

GTCC

greater timonium community council

9B West Ridgely Road, Box 276, Timonium MD 21093

www.gtccinc.org

Vol. XVII, No. 4
September 2025

President: Eric Rockel; Vice President: Kathleen Beadell; Secretary: vacant;
Treasurer: Tina Kline; Directors: Lisa Baldanza, Ashley Richardson, Pam Burke
Gregg DeHoff, Doug Dunlap

Our next GTCC General Meeting
Is September 10th at the Vista Room

President's Corner

That Inspector General's Re-Appointment Mess

If I wanted to write a script on how not to appoint an Inspector General for Baltimore County, I probably would have followed the actions of County Executive Kathy Klausmeier in the events that have transpired over the last few months. Klausmeier's refusal to talk directly with the press, and answer their questions, only added to the intrigue, and helped fuel the public's skepticism.

Kelly Madigan had served in the post of Inspector General since the position was created and she had hoped to serve for a second term. She had received high marks for her efforts during her first term in rooting out waste, fraud and abuse in county government. For example, near the end of 2023, the Association of Inspector Generals, a national organization headquartered in New York, recognized her for leading "an incredible organization." That national association went on to write that "the sheer size of the governmental operations that your office oversees, and your office's jurisdiction and responsibility are unparalleled ...", very lofty praise indeed. Yet she had ruffled some feathers during her first term in office, including those of former County Executive John Olszewski, Jr., who introduced legislation to curtail the Inspector General's powers, only to find that the County Council would not support that legislation, and Councilman Julian Jones, whose office was examined twice by Madigan and her staff.

Madigan claims she sent several emails to the County Executive that expressed Madigan's interest in continuing on in the position, but she did not meet face-to-face with Mrs. Klausmeier until May of this year. At that meeting the County Executive handed her a letter stating that Madigan would not be reappointed, and shortly thereafter the County advertised for applicants to fill the position.

Kelly Madigan did not go quietly into the night after learning of Klausmeier's decision. Madigan applied for the opening as Inspector General and she conducted a number of interviews to call attention to her efforts over the last four years. In contrast, Klausmeier kept the lowest of profiles, refusing to conduct any press interviews about the Inspector General's Office.

The fact that Madigan publicly campaigned to keep her job as Inspector General did not sit well with one former County official, John Hohman, who served as Fire Chief from 2000 to 2017. Hohman wrote in a Baltimore Sun commentary that Madigan waged "an extraordinary public relations and political campaign ...to prevent consideration of an otherwise highly qualified candidate so she could keep her job." Hohman went on to write in his commentary that "Madigan now remains in office, at least partially due to the political debt she demanded and received from these council members." In other words, Hohman felt that Madigan should have remained silent and accepted that the County Executive chose another candidate. I totally reject Hohman's line of thinking. First, I heard many, but not all, of Madigan's interviews during this period and I never heard her even insinuate, let alone come out and say, that the County Council owed loyalty to her. Most of the interview time was spent promoting the work she had done while in office. What's the matter with calling attention to your accomplishments? Nothing!! In fact, a basic trait of all human beings is the effort for self-preservation, and Hohman ignores that basic emotion in his critique.

Hohman's defense of the County Executive's search process was not shared by Common Cause of Maryland. The executive director of that organization stated the County's lack of transparency during the search process "has destroyed public trust in the Inspector General's office." The Association of Inspectors General also condemned the selection process as being rife with conflicts of interest.

In the end a three-person panel that included the County Executive chose Khadija E, Walker to fill the position of Inspector General. Ms. Walker had over 22 years of experience as an auditor working in the federal government, including time at the EPA, where she unearthed waste and abuse in several localities water systems. But Ms. Walker could not win the support of the majority of the County Council, who needed to confirm the appointment. Only Julian Jones and Pat Young voted for Ms. Walker.

Klausmeier indicated that she would keep Ms. Madigan in office until the new County Executive is sworn into office. Thus, ending a very embarrassing attempt to replace Kelly Madigan.

