



TOWN OF LA PLATA
Town Council Minutes
November 18, 2025, 6:00 PM
Regular Meeting
Council Chambers, La Plata Town Hall
305 Queen Anne St.
La Plata MD

PRESENT: Mayor Jeannine James
Councilman Paul Guttenberg
Councilman Patrick McCormick
Councilman Gregory Sampson, Jr.
Councilman Tyjon Johnson

ABSENT:

TOWN STAFF: Chuck Stevens, Town Manager
Michelle Miner, Assistant Town Manager
Matt Norris, Chief of Police
Kelly Phipps, Director of Legislative Services
Shelby Pritchett, Town Clerk

GUESTS: Jamie Kendrick, Woodvalley Community Solutions

1. Call to Order

1.1. Call to Order

Attendees, please use meeting courtesy. Virtual attendees are asked to mute microphones when joining the meeting. Participants may be muted by the Town Clerk and meetings will be recorded.

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the public has the right to view/listen to the discussion only. At their discretion, the Town Council may allow participants to voice questions or provide comments on the topics under discussion. Written comments may be submitted via email to Legislative@townoflaplata.org. Individuals wishing to address the Town Council may sign up in advance on the Town's website ([Public Communications](#)) or on the meeting sign-up sheet.

Join on your computer, mobile app, or room device.

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 240 806 147 692

Passcode: 2T5Bm6FQ

In accordance with the Code of Maryland, General Provisions, Section 3-302 (Open Meetings Act), notice is hereby given that a portion of this meeting will be held in closed session.

Mayor James called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

1.2. Roll Call

Director Phipps conducted Roll Call.

1.3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor James led all assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.4. Approval of the Meeting Agenda

Councilman McCormick moved to approve the agenda as presented.

Moved By: Patrick McCormick, seconded by Paul Guttenberg.

Ayes: Mayor James, Councilman Guttenberg, Councilman McCormick, Councilman Sampson, Jr., Councilman Johnson

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent:

Passed

2. Disclosure of Closed Session

2.1. Disclosure of Closed Session on October 28, 2025

In accordance with the Maryland Open Meetings Act § 3-306(c)(2), Mayor James disclosed the conduct of a closed session on October 28, 2025.

3. Consent Agenda

Councilman Johnson moved to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Moved By: Tyjon Johnson, seconded by Patrick McCormick.

Ayes: Mayor James, Councilman Guttenberg, Councilman McCormick, Councilman Sampson, Jr., Councilman Johnson

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent:

Passed

3.1. Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting on October 21, 2025 & October 28, 2025.

3.2. Adoption of Resolution 25-32 Town of La Plata Facilities Master Plan Services

4. Petitions, Communications, Appearances and Public Comment

4.1. Public Comment

No public comments were given.

4.2. Oath of Office: Ryan Van Cleaf

Mayor James administered the Oath of Office.

4.3. Proclamation: Municipal Government Works Month

Mayor James delivered the Municipal Government Works Month proclamation.

5. Matters of Council Discussion

5.1. Southwest Access Management Plan - Professional Engineering Services

Jamie Kendrick (Woodvalley Community Solutions) provided an overview of the Southwest Access Management Plan to date, and the Town Council asked no questions. The Town Council came to a consensus to proceed with legislation.

5.2. La Plata Bikeway — Additional Services — Mead & Hunt

Jamie Kendrick provided an overview of the proposed funds allocation to Mead & Hunt and its subconsultants for the continuation of the La Plata Bikeway existing contract, factoring in issues that arose with stormwater management and coordination with Heritage Green. The projected total expenditure is \$130,000 to \$300,000 over 3 years. The Town Council came to a consensus to proceed with legislation.

5.3. La Plata Bikeway Project – Non-Tidal Wetlands Permit – In-Lieu Fee Agreement

Jamie Kendrick provided an overview of the In-Lieu Fee Agreement annotating the \$157,000 expense in lieu of a new wetland at an expense of approximately \$500,000, with an 18-month delay for the Bikeway Project. The Town Council came to a consensus to proceed with legislation.

5.4. La Plata Town Council 2026 Meeting Schedule and Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Schedule of Events

The Town Manager summarized the 2026 Meeting Schedule and the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Schedule overview, citing Town Charter § C 3-4 & Chapter 13-1. Councilman Johnson engaged the Town Manager in discussion regarding the use of working sessions and addition of them to the regular meeting schedule. The Town Council came to a consensus to proceed with legislation. Councilman Gutenberg, Councilman McCormick, Councilman Sampson, and Mayor James all voted in favor. Councilman Johnson voted in opposition.

