



Town Council Election & Annual Meeting

The Town's 2024 election is Tuesday, May 7, and the Town's Annual Meeting will be held at 7 p.m. that evening. In this year's election, Town residents will elect three of five Council members, each to serve for a two-year term. The terms of Rich Brancato, Irene N. Lane, and Barney Rush will expire in May, and all incumbents are running for reelection. Candidates' statements are inside this newsletter.

Voting will be undertaken by mail and drop box only. There will be no in-person voting this year. Instead, each registered Town voter will receive a ballot by mail. For a resident's vote to be counted, ballot return envelopes must be mailed by May 7 or placed in the drop box outside the Town Office by 5 p.m. on May 7. Detailed election procedures are on page 7.



Please note that the drop box for the Town election is next to the bulletin board by the Town Hall (see picture). Montgomery County will hold a presidential primary election at the same time as the Town Council election, so please ensure that you use the correct drop box labeled "Town of Chevy Chase Official Town Election Ballot Box."

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Candidates' Forum, May 1

The Election Board will host a moderated Candidates' Forum on **Wednesday, May 1 at 7 p.m.** This event will give residents an opportunity to learn more about the candidates' positions on the many issues facing the Town. Those who wish to talk with candidates in person may come to the Town Hall at 6:30 p.m. for informal discussion. Residents who wish to attend remotely can join the formal part of the program at 7 p.m. by Zoom. Please submit questions that you would like the candidates to address to townoffice@chevychase.org no later than April 26.

Annual Meeting, May 7

On May 7 at 7 p.m., the Town will hold its Annual Meeting both in person in the Town Hall and by Zoom video conference. During this meeting, Mayor Lane will provide an overview of the Town's accomplishments over the past year, and Treasurer Brancato will present the proposed budget for the 2025 fiscal year, followed by a public hearing and Council adoption.

Proposed FY25 Budget

A summary of the proposed FY25 budget can be reviewed on pages 5 & 6 of this newsletter. Comprehensive budget documents are available for review on the Town website.

The Town's Annual Meeting will be held in-person in the Town Hall and by Zoom videoconference. Visit the Town website for information on how to join by Zoom.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

Rich Brancato, 4304 Leland Street

My wife, Mary, and our dog, Winnie, live on Leland Street and are longtime residents. I am a retired Federal civil servant and am currently the Treasurer of the Town Council after serving as Chairperson of the Town's Public Services Committee and a member of all of the Town's Purple Line committees.

I am running for a second term on the Town Council. It has been an honor and a pleasure serving with the current Council members -- Irene Lane, Barney Rush, Joy White and Stephanie Martz -- and working with our dedicated staff and volunteers who accomplish most of the day-to-day operations and activities of the Town. I care deeply about our community and have endeavored to engage, respect, and listen carefully to our residents.

While we have achieved progress on significant projects affecting the Town -- the Corso Senior Living Community, the Farm Women's Market and Parks development, the Zimmerman Park Improvements, the Purple Line and Capital Crescent Trail, the stop light installation on East-West Highway, and proposed zoning amendments at the State and County level -- we still need to see them through. Many important matters remain to be completed, and we must continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure that the interests of the Town are considered.

I am committed to engaging, listening, and being responsive to residents and working collaboratively with my colleagues on the Town Council. I hope to continue working on your behalf and ask for your support.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

Irene N. Lane, 4106 Aspen Street

For the past four years, I have had the honor of serving our community in various capacities on the Town Council, ranging from Community Liaison to Treasurer, Vice Mayor, and most recently, as Mayor. As I seek re-election for a third term, I ask for your support.

Throughout my tenure, I have approached this volunteer role with a steadfast commitment to understanding the intricacies of the issues and perspectives of our residents. My goals have always been to foster a vibrant community, address your concerns attentively, and deliver timely and effective solutions. I have strived to advocate for outcomes that not only benefit our Town but also carefully consider potential consequences and future impacts.

Specifically, I have worked closely with State Delegates to submit amendments to Governor Moore's legislation, which aims to promote affordable housing near transit. I have responded to County recommendations to facilitate the construction of multi-family housing in single-family neighborhoods and advocated for responsible zoning decisions for Bethesda to our County Council leaders, neighboring municipalities, and Planning Board commissioners.

Together with my colleagues on the Town Council, our dedicated Town Staff, and committed volunteers, we have tackled numerous challenges head-on. These include addressing the impacts of Purple Line construction on residents, regulating small cell/5G technology installations, and updating our ordinances to meet evolving needs.