From my perspective Khadija Walker was a qualified candidate, but was she the most qualified candidate? I think not. Kelly Madigan had already demonstrated that she was working at a high level in the position, and there was no evidence that Ms. Walker would exceed the efforts of Ms. Madigan. In addition, Ms. Walker did not have the benefit of a law degree, not a

disqualifier for the position, but Madigan did hold a law degree. The people of Baltimore County experienced a win in this case, but the process left much to be desired. Just this week the County Council approved a resolution that will allow the voters, in 2026, to decide if a selection board will be the mechanism by which future Inspectors General are chosen.

* * * * *

Irrespective of my support for Ms. Madigan, I heard some troubling allegations that if true need the Office of Inspector General to re-examine this situation. Former County Administrative Officer, Fred Homan, testified at a recent Council work session that a former county employee, now retired, had abused the County’s sick leave policy by taking more than 200 continuous sick leave days before retiring. These 200 plus days allowed the employee to retire with higher pension benefits than he would otherwise qualify to receive, according to Homan. What makes matters worse is that both personnel in the Office of Management and Budget and the former County Administrative Officer, Stacey Rogers, were aware of this irregularity and let it continue per Homan’s testimony. Mr. Homan also said that the Office of Inspector General’s office was made aware of this situation but had chosen to not pursue an investigation. If Mr. Homan’s story is correct, I would urge the Inspector General’s Office to re-examine the facts in this case and take any appropriate action.

Eric Rockel

Hearing Officer Approves Shawan Road Development

An Administrative Law Judge approved the proposed townhouse development to be located on the site of the former Delta Hotel by Marriott on Shawan Road in Hunt Valley. The 392-bed hotel will be torn down and replaced by 290-unit townhome development, 122 of which will be conventional townhomes and 168 units will be “stacked” townhomes, wherein one unit sits atop another.

The street pattern for the development will be a traditional grid pattern, with private alley ways that lead to individual garages for each unit. The development will also contain a central gathering space, or community green space, that is roughly 30,500 square feet in size. There was no specific time frame mentioned for the project, but the development will be constructed by Keelty Homes and the Lennar Corporation.

Administrative Law Judge Derek Baumgardner did not place any special conditions on the approval of the project, other than that the project comply with all of the comments and findings from the County’s reviewing agencies.

Broadmead Announces Expansion Plans

Broadmead Inc., the retirement community operator, announced that it has acquired three office buildings on Ridgebrook Road in Sparks, with hopes to obtain approval from the

Maryland Department of Aging to convert the property into an independent living facility for seniors. The property was once the headquarters of Integrated Health Services, a nursing home chain, and more recently the property was converted into multi-tenant office space. In total the sale creates 220,000 square feet of space that Broadmead could use.

In addition to the individual living units, Broadmead plans to create wellness space, dining venues and amenities in the facility. The parcel they bought also provides additional space for expansion in the future, beyond the currently announced plans.

Recent census data reports that Baltimore County already contains nearly 19% of its population who are seniors, and that number is expected to rise to over 20% by 2030.

Lutherville Station Update

Councilman Wade Kach wants to end the stalemate over the redevelopment of Lutherville Station, a nearly thirteen-acre parcel at the end of West Ridgely Road, adjacent to the light rail stop. Over the past several years, the developer of this project has suggested multi-family housing proposals of 400, 450 and 560 apartment units during a time when the property was not zoned for multi-family development, as well as a more recent proposal for up to 80 townhomes and 380 apartment units after the property was re-zoned to DR 16 in 2024. Each of these proposals drew a great deal of skepticism from communities near the property.

Kach is concerned that if the stalemate is not overcome, officials at the State, and even the local level, will introduce legislation and/or policies that will ignore the community's viewpoint and lessen his input on what is appropriate redevelopment of the property. Governor Moore's 2024 Affordable Housing legislation offers just one example where State law has superseded local controls. Under that law, local zoning density can be increased by thirty percent if a property is within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of a light rail station and the property includes at least fifteen percent of the units that are affordable. Kach is concerned that more laws like that will be passed in the future.

