



Approved: 
Attest: 
Approved Meeting No. 09-26
April 13, 2026

City of Rockville

City Hall
111 Maryland Ave
Rockville, MD 20850



Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 23, 2026

6:30 PM

Meeting No. 08-26

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 6:41 p.m. on Monday, March 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, City Clerk/Director of Council Operations, Sara Taylor-Ferrell, and Executive Assistant to the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations Judy Penny.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Monique Ashton and Rockville Girl Scout Troop 33439 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 reported that the City is moving forward with three items: 1) the final design and construction administration award of RedGate Park, 2) the reallocation of undistributed FY26 Community Services and Enrichment Grant Program funds to support the Rockville Housing Enterprise (RHE) Foundation's YouthBuild Program, 3) the New Public Art sculpture design "Shared Passage" to be installed at David Scull Park. All three items are to be awarded under the consent agenda item at tonight's meeting.

6. Boards and Commissions Appointments and Reappointments

A. Board and Commission Appointment and Reappointment

Councilmember Marissa Valeri moved to appoint Latrice Michelle Ware-Allen to the Community Policing Advisory Board to serve an unexpired three-year term until February 1, 2029.

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

Councilmember Kate Fulton moved to appoint Francis Bevington to serve as chair of the Cultural Arts Commission for a one-year term until March 1, 2027.

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

Councilmember David Myles moved to reappoint Edward Reed and Wendy Whitaker to the Education Commission, each to serve a two-year term until April 1, 2028.

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

Councilmember Izola Shaw moved to appoint Emily Stephenson to the Human Rights Commission to serve an unexpired three-year term until October 1, 2028.

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

Councilmember Adam Van Grack moved to appoint Marsha Douma to the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board to serve an unexpired three-year term until July 1, 2027.

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

FURTHER DISCUSSION

March 23, 2026, Agenda Item 6A.

[Mayor and Council Meeting March 23, 2026 No. 08-26](#)

Timestamp 07:36

7. Community Forum

NAME	TOPIC
In-Person Alex Belida	New Mark and the Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendment
In-Person Susan Knowles	New Mark and the Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendment
In-Person Steve Plotkin	New Mark and the Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendment
In-Person Patricia Reber	New Mark and the Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendment
In-Person Michelle Ware-Allen	Energy Endorsement
In-Person Kathleen Kelley	Rehabilitation
In-Person Anusha Dharmasena	Appreciates Living in the City of Rockville
In-Person Dianne Fuchs	The Villages Movement in Rockville
In-Person Ana Astrid Molena	New Mark and the Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendment
In-Person Nancy Pickard	Peerless Rockville Funding
In-Person JD Kumar	Statements
Virtual Jacky Shin	Peerless Rockville AAIP History
In-Person James Hedrick	Rockville Housing Enterprises

FURTHER DISCUSSION

March 23, 2026, Agenda Item 7.

[Mayor and Council Meeting March 23, 2026 No. 08-26](#)

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8. Special Presentations - NONE

9. Consent Agenda

- A. Authorize the City Manager to Execute the City of Rockville Cooperative Agreement with Montgomery County Road Runners, Inc. for the 2026 Suds and Soles 5K Race and Festival.**

- B. Approval of the proposed public artwork to be installed in David Scull Park and granting the City Manager authority to approve the final design in alignment with the community engagement process established for the project.**
- C. Reallocation of undistributed FY26 Community Services and Enrichment Grant Program funds to support RHE Foundation’s YouthBuild Program**
- D. Award and authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with LSG Landscape Architecture, of Tysons, Virginia, for a negotiated value of \$775,000, for RFP #08-25 - RedGate Park Improvements: Concept, Design, and Construction Administration Services.**
- E. Approval of Minutes**

March 2, 2026 (Meeting No. 06-26)
March 9, 2026 (Meeting No. 07-26)

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

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

FURTHER DISCUSSION

March 23, 2026, Agenda Item 9.

[Mayor and Council Meeting March 23, 2026 No. 08-26](#)

Timestamp 38:43

10. Public Hearing

A. FY 2027 Budget Public Hearing #3

Management and Budget Analyst Daniel Chambers provided an overview of the FY2027 Budget for Public Hearing #3.

The FY 2027 proposed operating budget totals \$187.1 million across 10 funds, a 6.6% increase over the current fiscal year. Budget appropriations are made by Governmental Funds and Enterprise Funds. Governmental funds are those through which most governmental functions of the City are financed. The taxpayer-supported General Fund is the largest component, constituting 67.1 percent or \$125.5 million of the total budget. The proposed budget maintains the current property tax rate and assumes that the rate will remain flat throughout the forecast period.

