

GTCC

greater timonium community council

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www.gtccinc.org

Vol. XVIII, No. 3

May 2026

President: Kathleen Beadell; Vice President: Eric Rockel; Secretary: Scott Taylor;
Treasurer: vacant; Directors: Lisa Baldanza, Ashley Richardson, Pam Burke, Gregg DeHoff, Doug Dunlap, and Cathy Norton

*Please join us for our next General Meeting on May 13th at the Vista Room
On the Maryland State Fairgrounds, starting at 7 PM. See page 9 of this newsletter for
details*

**Congratulations to Cockeysville native, Commander Reid Wiseman, and the three other
brave astronauts who flew on the Artemis II mission to the Moon !!!**

Vice President's Message:

It's Homework Time

No, it is not homework time for your children, or your grandchildren, that headline is directed towards you, the registered voter. We have entered into the election season, and whether the primaries or the general election, all voters need to learn about the candidates we are being asked to elect. The most effective democracies are ones where the electorate is informed about their ballot choices. So, put in some homework time to go out to listen to candidates speak in person, and check out each candidate's website to learn about their background and to understand what issues those candidates believe are important. The decisions you make will impact our lives for the coming four years, let us hope you are part of an informed electorate!

Eric Rockel

County's Budget Process in Full Swing

County Executive Kathy Klausmeier released the FY 2027 Budget Message to the County Council on April 16, 2026. As always is the case, the Executive's message featured emphasis on Public Safety and Education, but she also featured remarks on two areas that usually do not receive much fanfare, the Arts and the Permitting Process. Executive Klausmeier acknowledged that the arts are near and dear to her heart, and she encouraged residents to support community gems like the Holt Park for the Arts, in Overlea, or the Natural History Museum, also in Overlea. She also encouraged all residents to take part in celebrations this summer for the nation's 250th anniversary, much like citizens did for the Bicentennial in 1976. In support of the arts, Klausmeier's budget includes \$3 million for the art center development at the Pikesville Armory, and \$3.7 million in funding for regional and local art organizations. With

respect to the Permitting process, the County Executive said that no matter where she went, people expressed frustration with the permit process. From business owners trying to open their doors for the first time, to developers trying to obtain grading or building permits, to citizens attempting to build a deck, the permitting process just was not operating efficiently. So, the Executive has initiated Baltimore County BUILDS to make the process clearer, faster and more user friendly. She acknowledged that this revamp would take some time to fix, but she is committed to making it happen.

Our public schools will receive a boost of \$44.5 million dollars more than spent in last year's budget, which represents a 4.5% increase over the maintenance of effort. Similarly, the community college system will receive \$2.9 million over maintenance of effort. The biggest takeaway in the public-school funding is that the County Executive added \$9.3 million more than submitted by the public schools so that staffing ratios in elementary schools will remain the same as last year. Initially, the school system had projected that student to teacher ratios would increase. In the area of special education, the system will be able to add 20 new positions thru the infusion of \$2.6 million in new funding. All in all, public schools, the community college system, and the library system account for 56.1% of the operating budget.

However, the Teachers Association of Baltimore County (TABCO) are already demanding that the County add more money to the budget. Although elementary school staffing will not be reduced, TABCO is claiming that under the current budget proposal more than 400 positions will be lost in middle and high schools as a result of retirements that won't be filled and the natural attrition that occurs each year.

By contrast, public safety represents 11.4% of the operating budget. This coming year will include an additional \$9 million for a new Police Support Operations Division facility, as well as the construction of a new precinct station for the Wilkens Avenue precinct. There will be 12 new battalion chief positions added to the Fire Department and additional funding to expand medic emergency coverage at the volunteer fire companies.