Councilman Kach has suggested that the best way to reach a compromise is thru the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process. Under this development procedure, the developer would submit a documented site plan and application that would have to be approved by the County Council, then be further scrutinized under the County's normal development process, including approval at a Hearing Officer's Hearing. PUDs are allowed to include both residential and/or commercial uses on one property, provided that the project is considered for any detrimental impacts.

At this point in time the developer has submitted a new, different plan for the property. Rather than raze the existing buildings, the existing buildings would be stripped and reused, and some new construction would also take place on the property. Part of the existing building would be re-purposed for apartments, and a new four-story apartment building would be constructed to the north of the existing building. The current part of the buildings oriented towards West

Ridgely Road, as well as those buildings across from the private road next to the Kohl's building would be used for commercial/retail purposes, and they too would undergo a major exterior facelift. Finally, a new building would be constructed in the southeast corner of the property, oriented off of West Ridgely Road, that would be two stories tall. At least one floor of that new building would be a restaurant use.

Councilman Kach is asking that the adjacent community groups react to this new plan by October. He would then hope that any divergent opinions could be negotiated amongst the community groups, but if compromises cannot be reached, he will come up with what he believes are the most responsible compromises for all parties concerned, both the developer and the communities.

At our next GTCC meeting we will have plans of what the developer proposes to show the audience, and we will discuss the pro's and con's of many aspects of this project.

Evaluating Governor Moore

Anirban Basu is no stranger to answering tough questions. Since he founded the Sage Policy Group in 2004, he has answered many sensitive and complex questions about economics and governmental affairs in his career. Twice named one of Maryland's fifty most influential people, Dr. Basu currently lectures at Goucher College and his firm, the Sage Policy Group, provides consulting services to many private and public agencies.

So, when Basu wrote a commentary piece for the Baltimore Sun entitled "Our Country's Most Disappointing Governor", it may have caught many readers by surprise. The governor he was referring to is Wes Moore, and given that Maryland is a deeply Democratic state, many readers may have been skeptical of the pronouncement.

Dr. Basu did recognize that Mr. Moore held a net approval rating of 31, according to Morning Consult as of mid-July. That net approval rating means that the number of voters who approved of Gov. Moore's performance exceeded the number who disapproved by 31 percentage points.

Among the failings of Governor Moore for Dr. Basu was the fact that for the first time since 1973 Maryland saw its bond rating slip from AAA to AA1. That means that when the state goes to sell bonds on the open market buyers will demand a higher interest rate than if the state had retained its AAA rating. The commentary bemoaned that Governor Moore did not accept any responsibility for the downgrade, rather he placed the blame on Donald Trump. Yet as Dr. Basu pointed out, Maryland was warned of the possible downgrade by Moody's Investor Services some six months before Trump took office.

Another negative the commentary pointed out was the fact that Maryland enjoyed a budget surplus when Gov. Moore took office, but after two budgets under Moore's leadership the

state faced a \$3.3 billion fiscal shortfall. As a result, Maryland chose to raise taxes on its citizens by \$1.6 billion.

Basu also took aim at the problems with Maryland's juvenile justice system, including the controversial leadership of Vincent Schiraldi, Moore's appointee to the juvenile services department, who recently resigned, and a recent Sun report that advised the governor's office and several state agencies do not have a handle on how much money is given out to non-profit organizations and how that money is spent by the non-profits.

Basu concluded his commentary by saying "While it may be unfair to say that Moore is America's worst governor, an argument could be easily made that he is its most disappointing."

Ranking Baltimore County's Public High Schools

Baltimore County's Public Schools system is the nation's 22nd largest system and provides education to a wide variety of students from diverse backgrounds. *U.S. News & World Report* evaluates the nation's high schools each year, and we now can see how Baltimore County schools compare with others around the state.

U.S. News evaluated the following factors in coming up with their rankings: college readiness (30% of the score), state assessment proficiency (20%), state assessment performance (20%), underserved student performance (10%), college curriculum breadth (10%) and graduation rate (10%).

