



RockvilleReports

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2022
HAPPY
NEW YEAR

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City Hall Opening Delayed Following Surge in COVID-19 Cases

Rockville will delay reopening City Hall following a surge in COVID-19 cases driven by the new, more infectious omicron variant.

The Mayor and Council discussed the delayed reopening at their Monday, Dec. 20 meeting. City Hall was set to reopen Monday, Jan. 3. The Mayor and Council will revisit the discussion at their Monday, Jan. 10 meeting.

"A vaccination against COVID-19 and a booster shot, as well as covering up with a face mask, are still the best defense against the virus," City Manager Rob DiSpirito said. "If you have not yet been vaccinated, I encourage you to do so as soon as possible in the interest of your health and that of our community."

Information about testing and vaccinations can be found on Montgomery County's COVID-19 Information portal at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19.

To learn more about how to get a vaccination, go to www.GoVaxMoco.com.

City staff and the Mayor and Council continue to review city protocols as health guidance and conditions evolve daily, and will adjust requirements for city facilities as needed.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,

the omicron variant, which accounted for less than 1% of cases at the start of December, now accounts for about three-quarters of new COVID-19 cases in the U.S.

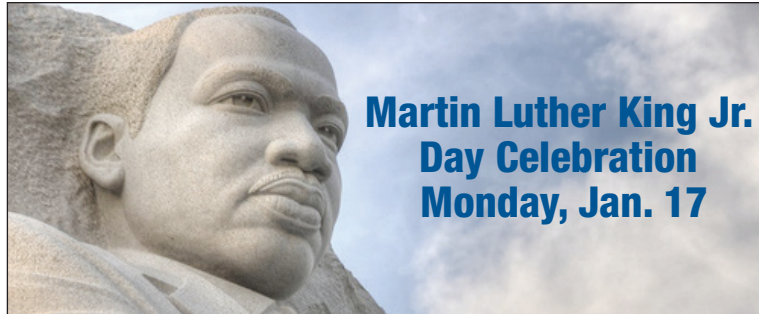
Maryland's seven-day positivity rate was at 10.27%, the highest it has been since January 2021, according to the Maryland COVID-19 Data Dashboard at coronavirus.maryland.gov.

City Hall has been closed since March 14, 2020, in an effort to protect the health of Rockville employees and the public, and prevent the spread of COVID-19. City government remains open with employees reporting on-site, in the field or virtually. The city's virtual services can be accessed through www.rockvillemd.gov.

Rockville employees are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and to have received booster shots, unless exempt for religious or medical reasons. Employees with approved exemptions are required to undergo mandatory weekly COVID-19 testing. The policy covers temporary, part- and full-time employees who work on-site and remotely.

The city is also pausing its recreational youth basketball program, and will continue to follow the advice and actions of the county's health department.

continued on pg. 8...



Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration Monday, Jan. 17

Rockville's Virtual MLK Day to Celebrate 'MLK50: Past, Present and Future'

Rockville's 50th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration, "MLK50: Past, Present and Future," will take place Monday, Jan. 17.

The celebration will include a video presentation at 10 a.m. on Rockville 11, channel 11 on county cable, and the city's YouTube channel, highlighting past Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebrations and Mayor and Council initiatives to promote equity and inclusion in Rockville.

Harmony's African-American Legacy Organization will host an interactive virtual event from noon-1:45 p.m. online via Webex. HALO will introduce barber-shop songs, engage in racial equity discussions and lead group discussions guided by prompts from King's book "Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?" Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/mlk to preregister and join live.

The virtual event will include the presentation of the Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Award to

a student at a Rockville high school who has worked to fulfill King's dream, and the F. Michael Taff Award to an individual, organization or business that has helped to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

The city has planned activities, following social distancing guidelines, for a week of service from Jan. 17-23. They are: cleanups of a trail at Croydon Creek Nature Center; a Weed Warrior activity; creating care kits for new immigrants and refugees; a self-guided neighborhood cleanup; making blankets for sick children, scarves for families in need and handmade crafts for children in need; and writing thank-you notes for seniors. Space is limited for these activities.

Find more information, including how to register, and discover other ways to give back to the community, at www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer. ✚

New Year's and Martin Luther King Jr. Day Bring Closures in Rockville

City Hall and city facilities will be closed on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, Friday, Dec. 31 and Saturday, Jan. 1 and some facilities will be closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Monday, Jan. 17.

