GTCC **greater timonium community council**

9B West Ridgely Road, Box 276, Timonium MD 21093 www.gtccinc.org

Vol. XVIII, No. 5
November 2026

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

Our Next Meeting is on November 11th
At 7:00 PM in the Vista Room

Vice President's Message

Is Rhetoric More Persuasive Than Facts?

Many Marylanders are concerned about the structural deficit of $3.3 billion that the state is facing in the next fiscal year. Unlike most state residents, State Senator J.B. Jennings can ask direct questions about state spending thru his position in the General Assembly. Over the summer, Governor Wes Moore announced that his administration had spent over $4.4 billion during his first term to either preserve or create 9,981 affordable housing units in the state, and as part of that total, the state spent more than $1 billion in fiscal year 2026. Senator Jennings correctly observed that given these costs and the number of units created, the majority of which are apartment units, the math breaks down to each unit costing over $440,000. Given those high costs, Senator Jennings wrote a lengthy letter to Housing and Community Development Secretary Jacob Day asking for more clarity to the Governor's announcement.

Secretary Day pushed back on the senator's concerns by saying that 95% of those funds came from bond financing proceeds, Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits, the National Housing Trust Fund and other sources not connected to state government. The state simply acted as the pass thru vehicle. Day went on to say that only 5% came from state general funds. Day also blamed the costs on the fact that Maryland is the most over-regulated state in the nation when it comes to building housing, even though that information is contradicted by a Comptroller's report that indicated Maryland is the fifth most regulated state, not the most regulated state. Day also did not attempt to explain why the State is using monies collected under Empower Maryland, a monthly charge on each rate payer's electric bill, to help make all of these affordable units more energy efficient. These units, after all, are privately owned by profit seeking and nonprofit companies, and should not be receiving these funds in this writer's opinion.

All in all, whether you share Senator Jennings concerns that each affordable unit is costly, or you accept Secretary Day's explanation, the sums spent to nurture affordable housing in this state are significant and need better scrutiny on a regular basis.

Eric Rockel

New Developments in Zoning Case for York & Timonium Roads Car Wash

A proposed car wash had been planned for the southeast corner of York and Timonium Roads, the site of the former Nissan dealership. However, the owner and contract purchaser of the property needed zoning approval before the proposal could move forward. So, on August 19 the owners and contract purchaser of the property engaged in a zoning hearing to approve a special exception to allow the car wash, along with a request to approve the continuation of commercial parking on residentially zoned property and requesting four zoning variances. Generally speaking, a request for special exception is usually granted so long as the petitioner(s) can prove thru the use of expert testimony that the special exception will not harm the health, safety and general welfare of the area.\

Many community members turned out in-person and virtually to speak against the special exception request. In addition, several residents collected signatures on a petition of approximately 100 residents, who were against the car wash use. Since the car wash plans to use existing entrances on West Timonium and Cinder Roads, many residents raised concerns over traffic issues. For example, the West Timonium entrance is very close to the intersection where both a merge condition for cars traveling westerly and the turning lane to venture south on York Road will create a very congested area for motorists entering the car wash. With the Cinder Road exit from the property, residents are leery that patrons of the car wash will turn east on Cinder and travel into the neighborhood or if patrons turn west on Cinder, they will be unable to cross York Road to get into the south traveling lanes because of the heavy congestion. Other residents voiced concerns about noise from the car wash disturbing the adjacent residences and/or about the appearance of the car wash.

In the end, Chief Administrative Law Judge, Maureen Murphy, granted the special exception to allow the car wash, as well as the four zoning variances and commercial parking that the petitioners requested. In light of this ruling, the Office of the People's Counsel has decided to appeal Judge Murphy's ruling to the County Board of Appeals. A date for that appeal hearing has not been set as of this writing,

However, a new development entered this equation when Councilman Nino Mangione introduced a piece of zoning legislation at a recent County Council meeting. Bill 104-26 would prohibit new car washes in a Business Roadside zoning classification unless the property to be used also has an "Automotive Service District" overlay for any property in the Hunt Valley to Timonium Planning Area. When the Council voted on this bill, Councilman Jones introduced an amendment that was passed by the majority that effectively said the bill would not apply to any project that had been in the development process prior to the vote on the bill. The net effect of this amendment is that this bill will have no impact on the car wash status for this project.