6. Legislation

6.1. Ordinance 25-09 Amendment to Town of La Plata Fiscal Year 2026 Fee Schedule (First Reading; For Introduction)

AN ORDINANCE concerning

Amendment to Town of La Plata Fiscal Year 2026 Fee Schedule

FOR the purpose of amending the Fiscal Year 2026 Fee Schedule, dealing with fees set by the Town of La Plata; and all matters generally relating thereto.

The Town Manager conducted the first reading of Ordinance 25-09.

6.2. Resolution 25-29 Southwest Access Management Plan – Professional Engineering Services (For Introduction and Consideration of Adoption)

A RESOLUTION concerning

Southwest Access Management Plan – Professional Engineering Services

FOR the purpose of authorizing the Town Manager to enter into a professional services agreement with Mead & Hunt to perform engineering and related services in furtherance of the Southwest Access Management Plan; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Councilman Sampson, Jr. moved to adopt Resolution 25-29.

Moved By: Gregory Sampson, Jr., seconded by Patrick McCormick.

Ayes: Mayor James, Councilman Guttenberg, Councilman McCormick, Councilman Sampson, Jr., Councilman Johnson

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent:

Passed

6.3. Resolution 25-30 La Plata Bikeway - Additional Services - Mead & Hunt (For Introduction and Consideration of Adoption)

A RESOLUTION concerning

La Plata Bikeway – Additional Services – Mead & Hunt

FOR the purpose of authorizing the Town Manager to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with the Mead & Hunt to complete the La Plata Bikeway; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Councilman Johnson moved to adopt Resolution 25-30.

Moved By: Tyjon Johnson, seconded by Gregory Sampson, Jr..

Ayes: Mayor James, Councilman Guttenberg, Councilman McCormick, Councilman Sampson, Jr., Councilman Johnson

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent:

Passed

6.4. Resolution 25-31 La Plata Bikeway Project – Non-Tidal Wetlands Permit – In-Lieu Fee Agreement (For Introduction and Consideration of Adoption)

A RESOLUTION concerning

La Plata Bikeway Project – Non-Tidal Wetlands Permit – In-Lieu Fee Agreement

FOR the purpose of authorizing the Town Manager to enter into an In-Lieu Fee Agreement with the Maryland Department of the Environment to mitigate wetland impacts of the La Plata Bikeway project; to enter into other environmental permitting agreements; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Councilman Guttenberg moved to adopt Resolution 35-31.

Moved By: Paul Guttenberg, seconded by Patrick McCormick.

Ayes: Mayor James, Councilman Guttenberg, Councilman McCormick, Councilman Sampson, Jr., Councilman Johnson

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent:

Passed

6.5. Resolution 25-28 La Plata Town Council 2026 Meeting Schedule and Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Schedule of Events (For Introduction and Consideration of Adoption)

A RESOLUTION concerning

La Plata Town Council 2026 Meeting Schedule and Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Schedule of Events

FOR the purpose of maintaining regulated and publicly accessible schedules of Town Council Meetings and enhancing public participation in the budget process; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Councilman Guttenberg moved to adopt Resolution 25-28.

Moved By: Paul Guttenberg, seconded by Patrick McCormick.

Ayes: Mayor James, Councilman Guttenberg, Councilman McCormick, Councilman Sampson, Jr., Councilman Johnson

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent:

Passed

7. New Business

7.1. Report from the Town Manager

The Town Manager reported on the purchase and dissemination of postcards to residents containing information on the holiday trash pick-up schedule.

7.2. Reports from the Mayor and Town Council

The Mayor and Town Council reported on activities in their respective boards and commissions, and on current and upcoming events in the town.

7.3. Town Manager's Operational Report (Written Only)

7.4. Treasurer's Report (Written Only)

7.5. Cash Disbursement Report (Written Only)

7.6. Firehouse Museum Follow-Up (Written Only)

8. Motion for a Closed Session

Councilman Johnson moved to enter the closed session.

Moved By: Tyjon Johnson, seconded by Paul Guttenberg.

Ayes: Mayor James, Councilman Guttenberg, Councilman McCormick, Councilman Sampson, Jr., Councilman Johnson

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent:

Passed

8.1. Statutory Authority to Close Session: § 3-305(b)(8) to consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation

Topic: Pending Maryland Department of the Environment litigation

Reason for Closure: Discussion involves communications regarding pending litigation, not appropriate for public disclosure

8.2. Statutory Authority to Close Session: § 3-305(b)(1)(i) To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of an appointee, employee, or official over whom it has jurisdiction.