City Hall's reopening has been delayed. See the article on this page for details.

Friday, Dec. 31: City Hall and most city facilities will be closed, including the Rockville Senior Center; Croydon Creek Nature Center; Lincoln Park, Thomas Farm and Twinbrook community centers; Glenview Mansion; the Rockville Civic Center business office; and the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre box office, which is closed through Monday, Jan. 10. Theater tickets are always available at www.rockvillemd.gov/theatre.

The Rockville Swim and Fitness Center will be open with limited services and activities. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/swimcenter for details. Recycling and trash are not collected on Fridays. Collections will occur as usual during this holiday week.

New Year's Day, Saturday, Jan. 1: City Hall and all city facilities will be closed.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday, Jan. 17: City Hall and most city facilities will be closed. The Rockville Swim and Fitness Center will be open for regular hours. All

continued on pg. 2...

Rockville Celebrates Fifth Year of Full Marks for LGBTQ+ Support

For a fifth consecutive year, and for the 10th anniversary of the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index, Rockville has scored perfect marks for the city's commitment to the health, welfare, safety and equality of its lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community.

Rockville scored a perfect 100 out of 100, plus an additional 10 bonus points, for its nondiscrimination laws, law enforcement, employment and workplace inclusivity, leadership, and services to the LGBTQ+ community.

"So much of this progress has

been fueled by municipalities leading with equity, inclusion and respect," HRC Foundation interim president Joni Madison states in the report's introduction. "These city leaders understand that when LGBTQ+ residents and visitors are welcomed and embraced, this helps their entire municipality thrive."

The 10th annual MEI scorecard, released in November, analyzes and rates 506 municipalities across the country, measuring each for the inclusivity of laws, policies and services for their LGBTQ+ communities.

This year, the cities rated in-

clude the 50 state capitals, the 200 largest cities in the U.S., the five largest cities or municipalities in each state, cities home to the state's two largest public universities, 75 cities and municipalities that have high proportions of same-sex couples, and 98 cities selected by HRC and Equality Federation state group members and supporters.

Ranked cities comprise more than 94.2 million in population.

Cities are rated across numerous criteria, covering citywide nondiscrimination protections, policies for municipal employees, city services, law enforcement and

the city's leadership on LGBTQ+ equality.

Rockville's 2021 MEI report can be found at www.hrc.org/resources/municipalities/rockville. Learn more about the MEI at www.hrc.org/resources/municipalities.

Rockville was one of nine Maryland municipalities and census-designated areas ranked, and one of five that scored full marks on the MEI. ✚

City	Score	Gaithersburg	.100
Rockville	100	Baltimore	95
College Park	.100	Annapolis	79
Columbia	100	Hagerstown	...68
Frederick	100	Bowie	60

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In This Issue...

- 2 Be In-the-Know About Snow**
- 3 City Priorities for the General Assembly**
- 4 Recycling and Trash Holiday Schedule**
- 6 Health and Wellness at the Senior Center**

MAYOR & COUNCIL
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Rockville, Maryland
20850-2364

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City to Launch Legistar Agenda System

The City of Rockville will launch this month a new, more accessible webpage to host information on public meetings for the Mayor and Council, and boards, commissions and task forces.

While the new system — Legistar — will look new, it will have the same information that's always been available, only easier to navigate. Legistar and the existing agenda management system will operate side-by-side while previous meeting information is migrated and archived on the new system.

The service will include agenda packets for each meeting ahead of time, video (where meetings are televised) and minutes. In addition, a tab will direct agenda-watchers to elected and appointed officials and their contact information.

For now, meeting information is available at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter.

Volunteer to Shovel Snow for an Elderly Neighbor

Each winter, the Rockville Senior Center looks for ways to help older Rockville residents with snow removal. If you're handy with a shovel and don't mind digging out an extra driveway or clearing a walkway or two, you can sign up and volunteer for the program.

The senior center's home maintenance coordinator organizes the program and can connect you with neighbors in need near your home.

To sign up to volunteer or to request snow-shoveling assistance, email Jerry Jones at jjones@rockvillemd.gov, call Jones at 240-314-8819 or call the Senior Center Support Services office at 240-314-8810.

To sign up for assistance or volunteer online, visit bit.ly/snowshovelvolunteer.