Council Gives Itself a Raise, and the County Executive, Too

Despite strong criticism from a very vocal segment of the County's population, the County Council granted raises to itself and the County Executive during the October 19 session. The Council raised the salary for future councilmembers from the current $69,000 to $119, 750. That new pay status will take effect after the November election and impact a new, nine-member council. This pay increase comes on the heels of a 2022 pay increase when the council members' salaries rose from $62,500 to $69,000. In the most recent vote, Councilmen Marks and Mangione voted against the pay increase, Councilmen Young, Jones, Ertel and Patoka voted for the increase and Councilman Crandell was not present.

In the case of the County Executive, five of the Councilmen voted to raise the executive's pay from $192, 000 to $240,000. Councilman Mangione voted against the raise and Councilman Crandell was not present. Additionally, the Council will be voting on an increase for the County Administrative Officer in its session of November 2.

Proponents of the increases point out that these amounts were recommended by the Personnel & Salary Advisory Board and did not come directly from the Council, and that these amounts are less than many of the more urban counties in the state. In addition, the Council recently recognized that council positions should be considered as full-time positions, not as part-time positions, as they had been classified in the past. Despite these supporting arguments, many critics observed that the increases are significantly more money, and that if the current council could work for $69,000, why should the new council members receive so much more?

A Dubious Distinction

Baltimore County leads the state in the most families facing eviction notices, with over 4,300 evictions notices in 2025. That number accounts for nearly 25% of the notices filed throughout the state. The demographics for the county appear to be moving in the wrong direction. Median household income dropped to under $88,000 in 2024, which represents an almost 8% decline since 2018. There also appears to be a rise in homelessness- a 28% increase in the last two years.

Unfortunately, there are few explanations for these statistics, other than that Baltimore County needs more affordable housing. Some have theorized that local governments in the Washington suburbs allocate more resources to this problem and that nonprofit aid is greater in those counties around Washington. Yet information on the demographic trends is harder to find in a search for answers as to why the county is a leader in the state. Are the lower income families moving into Baltimore County at a higher pace? Are we loosing many of our low skill jobs to automation or other factors? Are local eviction laws more favorable to landlords in Baltimore County compared to the rest of the state? Or are we becoming home to more immigrant families that generally earn less than the home-grown residents?

Education Notes

The State named its Blue Ribbon Schools for the 2026-27 school year. Kingsville, Fort Garrison and Seventh District elementary schools garnered the top honors in Baltimore County. No schools in the GTCC area made this prestigious list. However, there were a number of local schools that garnered a 5-star rating when the State released its rankings of all the schools in Maryland. These star ratings are based upon academic performance, attendance and graduation rates for each school. Among the schools earning the prestigious 5-star rating in our area were Lutherville Laboratory Elementary, Pinewood Elementary, Riderwood Elementary and Timonium Elementary. Hampton Elementary slipped from 5-star to 4-star. Schools such as Dulaney, Mays Chapel, Ridgely and Pot Springs receive 4-stars. While Cockeysville Middle remained at 3-star

Baltimore County Public Schools will hold a series of public meetings, termed "Community Conversations", hosted by Superintendent Dr. Bill Heiser, to discuss the development of the FY 2026 Operating Budget. The meeting at Cockeysville Middle School has already taken place by the time of this writing, but one will be held at Loch Raven High School on December 1, from 6-7 PM. Loch Raven is located at 1212 Cowpens Avenue.

UMBC Releases Its Latest Public Opinion Poll

The UMBC Institute of Politics, under the direction of Dr. Mileah Kromer, released a public opinion poll in early October. The poll represented the opinions of approximately 775 likely voters, who were polled in late September. Unsurprisingly, most respondents favored the re-election of Gov. Wes Moore by a large margin. Many of the other questions produced more nuanced responses.

For example, sixty percent of respondents think Maryland should switch to an open primary system, where all registered voters, including the unaffiliated, could vote in either the Republican or Democratic primary. Conversely, thirty-two percent favor keeping the primaries closed.

Respondents were also asked about whether each of seven issues facing American Democracy is a major problem, a minor problem or not a problem at all. Those who said that the issues were a major problem responded as follows: the influence of money in politics: 88%; declining trust in government: 88%; misinformation spread in social media: 85%; gerrymandering of districts to favor one party: 83%; feeling that ordinary people don't have a say: 79%; low voter turnout: 67%; potential for political violence: 62%.