The magazine also made a special point of highlighting high schools that focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Eastern Technical High and Western Technical were the first and fifth, respectively, ranking in the entire state of Maryland, and Dulaney High School also made the list as one of the top twelve STEM schools in the state.

As far as overall ranking of high schools, below is the listing of local schools in our Greater Timonium area and just beyond:

Dulaney H.S.: #36 in the state; Towson H.S.: #48 in the state

Herford H.S.: #26 in the state; Carver Center for the Arts: #24 in the state

Loch Raven H.S.: #137 in the state

BCPS Teachers Settle Pay Dispute with System

Baltimore County teachers and the school system ended the strange saga of "I thought we had a deal" over this summer in response to teacher salaries. When the deal was first reached in November of 2023, the agreement was that salaries would increase by 3% in the first year and by

5% in following years. But before the second-year salary increase could start, Superintendent Myriam Rogers announced that the school’s budget prevented it from providing the 5% increase. In total, it would have cost the school system \$61 million to fund the increases for the teachers and the other bargaining units. Four of the five unions agreed to accept a lesser amount of a 2.75% raise, but the teacher’s bargaining unit refused to accept that compromise.

In late July the teachers and the system reached a compromise by agreeing to a 3.05% increase. However, part of that increase will not start until September 20, and the rest of the increase becomes effective in January. What motivated the school system to agree to the 5% raise in the first place, when they knew that the money may not be available, has never fully been answered.

State Board Rescinds Censure

Maryland’s State Board of Education has rescinded the censure placed on Baltimore County School Board member Maggie Litz Domanowski, who had been censured by the local board for “rude and disrespectful conduct toward the Superintendent.” Ms. Domanowski was censured in March concerning her conduct at a January budget hearing by the local board. She appealed that censure to the State Board of Education.

In their finding, the State Board wrote that “ the video captures Appellant (Ms. Domanowski) asking legitimate questions about the budget in a calm and professional manner during her limited and allotted time.”

After the reversal, fellow School Board member, Julie Henn, wrote that “she should never have been silenced for looking out for the public good- and now, that wrong has been made right.”

County Council Publishes “Councilmanic Redistricting Map”

After holding its own public hearing, as well as receiving a final report and recommendation from the 2025 Baltimore County Councilmanic Redistricting Commission, which included a recommended Council district map, the Baltimore County Council has produced its own map that will be considered and voted upon before October 1.

To view the Council’s map, please use the following link [Bill 55-25 | Baltimore County Council - Councilmanic Redistricting](#).

In terms of the map’s impact on the GTCC’s membership area, regardless of what shape the Council districts ultimately resemble, any association eligible for membership in the GTCC by reason of their geographic location will remain a member no matter how the Council districts are shaped. The map that the Council has produced would result in communities situated on

West Seminary Avenue, west of I-83, to be situated in a new Council district (the Pikesville district) under the Council's proposed map. In addition, the communities of the original Mays Chapel and Mays Chapel North would also be moved to that same district as the West Seminary Avenue communities.

The Impact of the “Big Beautiful Bill” On your Taxes

Recently the Kiplinger Retirement Report ran a story on the changes to the federal tax picture as a result of President Trump's “Big Beautiful Bill,” signed into law this past July. As with any information related to your own tax perspective, you should consult with a tax professional to confirm the impacts on your specific situation, but below are the highpoints from this recent Kiplinger's article:

Income tax rates will stay the same from last year, with rates at 10%, 12%, 22%, 24%, 32%, 35% and 37%, depending on your income level. Long term capital gains rates also remain the same.

The basic standard deduction increased by \$1,500 for joint filers, \$750 for single filers and \$1,125 for heads of households. If you are 65 or older, you also get a deduction of \$3,200 for joint filers and \$2,000 more for singles and head of household who are 65 or older.