While we have made significant progress, there is still much work to be done. I remain committed to ensuring that any new housing developments align with our Town's building, stormwater, and tree ordinances. Additionally, I am dedicated to developing Bethesda Market Park into a beautiful and vibrant green space for our greater community, enhancing pedestrian safety, completing Zimmerman Park upgrades, and addressing drainage concerns considering climate change. Finally, I will continue advocating for crucial infrastructure and transportation enhancements to our County and State officials, recognizing the increased traffic concerns and development in Bethesda.

As a dedicated problem solver with relevant experience, I am fully prepared to continue serving our dynamic community. If you have any questions or would like to discuss your priorities for the Town, please feel free email me at greenloons@me.com. I ask for your support and your vote on Election Day, Tuesday, May 7.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

Barney Rush, 6917 Maple Avenue

I have served eight years on the Town Council -- four as Mayor, two as Treasurer, and now serving for my second time as Vice Mayor. It has been engaging and interesting work, but most importantly, rewarding. Serving the residents of this Town has meant a great deal to me. I have done my best to listen to your issues and concerns, look out for what is best for our community, help lead on issues of vital interest, vote sensibly and fairly, and provide thoughtful and considerate comments to residents and my fellow Councilmembers. I hope that my record rises to your standards, and that you will support my serving another term.

I've had many conversations with neighbors about all the issues that need to be addressed and the work that's required to serve on the Town Council. And frequently, these conversations end with the neighbor giving me a wry smile and asking, "So do you really want to serve another term?" I have various wry responses, but the direct answer is emphatically "Yes," for the simple reason that I want to see to completion, or at least to final commitment, matters on which I've worked for many years.

Foremost is the development of the Bethesda Market Park, which will replace much of the surface parking lot behind the Farm Women's Market and all of the parking lot between Leland and Walsh Streets. This will be a transformative project for the Town and Bethesda -- an urban green space with attractive amenities that we will all enjoy and that will provide relief from the congestion and bustle of Bethesda. I've been deeply engaged on this project since my first term on the Town Council, when, in 2016 and 2017, the Town and surrounding communities were successful in gaining support from the County Council to modify the original Bethesda Downtown Plan to make clear that creation of this park was an important priority for the Bethesda area.

After seven years, through times of progress and times of delay, we are, I hope, nearing the final stages of preparatory work. The tasks immediately ahead are finalizing the park design -- with another presentation to the surrounding residents -- and securing additional funds that will allow us to have a truly outstanding park. With additional funds, the park will have a mix of areas that will include open lawn, paths through plantings and foliage, and activity areas including, we hope, a water feature, stage and an exercise/play area, as well as dog runs for large and small dogs. The Town has ample reserves, and I support our taking a leadership role in providing, and marshalling from others, this additional funding. We hope the developers will be able to submit their Site Plan to the Planning Board this fall, with approval early next year.

Other issues will also require continued work: Zimmerman Park renovations will be undertaken this summer. A construction agreement must be negotiated between the Town and Corso to ensure that the construction activity on the old 4-H campus site is properly contained and monitored. And my colleagues and I continue to advocate on behalf of residents along the Purple Line for mitigation of the impact of that major project.

One other key issue that will require attention this coming term is the likely change in zoning regulations that will permit multi-family housing to be built in single-family neighborhoods. I support this change in principle, but the question of degree matters; and most importantly, any such housing must comply with our existing Town requirements that control setbacks, massing, and height. I am eager to hear more from residents on this vital matter.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve you; and I hope I've earned the opportunity to do so for two more years. Please email me at barneyrush@outlook.com if you have any questions you would like me to address. Thank you.

Financial Position

For FY24, the Town expects to realize a budget surplus of \$2.3 million due primarily to a larger than anticipated state distribution of local income taxes (*the income tax rate is set by state law and applies to all municipalities*); substantially more interest income generated by Town reserves; the use of \$739,000 of our \$2.4 million American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant to cover the cost of providing certain Town services; reduced need for land use, planning, and development consultants; nominal snow removal costs; and a delay in the expenditure of funds for roadway repairs, stormwater management improvements, and Zimmerman Park renovations, all of which are planned to be undertaken in FY25.

Looking ahead to FY25, we have assumed stable income tax revenue. We expect to realize a budget surplus of \$1.02 million in FY25, due primarily to using \$739,000 in ARPA funds to cover the cost of certain government services. As a result, the Town's gross general fund balance is expected to increase from \$17.3 million on June 30, 2024 to \$18.3 million on June 30, 2025. Offsetting this balance is the Council's commitment to contribute \$4.5 million to the Bethesda Market Park development project, resulting in a net fund balance of \$13.8 million on June 30, 2025. Separately, the balance of restricted ARPA funds will decrease from \$865,908 at the end of FY24 to \$126,908 at the end of FY25.