In total, the government-wide operating budget for FY 2027 comes to a little over \$5.47 billion. That figure includes all county tax revenue, plus revenue received from the state and federal governments. Compared to 2026, the FY 2027 budget has increased by 4.4%. Generally speaking, the property tax revenue represents 47.3% of the incoming local revenue. Income taxes on the local level represent 39.6% of the income, and sales and service taxes account for 6.8 %. All other sources of revenue represent about 6% of the income. In addition, monies from the State of Maryland, for education and library purposes, represent almost \$1.5 billion.

Moving forward, the County Council held a public budget hearing on April 28, followed by hearings for individual departments from May 5 to May 14. Some of the more noteworthy dates for the individual departments include May 7 at 2:30 for the Police Dept., May 12 at 3:00 for the Department of Public Works and Transportation, and May 14 at 3:00 for Baltimore County Public Schools. The County Council will vote to adopt the budget is May 21 at 10:00 AM.

UMBC Polls Reveal Citizens' Frustration

Two polls conducted by the UMBC Institute of Politics demonstrate that respondents are disappointed with the general state of the economy in Maryland and Baltimore County, as well as the elected leadership.

The first of the polls was conducted on March 17 and 22 from a sample size of 804 respondents. That poll revealed that Governor Moore had an approval rating of only 48%, while 42% of those surveyed said they disapproved of the job he was doing. That approval rating is down from the 54% who approved of Moore's rating in October 2024. The slip in ratings seems to be tied to the cost of living rising for most who responded to the survey. A separate poll conducted by Gonzales Research and Media Services also demonstrated that Moore's approval rating has been slipping.

Mileah Kromer, the director of the UMBC institute, said the overall sentiment from the respondents was frustration, distrust and anger over the state of the economy. When things are going well the governor gets oversized credit, but when things are not good the governor also gets a share of the blame, remarked Kromer. People also recognize that when Governor Moore was introduced at a recent Baltimore Orioles game, the overall reaction from the crowd was a chorus of "boos," not a hail of cheers.

The second poll conducted by UMBC was released the week of April 27, and it concentrated on the reactions of Baltimore County and Baltimore City residents to their respective jurisdictions. In total, 602 residents from the county participated in the poll. Only 63% of county respondents said they trusted their local government, and only 62% of city residents trusted their government. Kromer remarked that trust in local government is not where it should be, and she said that comparable results were registered in a poll a year ago. She indicated that other polls demonstrate that citizens trust their local government more than they do state and/or federal governments. The poll also found that only 31% of county respondents felt their jurisdiction was headed in the right direction; whereas 41% of city residents felt their government was headed in the right direction. The poll also found that more than 80% of those polled from each jurisdiction said that higher energy costs was the biggest challenge for their pocketbooks.

In other issues highlighted in this poll, the majority of county residents, 55%, doubted that the Key Bridge would be completed by 2030, as promised by Governor Moore. This poll question came before the State announced that the contract with the current contractor for the bridge was ending on April 28. On the issues of taxes and fees being paid by county residents, 69% of the respondents felt the amount of taxes and fees was too high. In regard to the actions and operations of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, county residents were close to equally divided- 49% felt ICE had gone too far; while 46% felt ICE had acted appropriately or not strong enough.

Education News and Notes

The Board of Education has selected Ray and Associates, LLC to assist in a national search for a new superintendent for the school system. Ray and Associates was chosen from

among seven firms that applied for the consultancy position, and it will be paid \$100,000 for their services. “The firm has more than 45 years of experience and has participated in hundreds of superintendent searches, many for large and diverse school systems like BCPS,” said Jane Lichter, chair of the Board of Education.

The need for a new superintendent came after current head, Dr. Myriam Rogers, unexpectedly announced that she would be retiring on July 1, 2026.

The Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education has announced that 19 Baltimore County Public Schools have earned Maryland Green School status for 2026. With this announcement, the number of Maryland Green Schools in the county’s system now rises to a total of 65. Schools receiving this status need to demonstrate and document “a continuous effort to integrate sustainable environmental management practices, environmental education curriculum, professional development and community engagement into their daily operations.” The award signifies their commitment to developing “stewards of the earth.” Recertification of the schools takes place every four years.