Enterprise funds, including Water, Sewer, Refuse, Parking, and Stormwater Management, account for approximately 29 percent of total appropriations or \$54.5 million and operate in a manner similar to private business enterprises, with expenses recovered through user fees rather than general taxation.

Staff recommends that the Mayor and Council conduct an additional public hearing and keep the record open until April 13, 2026.

There will be one additional public hearing related to the FY 2027 budget on April 13, 2026. In addition to public hearings, the public can submit written comments directly to the Mayor and Council via the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations.

The Public Hearing opened at 7:38 p.m.

NAME
In-Person Karen He – Robotics Center Funding
In Person and Written Comments Diane Fuchs
In-Person Sarah Stewart Chapin - Manager
In-Person Eric Bernard, Rockville Volunteer Fire Department
In Person And Written Comments Wendy Whitaker, Education Commission
In-Person Gabrielle Zwi, Dominic Russoli, Magda Brown, Emily Stephenson, Rockville Human Rights Commission
In-Person James Hedrick, Rockville Housing Enterprises Note: Spoke at Community Forum
In-Person Elaine Koubek, Chair – Rockville Commission on Aging
In-Person Kathleen Kelly
In-Person Lynne Harris - Interfaith Works Board of Directors
In-Person Terri Blandon - Director of Development, Interfaith Works
In-Person Lisa Kehayias-Farhi - Co-Chair Education Commission
In-Person Lisa Baker - Adventure Theatre

NAME
In-Person Nancy Pickard - Peerless Rockville
In-Person Jim Gilchrist – Peerless Rockville
In-Person Kathy Rodgers Collector – Peerless Rockville
In-Person Margaret Magner - Peerless Rockville
In-Person Ralph Bugless
In-Person Dick Stoner – Volunteer - Peerless Rockville
In-Person Eileen McGuckian - Peerless Rockville Historian
In-Person Paul Hillstrom - Peerless Rockville Treasurer
In-Person JD Kumar
In-Person and Written Comments Dianne Fuchs The Villages Movement in Rockville
Virtual Tara Owens - Main Street Executive Director
Virtual Deborah Moore - Funding for the Caregiver Organization of Rockville

The complete testimony of this evening’s speakers can be found in the official Public Hearing record in the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations Office. There being no additional speakers testifying, the Public Hearing closed at 8:56 p.m.

Budget Public Hearing #4, Mayor and Council worksession #3 - CIP, Changes, Final Balancing, and the Close of the community budget priorities survey and public record will be on April 13, 2026. The Adoption of the FY 2027 Budget and Capital Improvements Program will be on May 4, 2026.

Questions from the Mayor and Council were addressed by staff. The Mayor and Council provided their thoughts and comments.

FURTHER DISCUSSION

March 23, 2026, Agenda Item 10A.

[Mayor and Council Meeting March 23, 2026 No. 08-26](#)

Timestamp 51:40

THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL WENT INTO A BRIEF RECESS AT 8:56 PM. THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL RECONVENED AT 9:15 PM.

11. Action Items – NONE

12. Worksession

A. FY 2027 Budget Worksession #2 - Operating Expenditures and Grants

Deputy Chief Financial Officer Kimberly Francisco provided the Mayor and Council with an overview of the FY 2027 Budget Strategic Initiatives and Revenues.

Staff recommended the Mayor and Council review the FY 2027 Proposed Operating Budget and Capital Improvements Program and provide direction as needed.

This worksession provided a high-level overview of the FY 2027 budget, along with greater insight into the revenues, taxes, and fees that support the strategic initiatives for FY 2027.

This was the Mayor and Council's second budget worksession related to the FY 2027 Proposed Operating Budget and Capital Improvements Program. During this worksession, staff briefly reviewed revised fees based on the discussion during the first worksession and covered operating expenditures, including the city's proposed community service and enrichment grant allocations.

Revised development and regulatory fees were prepared in response to concerns raised by the Mayor and Council during the first budget worksession. This modification maintains progress toward aligning fees with actual service delivery costs while providing a more gradual transition for applicants and developers. Based on recent permit activity levels, staff estimates that the revised fee schedule will generate approximately \$684,800 less annually than the originally proposed cost-recovery model.

