

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF FREDERICK COUNTY
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, January 20, 2026**

Council Members Mason Carter, Jerry Donald, Kavonte Duckett, M.C. Keegan-Ayer, Renee Knapp, Steve McKay, and Brad Young were present for the meeting.

Also present were Catherine Keller, Assistant County Attorney; Ragen Cherney, Chief of Staff, County Council; Nancy Luna, Executive Assistant, County Council; Abby Boroughs, Administrative Specialist, County Council; and Sydnee Klimko, Senior Legislative Analyst, County Council.

Council President Brad Young called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Opening Statement from Council President Brad Young

Council President Brad Young provided an opening statement at the start of the meeting. Included in that statement was a welcome to the Legislative Day for Tuesday, January 20, 2026, and information on how to watch and participate in the meeting.

The meeting began with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council President Brad Young asked staff to call roll and a quorum was established.

Action on the Agenda

Council Member M.C. Keegan-Ayer moved to approve the agenda for 01/20/2026, as presented. Council Member Renee Knapp seconded the motion that passed 7-0.

Council Members	Aye	Nay	Absent/ Abstain/ Present
District 1 – Donald	X		
District 2 – McKay	X		
District 3 – Keegan-Ayer	X		
District 4– Duckett	X		
District 5 – Carter	X		
At Large – Knapp	X		
Presiding Officer – Young	X		

Public Comment

Public Comment was heard from:

- Kelly Schultz
- Mark Long
- David Bulitski
- Brian Hanes

With no further comments, Council President Brad Young closed Public Comment.

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Approval of Minutes

Council Member M.C. Keegan-Ayer moved to approve the minutes from 01/062026 as presented. Council Member Renee Knapp seconded the motion that passed 7-0.

Council Members	Aye	Nay	Absent/ Abstain/ Present
District 1 – Donald	X		
District 2 – McKay	X		
District 3 – Keegan-Ayer	X		
District 4– Duckett	X		
District 5 – Carter	X		
At Large – Knapp	X		
Presiding Officer – Young	X		

Budget Adjustment(s) – Kelly Weaver, Director, Budget Office

Council Member Jerry Donald moved to approve the following budget adjustment:

- J-26-197 – Accounting Department, Division of Finance
- J-26-198 – Accounting Department, Division of Finance
- J-26-201 – Accounting Department, Division of Finance

Council Vice President Kavonté Duckett seconded the motion that passed 7-0.

Council Members	Aye	Nay	Absent/ Abstain/ Present
District 1 – Donald	X		
District 2 – McKay	X		
District 3 – Keegan-Ayer	X		
District 4– Duckett	X		
District 5 – Carter	X		
At Large – Knapp	X		
Presiding Officer – Young	X		

Frederick County Board of Education Nominee Interview and Vote – County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

County Executive Jessica Fitzwater introduced the Council on the Frederick County Board of Education Nominee, Chad Wilson.

The County Council interviewed Chad Wilson by asking the following questions:

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1. What do you see as the primary role of a Board of Education member, and how should the board balance oversight with respect for local educators and administrators?
2. How will you approach decisions when there is strong public disagreement—particularly between parents, educators, and community groups?
3. What metrics or evidence do you believe are most important when evaluating student success and school performance beyond standardized test scores?
4. How should the board address achievement gaps and ensure equity across districts with very different resources and student populations?
5. What is your philosophy on curriculum oversight, and where do you draw the line between educational expertise and board intervention?
6. How do you plan to ensure transparency and public accountability in board decision-making?
7. What experience or perspective do you bring that will most influence how you serve on the board, and how will you continue learning while in this role?

Council Member Mason Carter moved to postpone the vote to confirm or deny the appointment of Chad Wilson to the Frederick County Board of Education to the January 27th, 2026, meeting. Council Member Steve McKay seconded the motion that failed 2-5, with Council Members Jerry Donald, Kavonté Duckett, M.C. Keegan-Ayer, Renee Knapp, and Brad Young opposed.

Council Members	Aye	Nay	Absent/ Abstain/ Present
District 1 – Donald		X	
District 2 – McKay	X		
District 3 – Keegan-Ayer		X	
District 4– Duckett		X	
District 5 – Carter	X		
At Large – Knapp		X	
Presiding Officer – Young		X	

Council Vice President Kavonté Duckett moved to confirm the appointment of Chad Wilson to the Frederick County Board of Education. Council Member Renee Knapp seconded the motion that passed 5-2, with Council Members Mason Carter and Steve McKay opposed.