For 2026, Lutherville Laboratory and Western School of Technology and Environmental Science earned the Sustainable Silver School designation, the program’s highest honor. Timonium Elementary earned a Sustainable Bronze School designation, the second level of rating. Congratulations to the high achievers.

General Assembly Concludes the 446th Session

The Maryland General Assembly ended its session on April 13, 2026, and as is typically the case the Democrat-members of the Assembly touted the many accomplishments of their ninety days together, while the Republicans recounted the many lost opportunities of the session. Despite the partisan differences this session examined ways to reduce the rising utility costs that impact all Marylanders, responded to efforts of the Trump administration to tighten immigration enforcement, sought to craft a state budget without increasing new taxes or new fees and sought to improve the juvenile justice system after many complaints of its shortcomings.

One measure aimed at reducing energy costs was the Utility Relief Act of 2026. Among the measures in this law are reforms in how electric rates are set, efforts to ensure that customers rates are not paying for excessive executive compensation at the utility companies, requiring that data centers cover their own infrastructure costs rather than allowing all ratepayers to shoulder those costs, reducing the Empower Maryland charges on every consumers bill, even though the Empower program was not eliminated, and saving ratepayers an estimated amount of \$150 a year on average. This bill also placed restrictions on multi-year rate plans that is expected to lower pressure on rates for electricity and gas. The Empower Maryland program is also seeing its greenhouse gas emissions targets reduced for each year from 2027 until 2035.

Yet Republican legislators claim that this energy legislation fell far short of providing substantial solutions to Maryland’s energy problems. They claim that Maryland is still placing too much reliance on solar and wind power projects, which by their very nature operate

intermittently. The Republicans were also disappointed that the session did not propose permitting amendments to allow nuclear energy to play a larger role as an energy source. They also argue that the closing of seven power plants over the last fifteen years, plus the eventual closing of the Brandon Shores plant, has made the state less self-sufficient and more susceptible to higher costs from outside the state.

Both the State's Budget Bill and the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act closed an estimated budget shortfall thru a combination of fund transfers, cuts and exchanging bonds for cash. General Fund spending decreased by \$91 million compared with the prior fiscal year. Although the Rainy-Day Fund was preserved, it was reduced in size to meet the shortfall. The budget did not cut the funding for the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, with state support totaling \$10.1 billion for local public-school systems. We will see whether the State will need to increase taxes and fees during the next legislative session, but for this election year all remains quiet.

In response to the Trump administration's immigration crackdown, the state legislature passed two bills to counteract the crackdown- HB 444 and SB 791. HB 444 prohibits local law enforcement agencies from entering into 287(g) agreements that deputize local officers to carry out immigration control efforts. Counties with existing agreements with the federal government will be required to terminate those agreements. This bill has already received much pushback from certain local sheriffs, including Carroll and Frederick counties. They question the wisdom of extinguishing the 287 (g) agreements. The companion SB 791, the Community Trust Act, would prohibit local correctional facilities from detaining an individual unless the federal agents have a valid judicial warrant. Critics point out that this will force ICE agents to arrest immigrants on the streets, a potentially more dangerous setting than in a local detention facility.

In the area of criminal justice, the General Assembly passed SB 323, the Youth Charging Reform Act. This law will lower the number of offenses in which 16- and 17-year-olds can be charged as adults, and it also removes first-degree assault and some firearms violations from the adult violations list. The bill also broadened the opportunities to offer rehabilitation services for young people.