The Town's capital expenditures will increase in FY25 due to planned infrastructure improvements, as mentioned above and detailed below.

FY25 Budget Overview

General Revenue

- Operating revenue is budgeted at \$5.7 million, of which \$3.65 million is projected income tax revenue; \$739,000 is ARPA grant funds; \$600,000 is interest income on reserve funds; \$294,000 is County tax duplication reimbursement, and \$131,000 is real property tax revenue.
- The Town Council proposes a real property tax rate of \$0.0084 per \$100 of assessed value. This reflects the constant yield tax rate (the tax rate that will generate the same amount of revenue in FY25 as in FY24) and is equal to \$84 for each \$1 million in a home's assessed value.

Operating Expenditures

- Operating expenditures are budgeted at \$3.7 million, approximately the same amount as was budgeted for FY24. The FY25 budget includes funds to continue the Town's high-quality programs and services.
- The Council proposes to maintain funding for off-duty police coverage that was increased in FY24. This increased coverage allows for additional traffic control during rush hours and around schools within the Town.

Capital Expenditures

- Capital expenditures are budgeted at \$987,500. These funds will be used to cover costs for street and sidewalk repairs, Zimmerman Park renovations, and stormwater infrastructure. The cost to redevelop Zimmerman Park (\$450,000) is substantially offset by a state grant (\$337,500), resulting in a net cost of \$112,500. In addition, the cost to install a new storm drain on Leland Street is offset by a County cost-sharing agreement (\$250,000), resulting in a net cost of \$25,000.

General Fund Balance

- The budget projects a gross general fund balance of \$18.3 million and a net general fund balance of \$13.8 million at the end of FY25. The net fund balance reflects the Council's commitment of \$4.5 million to the Bethesda Market Park project.

Restricted Funds

- The budget anticipates the expenditure of \$739,000 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for the provision of government services. It also funds additional cable-related capital improvements with grants provided by cable operators in the Town.

Visit the Town website for comprehensive budget documents.

FY25 Proposed Budget

Budget Summary	FY23 Actual	FY24 Budget	FY24 Est. Actual	FY25 Budget
GENERAL REVENUE				
Taxes				
Income Tax ¹	3,773,573	3,450,000	3,730,000	3,650,000
Highway User Revenue	126,085	153,000	152,000	152,000
Real Property Tax (\$0.0084/\$100 for FY25)	131,736	131,000	131,000	131,000
Utility Property Tax (\$0.66/\$100 for FY25) ²	33,184	34,000	33,000	33,000
Subtotal - Taxes	4,064,578	3,768,000	4,046,000	3,966,000
Grants, Reimbursements & Bank Shares	984,436	1,051,500	1,049,333	1,078,500
Interest, Fines & Collections	507,965	610,000	817,500	621,000
Permit Fees & Cable TV Revenue	59,221	65,500	46,500	56,000
TOTAL GENERAL REVENUE	5,616,200	5,495,000	5,959,333	5,721,500
OPERATING EXPENDITURES				
General Government				
Salaries & Benefits	838,402	945,000	946,530	1,035,000
Professional Services	305,978	385,000	248,500	370,000
Civic Affairs & Community Programs	272,134	291,000	176,000	210,000
Other Services & Supplies	178,805	158,000	164,286	174,000
Subtotal - General Government	1,595,319	1,779,000	1,535,316	1,789,000
Public Works				
Sanitation & Waste Removal	780,289	811,500	800,500	827,500
Parks, Grounds & Trees	312,008	368,000	315,500	348,000
Streets & Roads	69,994	220,000	124,836	260,000
Subtotal - Public Works	1,162,291	1,399,500	1,240,836	1,435,500
Public Safety (Police)	393,949	476,500	481,472	485,500
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	3,151,559	3,655,000	3,257,624	3,710,000
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES				
Streets, Sidewalks & Stormwater				
Asphalt & Concrete	15,506	415,000	285,607	425,000
Stormwater Management (Net of Reimbursements)	0	283,000	0	205,000
Special Infrastructure Projects	0	0	0	150,000
Street Signs & Street Lights	28,078	55,000	55,000	55,000
Subtotal - Streets, Sidewalks & Stormwater	43,584	753,000	340,607	835,000
Parks, Grounds & Trees				
Park Improvements (Net of Reimbursements)	0	112,500	0	112,500
New Trees/Reforestation	14,082	25,000	25,000	25,000
Subtotal - Parks, Grounds & Trees	14,082	137,500	25,000	137,500
Facilities & Equipment				
Town Office Improvements	0	25,000	20,000	10,000
Information Technology	3,965	5,000	5,000	5,000
Subtotal - Facilities & Equipment	3,965	30,000	25,000	15,000
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	61,631	920,500	390,607	987,500
TOTAL OPERATING & CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	3,213,190	4,575,500	3,648,231	4,697,500
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	2,403,010	919,500	2,311,102	1,024,000
<i>-- the estimated surplus for FY24 and the projected surplus for FY25 are due, in part, from applying ARPA funds towards certain service contracts.</i>				
GENERAL FUND BALANCE	15,025,467	15,944,967	17,336,569	18,360,569
RESERVED FOR BETHESDA MARKET PARK³	0	(4,500,000)	0	(4,500,000)
NET GENERAL FUND BALANCE	15,025,467	11,444,967	17,336,569	13,860,569
		FY25 Contingent Reserve⁴		2,288,600