There are nine categories of expenditures that make up the budget. These are 1) Personnel, 2) Operating, 3) Capital Outlay, 4) Other Expenses, 5) Principal, 6) Interest, 7) Administrative, 8) Transfers out, and 9) Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Transfer. The total is \$185.3 million for FY 2027, an increase of 7.1 percent from FY 2026.

Personnel

The Personnel category of expenditures consisted of regular employee wages, temporary employee wages, overtime, and benefits. This category increased by 5.7% (\$4.9 million) from FY 2026 to FY 2027. The FY 2027 budget equals \$60.3 million for regular employee wages across all funds. The budget includes a 2% cost-of-living adjustment, steps or performance-based increments for all employees, and the net addition of 6.8 FTE (Full-time equivalent) positions, 5.8 FTE in the General Fund and 1.0 FTE in the Water Fund. Regular employee wages made up approximately 67% of the Personnel expenditures category.

The FY 2027 budget equals \$4.8 million for temporary employee wages, a 7.8% increase from FY 2026. The majority of the temporary employees are in the Department of Recreation and Parks. For FY 2027, the City of Rockville will continue to follow Montgomery County's hourly minimum wage rate, which is expected to equal \$18.00 on July 1, 2026. This is a 2% increase from the \$17.65 hourly minimum wage in FY 2026. The overtime budget for FY 2027 equals \$1.8 million, a 20.6% increase from FY 2026 but less than recent actual overtime expenditures. The bulk of this increase (\$200,000) is for Police community support overtime, which is fully offset by an equal increase in community support revenue.

Benefits increased by \$1.4 million or 6.3% from FY 2026. The increase is driven by the addition of FTE positions, increases in health insurance costs, and increases in the annual retirement contributions. City covered benefits for FY 2027 include: allowances, long-term disability, retirement, health and dental insurance (including post-employment benefits), and life insurance.

Operating

The Operating category is made up of contractual services and commodities expenditures. The overall operating budget increased by 4.2% from \$32.9 million to \$34.3 million from FY 2026 to FY 2027.

Contractual services increased by 5.1% or approximately \$1.1 million to \$22.4 million in FY 2027. The contractual services category is mostly comprised of contracts or consultants that support planning, technology, parks, facilities, refuse and recycling processing, and wastewater treatment services. The largest increases from FY 2026 to FY 2027 were for increases in WSSC wastewater treatment costs, which were projected to increase by \$383,000, and for Contract Services - Grounds, which were projected to increase by approximately \$275,490 which is mostly contained within the Special Activities Fund for the Forest and Tree Preservation and Park Maintenance programs.

The overall commodities category increased by 2.6 percent, or \$298,430 across all funds to equal \$11.8 million in FY 2027. This category supports utility costs at city facilities, program and maintenance supplies, new or replacement furniture and equipment, and chemicals for water treatment. The largest increase in this category is for electricity, which is expected to increase by \$311,660 or 10.1 percent. This increase is offset by decreases in chemical costs primarily associated with the city's Water Treatment Plant. The contingency accounts for each of the General Fund, enterprise funds, and Speed Camera Fund are also included in this category. Contingency funding provides support for unanticipated needs during the year and complies with the city's Financial Management Policies.

Capital Outlay

The Capital Outlay category increased by \$905,560 from FY 2026 and equals \$7.4 million for FY 2027. The significant changes include approximately \$1 million in increased vehicle replacements and smaller increases in equipment and computer hardware replacements, offset by decreases in special projects. In addition to the purchased vehicles, the city leases most of the light duty and Police vehicles under the other category.

Other

The Other category, increased by \$2 million to \$23.5 million for FY 2027, consists of fixed asset depreciation in enterprise funds, community services and enrichment grants, vehicle and equipment leases, and Subscription Based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) expenses. The FY 2027 budget includes a \$1.6 million contribution to Rockville Economic Development Inc. (REDI), which includes increased funding for expanded bio-sciences marketing efforts and economic development operations.

Principal and Interest

Principal and interest expenditures, which remained relatively flat at \$2.4 million for FY 2027 consist of budgeted principal payments on governmental (taxpayer-supported) debt service in the Debt Service Fund. The principal payments on enterprise (rate-payer-supported) debt service are not considered an expenditure for budget purposes, but are factored into the working capital projections for the applicable enterprise funds. Interest expenditures, which decreased by \$345,500 to \$3.2 million for FY 2027, consisted of budgeted interest payments on both governmental (taxpayer-supported) and enterprise (ratepayer-supported) debt service.