Local delegates touted bills that they sponsored that will be enacted into law. Delegate Dana Stein stated that five bills he sponsored will make it into law, including HB 182/SB 237, which requires that presidential electors must vote for the candidate that the majority of voters in the state supported, or those electors can be replaced, and their vote vacated. HB 848 preserves the use of "valet trash" collection for the elderly and disabled in multi-family housing complexes. This bill aligns the requirements of the state's fire code with this valet collection method. HB 862/SB 156 deals with the required crew size on freight trains that also share tracks with high-speed passenger rail trains, and HB 925/SB 719 addresses the application of biosolids containing PFAS chemicals. These PFAS chemicals can be toxic, and Delegate Stein has been one of the loudest voices in the Assembly in trying to control the use of PFAS chemicals. Delegate Michele Guyton also saw bills that she sponsored enacted by the General Assembly. HB 450/SB 294, sponsored by Guyton in the House, protects the dignity and identity of survivors of sexual assault and stalking. HB 325 provides more representation to students with disabilities on the Professional Standards and Teaching Education Board. She also authored a

bill, HB 452, that gives veterinarians more flexibility to use medical cannabis as a treatment for pets. Finally, the intent of her bill to assist riders with disabilities on MARC trains and MTA buses was incorporated as part of the budget language for MDOT, which will require that this department have audible and visual displays so that riders with disabilities have more information as they use these transit systems.

MDOT Releases Baltimore Region Transit Oriented Development Strategy

As Governor Moore touts the benefits of transit-oriented- development, including a recent event at the Rogers Avenue heavy rail station stop, the Maryland Department of Transportation has released a strategy report for the Baltimore region. Although the title page of this report states it is a 2026 product, the footer on most pages of this sixty-three-page product carries the year 2025. The report was produced after a series of workshops with local officials from Baltimore County, Baltimore City and Anne Arundel County.

The report examines all of the financial incentives that the state offers to entice transit-oriented development, such as tax increment financing, enterprise zones, state loans and certain land use measures. The report also provides some case studies on mixed use development in Odenton and Montgomery County that have already been successful in the eyes of MDOT officials.

The report looks more closely at sites already owned by the State of Maryland that have strong development potential, but it also assesses other sites, such as Lutherville and the Business Park Drive Station Stop. In a graphic page that rates the amount of TOD-developable land within one half mile of any station stop, it rates the Lutherville station as containing 115 acres of developable land, the Business Park Drive stop as containing 142 acres and the Fairgrounds as containing 77 acres. Trying to figure out how they arrived at these acreage figures could not be determined by this writer.

It should be emphasized that MDOT did not seek any public comment from the greater Timonium community before releasing this report.

Lutherville Station Update

Members of the Lutherville Community Association, the GTCC and others continue to offer suggestions/recommendation to Councilman Wade Kach about the form and substance of any planned unit development submission by the developer of Lutherville Station. The developer has made some changes to the most recent proposal for the site, such as possibly reducing the number of residential units being proposed, but there are still levels of uncertainty with the plan that limits the community from feeling there is complete clarity about what the developer hopes to build.

In a related note, the developer has submitted a Transit Oriented Development Application to Baltimore County. That application would need to be approved and supported by

the county and then sent to the State for approval before the Lutherville project could receive an official designation as a transit-oriented development. This designation does not allow the project to proceed to construction, but it is an important mile marker in the developer's attempt to receive state funding for future construction. A link to the county webpage that will gain you access to a county pre-concept plan review of the Transit Oriented Development application on May 14th can be accessed here: [Lutherville TOD Designation Request Preconcept Meeting | Baltimore County Government](#)

Thank You, Tina Kline

President Kathleen Beadell, the other officers of GTCC and its board members want to issue thanks to Tina Kline for her time on the board and as treasurer of the organization. Tina is always organized and on point, traits that are admired in any volunteer organization. She has also worked to update the website as another way to reach out to more residents.

Tina, as reported at the last general meeting, has taken a position as constituent services coordinator with Delegate Michele Guyton, and she will be stepping down as treasurer of GTCC after our May meeting. We wish Tina well in this new endeavor and we will miss her insights on the board.