¹ the income tax rate is set by state law and applies to all municipalities.

² this tax is paid by utility companies, not by Town residents.

³ The Town Council has committed \$4.5 million to the Bethesda Market Park project.

⁴ this figure represents 40 percent of the Town's annual general revenue. It is included in the Town's general fund balance.

2024 TOWN COUNCIL ELECTION

Voting will be undertaken by mail and drop box only. There will be no in-person voting.

Write-In Candidates

- A Town resident seeking election to the Council as a write-in candidate shall submit a certificate of candidacy and a financial disclosure statement to the Town office by 5 p.m. on April 30, 2024. These documents are available on the Town website. The Town will notify residents of the names of any qualified write-in candidates after 5 p.m. on April 30. There will be appropriate blanks on the ballot for the purpose of adding write-in candidates.

Voter Registration & Eligibility

- To be eligible to vote, residents who are U.S. citizens must be at least 16 years of age; have resided in the Town for at least 30 days immediately preceding the election; and be a registered voter of the State of Maryland in Montgomery County. (Prospective voters who are at least 16 years old may register to vote with the state although they may not vote in state or federal elections until age 18.) If you have recently moved to the Town or are uncertain whether your name is on the list of registered voters, you may visit the Maryland State Board of Elections website at bit.ly/TOCCVoter or call the Montgomery County Election Board at 240-777-VOTE.
- Residents who are not U.S. citizens must be legally authorized to reside in the U.S.; be at least 16 years of age; have resided in the Town for at least 30 days immediately preceding the election; and be registered to vote with the Town. Any non-U.S. citizen resident who wishes to vote in the election must submit a completed registration form to the Town. The registration form is available on the Town website.

Voting Procedures

- Approximately 2 weeks prior to the election, the Town will mail a ballot, a ballot envelope, and a stamped return envelope to each registered Town voter.
- Return envelopes must be mailed no later than Election Day, May 7, 2024 or placed in the drop box outside the Town Hall no later than 5 p.m. on May 7, 2024, in order for the enclosed ballots to be counted. *Please note that the drop box for the Town election is next to the bulletin board by the Town Hall. The County will hold a presidential primary election at the same time as the Town Council election, so please ensure that you use the correct drop box labeled "Town of Chevy Chase Official Town Election Ballot Box."*
- Ballots enclosed in an incomplete, illegible, or unsigned ballot envelope, or in a return envelope whose control number does not correspond to the control number issued to that voter, shall not be counted. The Town will not accept copies of ballots or ballot envelopes.
- If a voter desires their ballot to be mailed to an address that is different than the address on the voter registration list, the voter should contact the Town office to provide the address to which the replacement ballot should be mailed. It is the responsibility of the voter to make such a request in a timely manner to allow the replacement ballot to be issued and voted. Upon receipt of such a request, any previously issued balloting material for that voter will be voided.
- In the event an issued ballot is lost or missing, a voter may contact the Town office to request a replacement ballot. It is the responsibility of the voter to make such a request in a timely manner to allow the replacement ballot to be issued and voted. Upon receipt of such a request, any previously issued balloting material for that voter will be voided.
- If a resident did not receive a ballot because the resident's name did not appear on the voter registration list, the resident may contact the Town office to request a provisional ballot. It is the responsibility of the voter to make such a request in a timely manner to allow the provisional ballot to be issued and voted. In order for the provisional ballot to be counted, the voter's registration must be reflected on the voter registration list no later than May 7, 2024.
- Election results will be announced after 5 p.m. on May 14, 2024.

Town of Chevy Chase

4301 Willow Lane
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

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TOWN COUNCIL

Irene Lane, Mayor

Barney Rush, Vice Mayor

Stephanie Martz, Secretary

Rich Brancato, Treasurer

Joy White, Community Liaison



This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.

Council Election and Annual Meeting Issue

2024 Election and FY25 Budget Information Enclosed

Information also may be found on the Town website

www.townofchevychase.org