The poll also asked about the Congressional redistricting amendment, Question 3 on the ballot. Only 25% said they were in favor of Question 3, to allow Maryland's constitution to be changed. Fifty-three percent indicated they were opposed to Question 3 and would vote no on the ballot; while 19% indicated they were uncertain on how to vote on the question.

The poll also asked whether the state is headed in the right direction or the wrong direction. Forty-nine percent said they felt the state was headed in the wrong direction, while 37% said they felt the state is headed in the right direction. For comparison purposes, in March 2026, 59% said the state was headed in the wrong direction, and in October 2024, only 39 % felt the state was headed in the wrong direction.

On the job that Governor Wes Moore is doing as governor, forty-nine percent say they approve of the job he is doing, while 42% disapprove and 8% did not have an opinion. As far as economic conditions in Maryland are concerned, 81% say that economic conditions over the past year are either poor or fair, while 17% say they are good or excellent, and only 12% expect things to improve a year from now.

The final issue the poll looked at was the question of data centers and the possible impact of artificial intelligence. Respondents were asked if they support or oppose data centers being built in Maryland. Only 13% supported data centers, while 78% opposed data centers. The poll also asked about building data centers near your community. Supporters totaled 16%, while those opposed came in at 77%. Lastly, likely voters were asked if artificial intelligence will have a positive or negative impact on society. Only 23% believed the impact would be positive, and 67% felt it would be negative.

All in all, the polling revealed that Marylanders have a rather pessimistic view of current events and the future in our state.

Join Us for the Next GTCC General Meeting

Our next general meeting will take place on November 11, at 7 PM at the Vista Room on the grounds of the Maryland State Fair. There will be an extended discussion of the current status of Lutherville Station, and its efforts to gain Planned Unit Development status, led by GTCC Board member, Tim Carroll. We will encourage your thoughts and feedback during this discussion. We will also have the latest news on the car wash proposal for the former Nationwide Auto site, and the representative from Precinct 7 can give us the latest news about the shooting on Greenside Drive . We hope to see you at the next meeting.

New County Council Designations

From the County's start as a home rule subdivision in 1956/57 until the election of this year, Baltimore County had been divided into seven council districts. However, a referendum vote in 2024 resulted in the County Council being expanded to nine council districts as of the election of November 2026. One of the by-products of the voters' decision will be that the GTCC area will no longer be in the third council district. Going forward we will be part of the fifth council district. This change to the election of nine council members also means that the former district's boundaries are slightly altered in the composition of the new district. To see a map of all of the new boundaries for all nine districts, click here
C:\Users\erock\Downloads\NEW Councilmanic Districts.pdf

Congratulations, Lynne Kahn

In October, County Executive Kathy Klausmeier named Lynne Kahn, the founder and executive director of the Baltimore Hunger Project, as the 3rd District Community Hero for 2026. Ms. Kahn directs the organization to provide food for children, who face food insecurity, from Fridays, when their school week ends, until Monday, when those children return to school. The Baltimore Hunger Project operates from a warehouse in Timonium, and it is staffed by many volunteers who provide for the growing demands of food scarcity in our county.

Calendar of Events

1. Nov. 7 & 8: Chesapeake Invitational & Gatorfest Lacrosse, 7:30 am to 4:30 pm Track Infield

2. Nov. 7: Maryland Toy Expo, 8 am to 5 pm, Exhibition Hall
3. Nov. 7: Teelin Dance Competition, 8am to 5 pm, Cow Palace
4. Nov. 8: Maryland Trading Card Expo. 9am to 2pm, 4H/Home Arts Bldg.
5. Nov. 13-15: Gem and Jewelry Show, Nov. 13-12pm to 6pm; Nov. 14- 10am to 6 pm Nov. 15- 11am to 5 pm, all shows at the Exhibition Hall
6. Nov. 13-15: Maryland Irish Festival, Nov. 13- 6pm to 11pm; Nov. 14- 12 pm to 11 pm; Nov. 15- 12pm to 6 pm. All shows at the Cow Palace
7. Nov. 14-15: Gothic Market, 12 pm to 5 pm both dates, 4H/Home Arts Bldg.
8. Nov. 21: Native American Festival, 11 am to 7 pm, Exhibition Hall
9. Nov. 27-29: Kennedy Kreiger's Festival of Trees, Cow Palace
10. Dec. 5,6: East Coast Car, Truck & Bike Show, Dec. 5-9 am to 6pm, Dec. 6- 9am to 4 pm.

Make Sure to Do Your Civic Duty and Vote on November 3rd !!