Learn more about 60-plus programs, courses, activities and services at www.rockvillemd.gov/seniorcenter or by calling 240-314-8800. For more on 60-plus activities, see the "Adults 60+" recreation guide at www.rockvillemd.gov/life.

When winter weather strikes, turn to the city's website at www.rockvillemd.gov/winterweather for information about Rockville's snow removal policies.

Kids Can Adventure Anew in 2022

Rockville's 2022 summer camps are back. Mark your calendars and be ready to choose your own adventure. Registration will open Thursday, March 10.

Rockville's summer activities will feature games, crafts and water activities outdoors, whenever possible.

Activities will include sports, cooking, Croydon Creek Nature Camps, music, drama, science, teen programs and park adventures. Camps will be open to residents and nonresidents.

Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/camps for more information, see the "Summer Camps 2022" guide when it publishes in March digitally at www.rockvillemd.gov/life, or in print at City Hall, community centers and other facilities.

January City Closures

continued from pg. 1...

other city facilities will be closed. Recycling and trash collections will occur one day later than usual throughout the week.

For more information on recycling and trash collection, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash or call 240-314-8568.

Parking will be free at city-owned meters on Dec. 31, Jan. 1 and Jan. 17.

Learn more at www.rockvillemd.gov or call 240-314-5000.

During COVID-19, please check our online resources to see if any information contained in this edition of "Rockville Reports" has changed. ❀

Snow How: Be In-the-Know About Winter Weather

Quick Links, Facts and Phone Numbers

When winter weather strikes, turn to the city's website at www.rockvillemd.gov.

Closure and snow emergency information will be available on the website, as well as through Facebook (www.facebook.com/cityofrockville) and Twitter (@rockville411), and by signing up for Alert Rockville notifications at www.rockvillemd.gov/alerts.

City crews treat and plow roads in priority order. First are primary roads, including major arterial roads, emergency routes, central business districts and primary residential roads near schools. Next are secondary roads, including the remainder of neighborhood streets, alleyways and cul-de-sacs. To check if an address is within the city limits, find the Address and Residency Check map at www.rockvillemd.gov/maps.

This snow season, the city is again urging patience on the part of residents as operations and normal service times may be impacted

due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Crews will respond as quickly and safely as possible.

Removing snow from sidewalks, driveways and entrances is the responsibility of the property and/or business owner or a community association. Rockville requires that snow and ice be removed from sidewalks, steps, driveways, parking spaces and similar paved areas for public use within 24 hours after a snowfall of up to three inches, within 48 hours after a snowfall of three to 10 inches, and within 72 hours after a snowfall of more than 10 inches. If residents can do so, they should clear snow from around fire hydrants and storm drains. To report a sidewalk that has not been cleared within the required timeframe, call 240-314-8330.

Residents are encouraged to check on older neighbors who may need assistance clearing snow. See the article on this page about the city's volunteer snow shoveling for seniors. ❀

NUMBERS TO KNOW

Emergency	911
Report a Downed Tree to the City.	240-314-8700
City of Rockville Dept. of Public Works	240-314-8500
Water Main Breaks/Sewer Line Overflows	240-314-8567
Rockville City Police Dept. (non-emergency)	240-314-8900
Rockville Recreation Programs Cancellation Line	240-314-5023
Rockville City Hall	240-314-5000
Report a Power Outage or Downed Wire to Pepco ...	1-877-737-2662
Montgomery County Hypothermia Alerts (report safety concerns for people or pets)	301-279-8000



ALERT
Rockville

Winter is here! And snow!

Get an Alert Rockville account
at www.rockvillemd.gov/alerts.

Be even more in-the-know when it
snows: Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/winterweather.

Rewarding Neighborliness with a Good Neighbor Awards Nomination

Rockville prides itself on being a community of good neighbors — we need your help in finding them.

The city is seeking nominations, through 5 p.m. Friday Feb. 25, for its Good Neighbor Awards. The program recognizes community members who are unselfishly giving back and improving quality of life in their neighborhoods through good deeds or community service.

The program is designed to honor those who make a difference in our community without seeking or receiving recognition for their service.