Trump promised that social security benefits would be tax free under this bill, but that did not happen when the dust settled. In the place of this promise is a new deduction for persons 65 and older in the amount of \$6,000, or \$12,000 on a joint return if both members are over 65. This deduction is available to taxpayers who either claim the standard deduction or those who itemize. However, this deduction is only temporary, taking effect on the 2025 tax return and ending after 2028. Additionally, the deduction starts to phase out on joint returns above \$150,000 and for single returns above \$75,000.

State and local tax deductions, if you itemize, had been limited to \$10,000 a year, but beginning in 2025 and running through 2029, the State and local tax deduction will rise to a maximum of \$40,000. It will return to \$10,000 in 2030. Additionally, this deduction will begin to phase out if your modified adjusted gross income is over \$500,000.

Filers who do not itemize on Schedule A can deduct up to \$1,000 of charitable cash donations each year, beginning in the 2026 tax return. The amount is \$2,000 for joint filers.

If part of your income is the result of tips, you can deduct up to \$25,000 in qualified tips, and both itemizers and nonitemizers are eligible. Trump also promised deductions on overtime compensation, and up to \$12,500 is eligible in the overtime category. However, Kiplinger's warns that in both of these categories there will be lots of rules, guardrails and technicalities involved. So, a tax professional should guide you if income falls into these two categories.

Many of the “clean energy” tax breaks that were enacted as part of the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act under the Biden administration are being rolled back. The up-to-\$7,500 credit for

buying an electric vehicle expires on EVs purchased after September 30, 2025. The 30% residential clean energy credit for people who install solar panels in their homes, or other green energy alternatives, such as wind or geothermal energy, will end at years end, as will the smaller tax credits for energy efficient exterior doors, windows, and the like.

See a professional to understand the full ramifications on your own tax situation.

GTCC Dues

A number of associations have not paid their GTCC dues for 2025. A copy of the membership form can be found at the following link: [2025-Membership-Form-Fall-Final.pdf](https://www.gtcc.org/2025-Membership-Form-Fall-Final.pdf)

Please complete this form and pay the dues at your association's convenience.

Calendar of Events

Enjoy the final weekend of the Maryland State Fair from September 4-7. In a separate ticketed event you can enjoy the music of the Marshall Tucker Band, September 5, or Maddox Batson, September 6.

- 1.) Maryland RV Show, Sept. 12-14, 10AM to 6PM, Maryland State Fair (MSF)
- 2.) Reptile & Exotic Animal Show, Sept. 20, 9AM-4PM; Sept. 21, 10AM to 4PM, MSF, Exhibition Hall
- 3.) Trifecta Music & Food Truck Festival, Sept. 20, starting at 11 AM, MSF
- 4.) Stamp & Coin Show, Oct. 4, 9AM to 4PM, MSF, Mosner Miller Bldg.
- 5.) Gun Show, Oct. 4, 9AM to 4 PM; Oct. 5, 9AM to 3PM, MSF, Exhibition Hall
- 6.) Stella Maris 41st Annual Crab Feast & Day of Giving, Oct. 12, 1PM, MSF. Exhibition Hall
- 7.) Fall Home, Garden & Craft Show, Oct. 17,18 & 19, 10AM to 6 PM, MSF, Cow Palace
- 8.) Spicy Con- All things Hot Sauce and Firey Flavors, Oct 18, MSF, Exhibition Hall
- 9.) Children's Consignment Sale, Oct. 24,25 & 26, MSF, 4H/Home Arts Bldg.
- 10.) Train Show, Oct. 24, 9AM to 5PM; Oct. 25, 9AM to 3PM, MSF, Cow Palace
- 11.) Power of Age Expo by Balt. Co. Dept. of Aging, Oct. 29, 9AM to 6PM, MSF, Cow Palace

Please join the GTCC General Meeting on September 10, starting at 7 PM, to be held in the Vista Room of the Maryland State Fair.

Our speakers will include former State Senator, Jim Brochin, and Riley Sullivan, the new area planner from the Planning Department. In addition, we will update you on the newest plan for Lutherville Station and other news that impacts the Greater Timonium area.