench at every bus stop in the City. Hometown Holidays will be on May 23-25, and the annual Rockville Pride event will take place on June 7 in Town Square from 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

6. Boards and Commissions Appointments and Reappointments – NONE

COUNCILMEMBER DAVID MYLES JOINED THE MEETING AT 6:38 PM.

7. Community Forum

**Community Forum
In-Person/Virtual Speakers and Written Comments List
(May 18, 2026)**

NAME	TOPIC
In-Person David Fields	Landlord-Tenant Concerns
In-Person Mark Pierzchala	College Gardens, Zoning Ordinance
In-Person Julia Bender	New Mark Commons, Zoning
In-Person Susan Knowles	New Mark Commons, Zoning

NAME	TOPIC
In-Person Ana Astrid Molena	New Mark Commons, Zoning
In-Person Pat Reber	New Mark Commons, Zoning
In-Person Libby Adams	Rental/Mold Issues
WRITTEN COMMENTS	
Pat Reger	New Mark zoning: please reconsider height limit?
David Sloane	RMD-15 for Parcel Adjacent to New Mark
Julia Binder	Rezoning ZOR ID 17
Deborah Mesmer	Tower Grove ZOR-ID 17: Questions about max height and density following May 11 Hearing
Rachel Neill	Deer fencing regulations
Monica Barberis-Young	RMD25
A S	RMD-15 at Don Mills Ct
John Ogawa	College Gardens secondary street access
Herman Edskes Huei-Fung Tsai	Rockville zoning ordinance
Ana Astrid Molina	Max. 40ft height consideration for ZOR ID 17 on planning area 12
Mun Wong	Max. 40ft height consideration for ZOR ID 17 on planning area 12
Brian Anleu	AOBA Comments on Rockville Chapter 18 Update
Michael Berman	Deer Mesh and Setbacks
Ashlie T. Bagwell Senior Government Relations Association	Proposed Ordinance – Rental and Landlord Tenant Relations

8. Special Presentations - NONE

9. Consent Agenda

- A.** Approve the recommendation from the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board to approve the Proposal from the Maryland State Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (MSSDAR) to plant a Liberty Tree scion at Glenview Mansion in Recognition of America’s 250th Semi-Quincentennial.
- B.** FY26 Grant Agreement for Rockville Volunteer Fire Department Emergency Vehicle Contribution
- C.** Award and Authorize the City Manager to Execute Contracts Responsive to IFB #26-25 for Water Main Rehabilitation Program - Externally Funded Projects
- D.** Approval of FY26, Year 51 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Contract with Montgomery County and Authorization for the City Manager to Sign the Contract
- E.** Approval of Minutes

Councilmember Adam Van Grack moved to approve consent agenda items A, B, C, D, and E.

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

10. Public Hearing – NONE

11. Action Items

- A.** Adoption of an Ordinance to Amend Chapter 18 of the Rockville City Code, entitled “Rental Facilities and Landlord-Tenant Relations”

Housing Programs Manager Jane Lyons-Raeder and Housing Specialist Trevor Stephens provided Mayor and Council with an overview of the ordinance to amend Chapter 18 of the Rockville City Code, entitled “Rental Facilities and Landlord-Tenant Relations.”

Staff recommend the Mayor and Council introduce and adopt the proposed Ordinance amending Chapter 18 of the Rockville City Code, entitled “Rental Facilities and Landlord-Tenant Relations.” As such, the following actions should be taken: the Ordinance should first be introduced, and then a motion to waive the layover period should be made. If the motion to waive the layover period is

approved by six affirmative votes, a motion to adopt the Ordinance may then proceed. The proposed effective date is January 1, 2027.

In Fall 2024, a comprehensive rewrite of City Code Chapter 18, Rental Facilities and Landlord-Tenant Relations, was identified as a key action in the City's Housing Strategies Work Plan as a way to further housing stability. While supply and subsidy strategies can help to improve housing affordability, only stability strategies will ensure fair and equal treatment of tenants. As the City experiences a growing number of tenants, stability strategies will help to reduce displacement and ensure everyone in the community can reap the benefits of the City's growth and investments.

Community Engagement

Below is a summary of what was learned through the Chapter 18 rewrite's community engagement process, including the challenges faced by landlords and tenants, general feedback, and responses to proposed code changes. Common themes significantly differed depending on whether the individual was representing the perspective of a tenant or landlord, and so have been organized as such.