Animal Welfare the Focus of County Administration and Council

County Executive Kathy Klausmeier and bipartisan supporters on the County Council hope to pass three bills in early May that will modernize animal welfare regulations. One of the bills proposes to better define what constitutes humane treatment of animals by their owners. That bill addresses requirements for proper shelter, proper care and tethering of pets, as well as specific prohibitions on animal abuse and dogfighting. Repeat offenders of the animal cruelty provisions would be banned from owning animals for four years.

A second bill proposes reworking existing legislation concerning animals that are deemed a threat to public health and safety. This bill would add a new definition and category termed "potentially dangerous animal" to the current categories of dangerous animal and menacing animal. The County's health officer would be authorized to declare any animal as menacing, potentially dangerous, or dangerous (three categories) that would result in the issuance of a civil citation to the owner. In turn, the owner may appeal that decision to the Animal Hearing Board, and if the owner disagrees with the board's ruling, they can file a petition with the Board of Appeals. The third bill would shorten the time an owner has to appeal a decision to the Board of Appeals from 30 days to 10 days. This third bill would also require the board to hear the case within 14 days.

This package of bills come on the heels of reports on animal hoarding and abuse in the southwest part of the county.

Council Amends Pension Law that Would have Affected Current Members

The County Council received almost universal criticism as a result of pension changes that tied pension payouts to salary increases, as contained in previous legislation, Bill 40-24. The collection of critics included past council members Sam Moxley, Vicki Almond and Tom Quirk, as well as current Councilmen Young and Jones and current candidate for County Executive, Nick Stewart.

The prior law, Bill 40-24, was passed before the Personnel and Salary Advisory Board came out with a recommendation to increase the Council members' salaries from \$69,000 per annum to \$140,000 per annum as a result of the voters declaring that the Council members should be recognized as full time employees.

The recent bill, 19-26, sponsored by Councilmen Patoka and Ertel, passed by a unanimous vote of 7 to 0 to effectively remove any salary increases for the Council to impacting the pension payments for any current Council member.

Please Join Us for Our Next General Meeting on May 13th, 7 PM

Our May General Meeting will include talks by a group of candidates slated to run in the primary election in June. Those candidates speaking that night will include Larry Novak and Jeff McDonald, who are running in the Republican primary for delegate in District 42 B; Theaux Le Gardeur and Nino Mangione, who are running in the Republican primary for County Council, and Nick Stewart, who is running in the Democratic primary for County Executive. It should also be noted that since the Democrat candidates for District 42 B and County Council seats are running unopposed, we will invite them to speak at our September meeting.

Also scheduled on our agenda is the regular report from Cockeysville Police Precinct 7, and a vote to elect a new treasurer for the organization, plus other news impacting the area.

Calendar Of Events

1. Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Colorful Walk/Run in Support of FCA Summer Camps May 9, 9:30 to 12:30, including food trucks, Bouncy House fun and Music, Maryland State Fair (MSF)
2. Gem & Jewelry Show, MSF-Exhibition Hall; May 15, 12PM to 6PM, May 16, 10AM to 6PM, May 17, 11AM to 5 PM
3. Cirque De Paris, MSF-4H/ Home Arts Bldg. enjoy a one-ring circus show from France, May 29 to June 7, consult the MSF website for starting times on each date.
4. LAX Splash- Enjoy Youth Lacrosse on the MSF Track Infield, May 30 & 31st.
5. Maryland & Delaware Truck Driving Championship, MSF Exhibition Hall, June 6th, driver registration starts at 8 AM.
6. Maryland Toy Expo, MSF Exhibition Hall & 4H Building, June 13th, 8AM to 5PM
7. Wine & Food Festival, June 13th, 1PM to 5PM, MSF Track Infield

8. Trading Card Show, June 14, 9AM to 2 PM, MSF- 4H/Home Arts Building
9. Maryland German Festival, July 11, 11:30 AM to 10 PM, July 12, 11:30 AM to 6 PM, MSF- 4H/Home Arts Building