Nominees are sought in five categories:

- **Individual adults:** An individual who meets a need in the community by promoting service, social justice, equity, diversity, inclusion and positive change.
- **Individual youth:** An individual up to 18 years of age who meets a need in the community, especially through promoting service, social justice, equity, diversity, inclusion and positive change.
- **Nonprofit:** A group or individual dedicated to improving, encouraging and

promoting services that help to improve the lives of individuals in under-represented communities, ensuring access to resources and opportunities.

- **Businesses:** A group or individual dedicated to improving, encouraging and promoting sustainable economic development, especially that which serves under-represented communities, ensuring access to resources and opportunities.
- **Rockville partner:** A person or organization from outside Rockville that has contributed to the good of the city's community.

Award nominees must be Rockville residents, except in the "Rockville partner" category, and must have made a significant contribution to an individual or the community during 2021. Nominators may not nominate themselves. The Mayor and Council will celebrate volunteers and good neighbor awardees at a special event in 2022.

For more information and nomination forms, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/goodneighbor. ❀

Grant Program Seeks Projects to Improve Communities

Applications Are Being Accepted

The city's matching grant program helps neighbors work together to accomplish common goals that support the health, vitality and inclusivity of the place they call home.

Community Empowerment Matching Grant applications are being accepted through Friday, Feb. 4. Approved grants will become available Wednesday, March 9.

Neighborhood, civic or homeowners associations, community groups, organized groups of neighbors and student groups are eligible to apply. Neighbors and organizations willing to match funding through cash, in-kind donations and volunteer hours are also eligible.

Applications are reviewed and grants are awarded by the City Manager's Office.

Grants typically range from \$500-\$1,000 each, must benefit a clearly identified area within city limits and

may address any or all of the following objectives:

Building community:

Projects that promote the development or sustainability of a neighborhood association or community group. Activities that foster diversity, equity and inclusion.

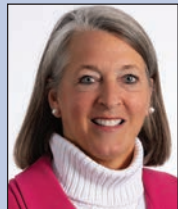
Community improvement projects:

Projects that improve the shared space within a neighborhood or strengthen community identity. This may include landscape improvements and maintenance, natural features management, benches, painting or certain exterior improvements. Bonus points will be awarded if two or more groups work together on a project.

Livability initiatives:

Projects that provide educational and outreach opportunities that strengthen social connections between

continued on pg. 8...



Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton
240-314-8291
bnewton@rockvillemd.gov



Councilmember Monique Ashton
240-314-8293
mashton@rockvillemd.gov



Councilmember Beryl L. Feinberg
240-314-8293
bfeinberg@rockvillemd.gov



Councilmember David Myles
240-314-8294
dmyles@rockvillemd.gov



Councilmember Mark Pierzchala
240-314-8292
mpierzchala@rockvillemd.gov

VIRTUAL MEETINGS ARE BEING HELD ONLINE. Meetings are closed to in-person attendance and are livestreamed at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11.

Meetings Schedule: Mondays, Jan. 10 and 31 at 7 p.m., with a work session at 7 p.m. Jan. 24. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter for details.

The Jan. 10 meeting will be preceded by a drop-in session by telephone with Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton and Councilmember Mark Pierzchala from 5:30-6:30 p.m. To participate, sign up by 10 a.m. the day of the drop-in at www.rockvillemd.gov/FormCenter/City-Clerk-11/Sign-up-for-Dropin-Meetings-227.

If you wish to submit comments in writing for community forum or public hearings, please email mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov by 10 a.m. on the day of. Share comments live during community forum. Sign up by calling the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations at 240-314-8280 by 10 a.m. the day of the meeting. All comments will be acknowledged by the Mayor and Council at the meeting and added to the agenda for public viewing on the website. To practice responsible social distancing, Mayor and Council meetings will be conducted by teleconference and broadcast on Rockville 11, channel 11 on county cable, livestreamed at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11, and available a day after each meeting at www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand.

Happy New Year from Rockville's Mayor and Council!

City Legislative Priorities: Legal Notices, Schools, Fighting Climate Change and Protecting Homes

Maryland General Assembly's 90-Day Session Begins Jan. 12

Rockville's 2022 state legislative priorities include authorization of electronic legal notices, education funding, protecting homes and businesses from the state's project to widen Interstate 270, and combating climate change.