Research and engagement for the Chapter 18 rewrite commenced in Spring 2025. The goals for the rewrite were established as follows:

- Provide clarity on existing code elements.
- Consider alignment with surrounding jurisdictions' codes.
- Improve housing stability and opportunities for tenancy agency.
- Require greater transparency for tenants.
- Ensure alignment with the state of Maryland law.
- Review local and national best practices.
- Better connect data collection and city goals.

Notable Code Changes

The following section describes notable changes to Chapter 18. All recommended changes and additions to the current code and the draft code language.

Algorithmic Rent Pricing Ban: Ban the practice of algorithmic rent pricing generally, following best practices of other jurisdictions, as a means of ensuring rents are set competitively and fairly.

Court Costs and Legal Fees: Prohibit rental leases from requiring a tenant to pay legal costs or attorney fees other than those awarded in court. Any lease requires a tenant to pay legal fees must specify attorney fees are not a part of rent and obligate the landlord to pay the tenant's attorney fees if the tenant is the prevailing legal party.

Criminal Background Check Restrictions: In a previous work session, staff recommended adopting Montgomery County's restrictions on criminal background checks for prospective tenants. Staff has since learned City code already incorporates the entirety of Montgomery County Code Chapter 27, Human Rights and Civil Liberties.

Data Reporting: Require all rental properties to submit certain data to the city through the rental licensing process. Smaller apartment complexes and properties owned by non-profits would no longer be exempt from data reporting. In addition, data would be reported at the time of rental license renewal instead of monthly.

Early Lease Termination: Allow tenants to terminate a lease with 30 days' written notice in certain situations, listed below. This change specifies the reasons outside of a tenant's control why a tenant may want to terminate a lease early, allowing tenants to more easily understand in which situations they may be able to take advantage of this right. The lease may provide in the event of termination for such cause; the tenant is liable for a reasonable termination charge not to exceed one month's rent.

Eviction History: Ban landlords from asking about past eviction history on rental applications. Landlords would still be able to look up a prospective tenant's eviction history through other means of publicly available records. This would keep landlords' evaluation of prospective tenants focused on their ability to pay at the time of application.

Fee Transparency: Require landlords to disclose fees to tenants when advertising rental units, before lease signing, and at lease renewal, and in the lease agreement itself. In Advertising - Require landlords to disclose all mandatory fees whenever a price is advertised or displayed, including online, as well as whether utilities are included in the monthly rental payment. Monthly mandatory fees may be included in or stated with the monthly rental rate. Before lease signing, at Lease Renewal - Require landlords to fully disclose all fees prior to the lease agreement being certified by both parties, and at the time of lease renewal. This may include disclosure at the time of lease signing. The disclosure should include whether the fee is mandatory or optional, the basis for the fee, the amount, and the frequency of payment. The landlord should disclose estimated utility costs.

Fee Restrictions: Restrict the types of fees tenants may be charged to the following:

- Application fee (cost restricted by state law to \$25 and can only retain the actual cost for credit check and other expenses arising out of the application)
- Bicycle parking fee (1/6 of any motor parking fee for bike lockers and 1/10 of motor parking fee for any other bicycle parking space)
- Common ownership community penalties
- Internet, technology, cable television (cannot be mandatory)
- Lost key fee (actual cost plus \$25)
- Lock out fee (actual cost)
- Motor vehicle or motorcycle parking fee
- Optional fees (when consented to by tenant)
- Pet fee (refundable deposit and non-refundable monthly fee)
- Secure storage fee (unless within, attached to, or associated with unit)

This creates clear parameters for what fees can and cannot be charged. It would also bring Rockville into alignment with Montgomery County's fee restrictions, without some of the caps placed on certain fees, such as for motor vehicle or motorcycle parking.

Guarantor Requirements: Allow landlords to require a guarantor, but if a guarantor is required, the landlord must provide the reason in writing, creating greater transparency.

Lease Collection: Require landlords to submit standard leases to the City at the time of rental license application or renewal. Currently, a copy of “any type of lease used by any landlord” is supposed to be filed with the City. This change brings the code into alignment with current practice and staff capacity.

Lease Receipt: Reduce the amount of time the landlord must provide the tenant with an executed copy of the lease from 10 days to three business days after its execution so tenants may be assured of their upcoming living situation as soon as reasonably possible.

Lease Review: Require landlords to provide prospective tenants with a copy of their proposed lease at least two (2) days prior to the day of its execution, unless the prospective tenant requests a shorter time. This will allow tenants time to review the lease and its contents before committing to its terms.

Non-Electronic Payments: Require landlords to offer a method for tenants to make payments via non-electronic or web-based methods without being charged any additional fees. Some residents may not have access to the internet and should not be penalized as such.

