

**City of Rockville
Leadership Planning Team Meeting Notes
September 29, 2025**

Meeting Participants:

Mayor Ashton
Councilmember Fulton
Councilmember Jackson
Councilmember Shaw
Councilmember Valeri
Councilmember Van Grack
Jeff Mihelich, City Manager
Robert Dawson, City Attorney
Sara Taylor-Ferrell, City Clerk/Director of Council Operations
Barack Matite, Deputy City Manager
Dave Gottesman, Assistant City Manager
Judy Penny, Executive Assistant to the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations

Agenda Review

September 29, 2025 Meeting Agenda

Comment: CM Valeri identified some possible confusion about the city's legislative process, then walked through it starting with the body's strategic retreat, and noting that the electeds do not write policies, ordinances, or resolutions themselves, rather that is done by staff in order to get broad discussion from the body and possible revisions, and pointing out that electeds do not influence staff in this work; she then proposed pulling agenda item 11, saying that it is not yet ready to move forward.

Comment: CM Van Grack supports removing item 11 as well.

Comment: CM Shaw also supports removing item 11, saying it needs more time and should not be rushed; adding that we need to define "decorum" so that it does not silence political dissent, adding that the electeds can provide direction to staff, can write legislation, and can work with staff on it.

Comment: CM Jackson agrees on removing item 11 because it was added late to the agenda and there is not enough time for the public to review and understand it; he noted there are three pieces to it, the council piece, the staff piece, and the rules of decorum piece, adding that people should feel comfortable expressing themselves.

Comment: City Manager Mihelich says he will remove item 11 and work with the CC/DCO to put it on the 6-month calendar

Comment: Mayor Ashton said we must protect 1st Amendment Rights and ensure all are comfortable; and asked that staff look at models at work in other jurisdictions plus consult with the Human Rights Commission on the matter.

Comment: CM Fulton agrees to remove item 11 to allow time for resident feedback, adding that we should err on protecting as much speech as possible.

Comment: CM Shaw said that the most important issues to residents have been removed or censored from the agenda, and that decorum is not the biggest issue for our residents in a time of increasing unemployment in the region.

Comment: City Manager Mihelich noted that the King Farm Farmstead item and the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite item will both come back before the body after their feedback.

Comment: Mayor Ashton said she may bring up the city's work to support residents, grantees, and others in light of the possible federal government shutdown (E.g. easing back on utility shutoffs, etc.)

Response: City Manager Mihelich suggested discussing this issue in their upcoming one-on-one meetings.

October 6, 2026 Meeting Agenda

Comment: City Clerk Taylor-Ferrell noted that there will be some Board and Commission appointments added to the agenda.

Comment: Mayor Ashton clarified that the Public Safety item is specific to RCPD's portion of a larger public safety continuum.

Response: City Manager Mihelich directed Associate City Manager Linda Moran to work with the City Clerk to make that adjustment to the agenda.

Review and Comment on the Six Month Agenda Planning Calendar

November 10, 2025 Meeting

Comment: City Manager Mihelich clarified the intent of the Residential Inspection item.

Comment: Mayor Ashton asked if items such as the EV Readiness Plan are supposed to be coming back to the body in the future.