Administrative

Administrative charges represent centrally budgeted administrative or "overhead" costs. Six of the City's operating funds pay for their share of overhead costs through an annual transfer to the General Fund. The FY 2027 administrative charge revenue equals \$6.1 million based on the city's internal cost allocation model; this is \$471,500 more than what was adopted in FY 2026. A calculation is performed each year to determine the administrative charges.

Transfers Out

The Transfers Out category primarily consisted of transfers from the General Fund to the Parking, Debt Service, Refuse, and Special Activities funds. The Parking Fund transfer will be approximately \$1.2 million in FY 2027, which is \$50,000 less than the adopted FY 2026. It is anticipated that a General Fund transfer will be needed until the debt is repaid in FY 2036. The transfer to the Refuse Fund represents the city's grant contribution to Rockville Housing Enterprises (RHE). RHE, via the City's annual community organization grant program, receives free recycling and refuse pickup at its low-income properties. The Debt Service Fund transfer equals \$3.3 million in FY 2027. This annual transfer is needed to pay down the taxpayer-supported debt that was used to finance general taxpayer-supported capital projects.

General Fund

The General Fund transfer to the Special Activities Fund of \$833,940 subsidizes seven accounts: Art in Public Places, Art in Public Architecture, Housing Opportunities, Farmer's Market Eat Fresh Rockville, Recreation Fund, Senior Assistance, and Rockville Emergency Assistance Program (REAP). The subsidies for these programs promote works of art and help to provide financial assistance for individuals and

families who meet the program requirements. The most significant increase to this transfer is driven by the \$250,000 increase to the Housing Opportunities transfer, and the consolidation of all REAP programming within the Special Activities Fund.

CIP Transfer

City makes a transfer from the General Fund, which is known as the cash or "paygo" contribution to the CIP. The paygo contribution is critical in controlling the City's overall debt and maintaining the City's credit rating.

The FY 2027 budget includes a transfer of \$12.3 million, which is \$2.5 million higher than the FY 2026 adopted transfer. The amount of the paygo contribution impacts both the current fiscal year and future years since the Capital Projects Fund is balanced over a five year period. The FY 2027 budget also recommends a \$4 million allocation of reserves exceeding the target to support the CIP.

Operating Expenditures by Department

Citywide Expenditures by Department are shown in Table 2. The table shows total department budgets with percent changes from Adopted FY 2026 to Proposed FY 2027. The cause for the change in the FY 2027 operating expenditure budget varies by department. Details on the major changes and FY 2027 outlook for each department are highlighted in the budget worksession presentation in *Attachment 1* and are detailed in the *Operating Departments* section of the budget document.

Community Service and Enrichment Grants

Each year the City appropriates funds to support organizations that provide aid to Rockville individuals and families who are experiencing difficulty meeting one or more basic needs related to housing, food, clothing, financial resources, health care, and/or family well-being, as well as to support other community organizations that provide other benefits to the Rockville community.

For FY 2027, the proposed budget reflects recommended grant awards for 49 programs, of which 13 are new. The allocations proposed in the FY 2027 budget total \$1.8 million and reflect a 17.4 percent increase over the FY 2026 base funding levels.

The Mayor and Council will hold Budget Public Hearing #4, and Worksession #3 – CIP, Changes, Final Balancing the FY 2027 Budget, on April 13, 2026. The public can submit written comments directly to the Mayor and Council via the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations. The Community Budget Priorities Survey and Public Record will close on April 13, 2026. Adoption of the FY 2027 Budget and Capital Improvements Program is scheduled for May 4, 2026.

The Mayor and Council provided their thoughts, comments, and feedback.

FURTHER DISCUSSION

March 23, 2026, Agenda Item 12A.

[Mayor and Council Meeting March 23, 2026 No. 08-26](#)

Timestamp 1:40:16

B. Work Session #1: Discussion and Direction on Planning Commission Recommendations on Zoning Text Amendment TXT2026-00271, the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite and Map Amendment MAP2026-00126, the Comprehensive Zoning Map Amendment; Mayor and Council of Rockville, Applicants

Worksession was moved to future date.

13. Mock Agenda

There were no changes to the Mock Agenda.

14. Old / New Business

Mayor and Council reminded the Rockville community that the Montgomery County Board of Education will hold an important discussion regarding schools in the City of Rockville this week, and encouraged the community to send letters to the Board, testify at the meeting, or watch the proceedings.

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:03 a.m.

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