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Council Members	Aye	Nay	Absent/ Abstain/ Present
District 1 – Donald	X		
District 2 – McKay		X	
District 3 – Keegan-Ayer	X		
District 4– Duckett	X		
District 5 – Carter		X	
At Large – Knapp	X		
Presiding Officer – Young	X		

Resolution for Signature Purposes of the Critical Digital Infrastructure Comprehensive Plan Amendment – Council President Brad Young

The Council signed the resolution of the Critical Digital Infrastructure Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

Ordinance for Signature Purposes on the Comprehensive Zoning for the Critical Digital Infrastructure Overlay Zone – An Element of the Livable Frederick Comprehensive Plan – Council President Brad Young

The Council signed the ordinance of the Comprehensive Zoning for the Critical Digital Infrastructure Overlay Zone – An Element of the Livable Frederick Comprehensive Plan.

Confirmations of the County Executive’s Appointments to Frederick County Boards and Commissions - Miranda Ducey, Administrative Coordinator - Boards and Commissions, County Executive’s Office

Council Member Renee Knapp moved to approve the County Executive’s appointment of Brooke Gomulka, Chief, Domestic Violence Unit as the States’s Attorney’s Office representative’s designee as a voting member with no term expiration. Council Member M.C. Keegan-Ayer seconded the motion that passed 7-0.

Council Members	Aye	Nay	Absent/ Abstain/ Present
District 1 – Donald	X		
District 2 – McKay	X		
District 3 – Keegan-Ayer	X		
District 4– Duckett	X		
District 5 – Carter	X		
At Large – Knapp	X		
Presiding Officer – Young	X		

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) - 2026 Board and Committee Appointments - Miranda Ducey, Administrative Coordinator, Boards and

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Commissions – Office of the County Executive

Council Member Renee Knapp moved to approve the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) - 2026 Board and Committee Appointments as presented by staff. Council Member M.C. Keegan-Ayer seconded the motion that passed 7-0.

Council Members	Aye	Nay	Absent/ Abstain/ Present
District 1 – Donald	X		
District 2 – McKay	X		
District 3 – Keegan-Ayer	X		
District 4– Duckett	X		
District 5 – Carter	X		
At Large – Knapp	X		
Presiding Officer – Young	X		

Proposed Resolution - Carrollton Manor Rural Legacy Area Amendment -
Shannon O’Neil, Land Preservation Program Administrator – Office of Agriculture

Shannon O’Neil briefed the Council on Proposed Resolution - Carrollton Manor Rural Legacy Area Amendment.

Council Member M.C. Keegan-Ayer moved to approve Proposed Resolution - Carrollton Manor Rural Legacy Area Amendment. Council Member Renee Knapp seconded the motion that passed 5-2, with Council Members Jerry Donald and Steve McKay opposed.

Council Members	Aye	Nay	Absent/ Abstain/ Present
District 1 – Donald		X	
District 2 – McKay		X	
District 3 – Keegan-Ayer	X		
District 4– Duckett	X		
District 5 – Carter	X		
At Large – Knapp	X		
Presiding Officer – Young	X		

2026 Maryland Department of Transportation Priority Letter - Mark Mishler, Traffic Engineer – Permitting and Development Review, Planning and Permitting Division

Mark Mishler briefed the Council on the 2026 Maryland Department of Transportation Priority Letter.

The County Council unanimously agreed to support the 2026 Maryland Department of

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Transportation Priority Letter, with the removal of the paragraph referencing the Investing in Workers and Workplaces, located on page 3.

Council President Brad Young passed the gavel to Council Vice President Kavonté Duckett in order to make a motion.

Third Reading Calendar:

- a) Bill 25-14 - Amendments to Ch 1-19 of the Frederick County Code to Update the Land Use Table – Council President Brad Young

Council Member Brad Young moved to approve Bill 25-14 - Amendments to Ch 1-19 of the Frederick County Code to Update the Land Use Table. Council Member Renee Knapp seconded the motion that passed 7-0.

Council Members	Aye	Nay	Absent/ Abstain/ Present
District 1 – Donald	X		
District 2 – McKay	X		
District 3 – Keegan-Ayer	X		
District 4– Duckett	X		
District 5 – Carter	X		
At Large – Knapp	X		
Presiding Officer – Young	X		

Council President Brad Young regained the gavel and presided over the remainder of the meeting.

Public Comment

Public Comment was heard from:

- Mark Florimbio
- Laura O’Neil
- Steve Cassis

With no further comments, Council President Brad Young closed Public Comment.

Council Member Comments

Council Member comments were provided.

Upcoming Meetings

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- Tuesday, January 27, 2026
- Tuesday, February 3, 2026

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Brad W. Young, President
County Council