Meaningful fines: Increase certain fines for violations via a fine resolution to allow for a range of fines up to \$5,000, depending on the violation. Currently, all violations incur a \$100 fine.

Relocation Assistance: Establish a requirement for landlords to provide tenants with relocation assistance when rental units become unfit to occupy or when tenants are displaced due to other qualifying circumstances.

Temporary Relocation Assistance:

- Required when the city deems a rental unit cannot be safely occupied or when a landlord must temporarily recover possession to comply with housing, health, building, fire, or safety laws.
- Does not apply in situations where the displacement is caused by a natural disaster or other incident beyond the control of the landlord.
- Depending on the amount of time the displacement is expected to be, the tenant may be placed in a hotel, provided with alternate comparable housing (including a unit transfer), or given per diem money for temporary housing and expenses.

Permanent Relocation Assistance:

- Required when:
 - The unit will be demolished, redeveloped, substantially renovated, or changed in use, requiring a tenant household earning less than 50% of the area median income to move prior to the end of their lease term.
 - A rental license is suspended or revoked, and the landlord chooses to cease renting the facility.

- The tenant decides to end their tenancy following a temporary relocation has lasted/will last more than six months.
- The city issues an order for permanent relocation because the unit will not be able to be safely occupied for at least six months.
- Not required when the tenant agrees to a lease transfer to a different unit at the same property or when a tenant is legally evicted.
- Relocation payment would include:
 - Security deposit returned in full;
 - Pro rata rent for the remainder of the month;
 - Cash equivalent of three months' fair market rent for a unit of comparable size;
 - All actual reasonable moving and storage costs; and
 - An additional sum for households where at least one tenant is over 62 years of age, handicapped, disabled, or a legally dependent child.

Rent Increase Notice: Remove the requirement for landlords to provide the Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) with rent increase information for individual units. The department would be able to receive the information necessary to monitor general rent increase trends by collecting other data. Landlords would still be required to provide a rent increase notice and information to the applicable tenant.

Repair and Deduct: Allow tenants to make repairs at their own cost and then deduct the cost of repairs from the rent, up to a maximum of two months' rent. This would only be allowed in situations where the landlord has failed to make repairs within a reasonable amount of time (typically 24-28 hours for emergencies and 15-30 days for other repairs).

Tenant Organizing: Prohibit landlords from charging tenant organizations fees for the use of meeting rooms or common areas. This is to support tenant organizations may not have the funds to rent meeting spaces.

Two-Year Lease Terms: Require a landlord to offer tenants a two-year lease term at initial lease signing and renewal. The option of a two-year lease term would provide additional security for tenants because they would potentially be able to lock in rental rates and lease terms for a longer time period, and landlords would have a lower risk of vacancy and tenant turnover. Landlords would still be able to increase rents during a multi-year lease term, as long as there is a provision regarding the option in the lease and a 90-day notice is provided.

Housing is one of the Mayor and Council's five focus areas. In June 2024, a high-level briefing was presented outlining the City's housing crisis and policy landscape. Later in 2024, there were three work sessions on the City's housing strategies, during which updating City Code Chapter 18, Rental Facilities and Landlord-Tenant Relations, was approved by the Mayor and Council as one of the strategies.

Following the adoption of the proposed ordinance, staff will work with the City Attorney's Office to develop and promulgate pertinent regulations. In addition, staff will create a Landlord-Tenant Handbook and other educational materials will allow both landlords and tenants to clearly understand their rights and responsibilities, as well as City resources.

The Mayor and Council requested the adoption of an ordinance to amend Chapter 18 of the Rockville City Code, entitled “Rental Facilities and Landlord-Tenant Relations,” come back at another meeting for further discussion and possible adoption.

FURTHER DISCUSSION

May 18, 2026, Agenda Item 11A.

[Mayor and Council Meeting - May 18, 2026 \(Meeting No. 14-26\)](#)

Timestamp 28:08

12. Worksession

- A. Work Session #4 on Zoning Text Amendment Application TXT2026-00271, for the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite and Map Amendment Application MAP2026-00126, for the Comprehensive Map Amendment; Mayor and Council of Rockville, Applicants - Articles 9-13: Nonconformities, Signs, Historic Preservation, and Plats and Subdivision

This agenda item was moved to the June 1, 2026, meeting.

13. Mock Agenda

Worksession #4 on Zoning Text Amendment Application, Zoning Ordinance Rewrite, and Map Amendment Application was moved to the June 1, 2026, meeting.

14. Old / New Business

There was no Old/New Business.

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:13 p.m.

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