Topic: Town Manager Performance Appraisal Process Discussion

Reason for Closure: Discussion concerns the evaluation of an individual employee

9. Adjourn

9.1. Adjournment

Mayor James adjourned the meeting at 7:14 PM.

Submitted by:

Shelby Pritchett, Town Clerk

**PRESIDING OFFICER'S WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING ("CLOSING STATEMENT") UNDER THE
OPEN MEETINGS ACT (General Provisions Article § 3-305)**

This Certification Must Be Completed Before a Closed Session May Be Held

Date: 10/28/2025 Time: 6:00 PM Location: La Plata Town Hall at this meeting, a motion was made by Tyjon Johnson and seconded by Paul Guttenberg to conduct a closed session of the Council of the Town of La Plata.

Recorded vote to close the meeting:

<u>Members</u>	<u>IN FAVOR</u>	<u>OPPOSED</u>	<u>ABSTAINING</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Mayor Jeannine E. James	☒	☐	☐	☐
Councilman Paul C. Guttenberg	☒	☐	☐	☐
Councilman Patrick McCormick	☒	☐	☐	☐
Councilman Gregory Sampson, Jr.	☒	☐	☐	☐
Councilman Tyjon C. Johnson	☒	☐	☐	☐

(Note: If any member of the public objects to conducting the closed session, a copy of this certification must be sent to the Maryland Open Meetings Law Compliance Board.)

STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO CLOSE SESSION, State Government Article §3-305(b) (check all that apply):

☒ **(1) To discuss:**

- ☒ **(i)** the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of an appointee, employee, or official over whom it has jurisdiction; or
- ☐ **(ii)** any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals;

☐ **(2)** protect the privacy or reputation of an individual with respect to a matter that is not related to public business;

☐ **(3)** consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related to the acquisition;

☐ **(4)** consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State;

☐ **(5)** consider the investment of public funds;

☐ **(6)** consider the marketing of public securities;

☐ **(7)** consult with counsel to obtain legal advice;

☐ **(8)** consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation;

☐ **(9)** conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations;

☐ **(10)** discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or to public security, including:

- ☐ **(i)** the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and

- ☐ **(ii)** the development and implementation of emergency plans;

☐ **(11)** prepare, administer, or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examination;

☐ **(12)** conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct;

☐ **(13)** comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter;

☒ **(14)** discuss, before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process; or

☐ **(15)** discuss cybersecurity, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to:

- ☐ **(i)** security assessments or deployments relating to information resources technology;

- ☐ **(ii)** network security information, including information that is:

- ☐ **1.** related to passwords, personal identification numbers, access codes, encryption, or other components of the security system of a governmental entity;

- ☐ **2.** collected, assembled, or maintained by or for a governmental entity to prevent, detect, or investigate criminal activity; or

- ☐ **3.** related to an assessment, made by or for a governmental entity or maintained by a governmental entity, of the vulnerability of a network to criminal activity; or

- ☐ **(iii)** deployments or implementation of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices.

***PRESIDING OFFICER'S WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING ("CLOSING STATEMENT") UNDER THE
OPEN MEETINGS ACT (General Provisions Article § 3-305)
This Certification Must Be Completed Before a Closed Session May Be Held***

For each citation checked the reasons for closing and topics to be discussed:

- (1)(i) Topic: Conduct of a member of a board or commission
Reason for Closure: Consideration of disciplinary action
 - (14) Topic: Facilities Master Plan Contract Discussion
Reason for Closure: Discuss negotiating parameters
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Persons attending closed session:

Mayor Jeannine James	Councilman Tyjon Johnson	
Councilman Paul Guttenberg	Chuck Stevens, Town Manager	
Councilman Patrick McCormick	Michelle Miner, Assistant Town Manager	
Councilman Gregory Sampson Jr.		

Action(s) Taken:

- (1)(i) Council gave direction to the Town Manager concerning a personnel matter involving a member of a Town board or commission.
 - (14) Council provided negotiating parameters concerning a contract negotiation involving the Facilities Master Plan RFP. Staff will bring the contract to Council during open session for consideration at a future date.
-

Time closed session adjourned: 8:12 PM

This statement is made by Mayor Jeannine E. James, Presiding Officer: _____