



Howard County Council

George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

COUNCILMEMBERS

Opel Jones, Chair
District 2

Christiana Rigby, Vice Chair
District 3

Liz Walsh
District 1

Deb Jung
District 4

David Yungmann
District 5

Minutes – Approved

Operating Budget Work Session #4
Friday, May 15, 2026
Hybrid Meeting (Virtual and In-Person Meeting)
Video Streamed on <https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/watch-us>
Banneker Room
10:00 am

Chair Jones opened the meeting at 10:18 am.

Council Members Present: Council Chair Opel Jones, Council Member Deb Jung, Council Member Liz Walsh, and Council Member David Yungmann.

Staff Present: Michelle Harrod, Administrator to the County Council; Gary Kuc, County Solicitor; Amanda Mihill, Assistant County Solicitor; Janine MacGregor, Acting County Auditor; Theodore Wimberly, Administrative Manager; Yusef Ibrahim, Deputy Council Administrator; Jim Almon, Legislative Analyst; Nick Rinehart, Legislative Analyst; Owen Kahn, Fiscal Manager; Melinda Massey, Fiscal Manager; and Isaiah Anderson, Executive Assistant.

Administration Staff: Noted below

Agenda

Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Marcus Harris appeared before the County Council and provided opening remarks and an overview of the Sheriff's Office proposed Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2027. There was general discussion among Council Members and the representatives from the Sheriff's Office on the increase in expenses, the number of vehicles requested for Fiscal Year 2027, and the increase in new deputy sheriff positions to cover the increased support needed for courthouse security.

C0337 – FY14 Ellicott City Improvements & Enhancements

Mark DeLuca, Deputy Director for the Department of Public Works (DPW), was joined by Holly Sun, Budget Director, Mark Richmond of DPW, and Zach Hollenbeck and Emily Iacchei of the Department of General Services (DGS), in appearing before the County Council to give an update on Capital Project C0337 – FY14 Ellicott City Improvements & Enhancements, also known as "Ellicott City Safe & Sound".

Mr. DeLuca gave opening remarks to the Council that covered the succession planning of the project staff upon his retirement; Mr. Richmond will be the new project manager for the North Tunnel project, and Mr. Hollenbeck will be the program manager for all other construction projects and acquisitions.

Mr. DeLuca then gave a presentation for each of the separate construction projects associated with Ellicott City Safe and Sound, the current FY2027 budget request, and funding updates for each project. He also highlighted the quarterly financial reports that DPW, DGS and the Budget Office have been collaborating to submit to the Council, with the most recent one submitted on April 29th.

There was general discussion between Council Members and the representatives present regarding the quarterly financial reports, the costs of the CSX bridge replacements, property acquisitions, funding for the North Tunnel project and the priority of the remaining projects.

Downtown Columbia Projects

Carl DeLorenzo, Director of Policy and Programs for the County Administration, appeared before the County Council, joined by Felix Facchine, Chief of Staff for the County Executive, Tae Jung of the Department of General Services, and Clarence “Trey” Dickerson, Administrator for the Office of Transportation, to give an overview of the proposed budgets for the following Downtown Columbia capital projects:

- C0319 – FY2010 Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Projects
- C0364 – FY2021 New Cultural Center
- C0353 – FY2024 Transit Center

Greg Fitchett of Howard Hughes Corporation and Jill Manion of MuniCap were also present for the discussion.

Mr. DeLorenzo gave a presentation on C0364 – FY21 New Cultural Center to the Council, that included an update on the project with revised square footage totals, an update on the construction schedule and an update on the cost per square foot of the project.

There was general discussion between Council Members and the representatives from the departments listed regarding the construction contract awarded to Whiting Turner for the construction of the New Cultural Center and the breakdown of programmable square footage.

Council Members asked questions regarding the debt service for the TIF projects, the total square footage delivered so far in accordance with the Downtown Columbia phasing plan, the funding request for Capital Project C0353 – FY24 Transit Center, and the funding set aside for a school in Downtown Columbia.

County Council/County Auditor

Michelle Harrod, Administrator for the County Council, and Janine MacGregor, acting County Auditor, appeared before the Council to give an overview of the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budgets for the County Council and the County Auditor, respectively.

Ms. Harrod gave highlights of the Council's proposed budget, including an increase in chargebacks and an earmark request to cover payouts for departing staff due to Council transition in December. Ms. MacGregor highlighted the request for a new IT Audit Manager in the Auditor's proposed budget due to an increased County dependency in IT and the related risks.

Council Members asked questions about the new IT Audit Manager position, and thanked Council staff for the preparation of the Budget Work Session materials and fiscal analyses.

Budget Amendments

Brandee Ganz, Chief Administrative Officer for Howard County, was joined by Felix Facchine, Chief of Staff for the County Executive, and Jamar Herry, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, in appearing before the Council to answer any questions about proposed Budget Amendments for the FY2027 Budget.

Ms. Walsh gave an overview of her proposed Amendment 9 to Council Bill 33-2026, which proposed a budget condition that would condition the expenditure of IT Chargebacks by the Administration on granting the Inspector General full access to County systems.

There was general discussion among Council Members and the representatives from the Administration regarding systems access for the Inspector General, the data user agreement between the Inspector General and the Administration, and conflicts of this amendment with state and local law and the Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA).

Ms. Jung also announced her intent to withdraw her amendment to CB33-2026.

Mr. Yungmann adjourned the meeting at 1:32pm.

Council requested follow-up:

C0337 FY14 Ellicott City Improvements & Enhancements

- *Please provide a copy of the GIS Overlay map, referenced by DPW in the Work Session, that shows the properties impacted by the construction of the North Tunnel.*

Downtown Columbia Projects

General

- *Please send a copy of the Downtown Columbia phasing chart*

C0364

- *Did the contract awarded to Whiting Turner for the construction of the Performing Arts Center violate [Section 4.110 of the Howard County Code](#)? (Office of Law)*
- *What percentage of the projected 39,450 square feet of programmable space in the Performing Arts Center will be dedicated to Toby's Dinner Theatre? What percentage of*

the 55,312 square feet of the Performing Arts Center is dedicated to the County Black Box theatre and art gallery?

5/15/2026 Operating Work Session Attendee List:

Budget Office

Holly Sun
Brook Mamo
James Kwak
Lori Buchman
Andrew Galarza

Administration

Brandee Ganz
Felix Facchine
Jamar Herry
Jennifer Sager

Sheriff's Office

Marcus Harris

Safe and Sound (C0337)

Mark Deluca
Mark Richmond
Zach Hollenbeck
Emily Iacchei

County Council/Auditor

Michelle Harrod
Janine MacGregor

Downtown Columbia

Carl DeLorenzo
Jill Manion
Greg Fitchett

TIF (C0319) Projects

Carl DeLorenzo
Rafiu Ighile
Angela Price
Keenan Rice

New Cultural Center (C0364)

Carl DeLorenzo
Tae Jung

Transit Center (C0353)

Clarence Dickerson
David Cookson

Visit the Council's website (cc.howardcountymd.gov) to view legislation, send written testimony, and sign-up electronically to testify at public hearings.

Persons needing accommodations to fully participate in the meeting, please contact the Council Office, 410-313-2001.