The 2022 state legislative session runs from Wednesday, Jan. 12-Monday, April 11 in Annapolis. Under priorities approved by the Mayor and Council on Nov. 1, the city will advocate for:

- Jurisdictions to be allowed to post electronic legal notices. With no local print newspapers in Montgomery County, Rockville is forced to post costly print notices in "The Washington Post."
- Increased state aid for school operations and construction to support education from birth through community college.
- No Rockville homes, businesses or infrastructure to be taken by the state's I-495 and I-270 Managed Lanes Project.
- Noise barrier projects for all communities impacted by the Interstate 270 project.
- Climate change policy initiatives including, but not limited to, climate resiliency, flood plain planning and resilience, community choice aggregation for energy purchasing, electric vehicle incentives, and renewable energy.
- Increased funding for senior transportation services, recreation and wellness programs, senior programs in neighborhoods, aging-in-place and village initiatives, and outreach to increase awareness of these services and programs.

- An increase in the fine for illegally modified vehicle exhaust systems that generate excessive noise and disrupt the quality of life in neighborhoods.
 - \$250,000 for renovations to the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre and Social Hall to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
 - Rockville is also supporting two Maryland Municipal League-backed priorities:
 - Full and permanent restoration of municipal Highway User Revenue funding, beginning in Fiscal Year 2025. This share of state fuel and vehicle taxes is distributed to local governments for road and bridge maintenance. Fiscal Year 2022 is the third year of a five-year state budget restoration of aid to a level that is approximately 85% of what it was before the 2008 recession. The state estimates Rockville will receive \$2.6 million in aid in FY 2022, about 78% of the pre-recession level of \$3.3 million.
 - A revision to state law so that municipalities have the option of creating their own police accountability board and administrative charging committee.
- The Mayor and Council on Dec. 20 discussed these priorities with the District 17 delegation, which represents Rockville in the General Assembly. Find video of that discussion, as well as the Nov. 1 discussion, and staff reports at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter, or contact Linda Moran at lmoran@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8115. ✚

FY 2021 Financial Reports Highlight Rockville's Finances

Two annual reports released last month give the public a closer look at Rockville's financial health during the most recently completed fiscal year.

For Fiscal Year 2021, which closed June 30, the city ended with an overall net position of \$307.1 million, an increase of 4.7% over last year, City Manager Rob DiSpirito wrote in the city's Popular Annual Financial Report, a summary document highlighting

the city's finances. Net position is a useful indicator of a government's financial health and represents total assets minus total liabilities.

"The change in net position is based on increases in property tax revenue, coupled with conservative spending across City departments and programs," DiSpirito wrote.

That left the city with a general *continued on pg. 7...*

Mayor and Council Adopt Fee Increases to Cover Development Costs

The Mayor and Council voted Dec. 6 to increase development fees across the board by an average 2.5% to address increased expense from development-related city services and the cost of new efficiency-oriented technology.

Building fees were last updated in 2018. Development fees have remained unchanged since 2011. The new fee structure will go into effect Monday, Feb. 7.

Building fees consist mainly of building and trade-related permits, nonbusiness licenses, fire safety permits and life safety reviews on new commercial buildings, additions and alterations, as well as occupancy permits.

A new sign variance fee will cover costs associated with changes in the sign ordinance adopted in 2019. A new fee for minor commercial developments will cover the cost of review and notification for this new, expedited process.

Minimum electrical permit and residential alteration fees were increased to slightly higher rates, aligning them with other similar permit fee types. Some adjustments to the structure lowered fees for certain services. For example, residential solar panels and electric-vehicle charging fixtures and outlets fees were reduced by roughly 50% to encourage installation.

Fees will also change for public works development-related permits, either directly or as reflected through 2.5% increases to the Department of Public Works' standard prices for cost estimating, which is used to determine bond and fee amounts. A new fee for fire hydrant flow testing will cover the cost of service provided by city crews.

Residential parking fees, which haven't been adjusted since 1985, will be raised from \$2 a year to \$5 a year.

For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/165/Permits-Inspections, see the staff report attached to the Dec. 6 Mayor and Council agenda at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter, or contact John Foreman at jforeman@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8262. ✚



**LEARN MORE
ABOUT THE CITY
ON ROCKVILLE 11**
www.youtube.com/cityofrockville

Get Involved with the City

- **Send an email** to mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov.
- **Testify at a hearing** or in writing to mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov or by mail to the Mayor and Council, Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850.
- **Volunteer** to be on a board or commission. Find ways to give of your time and talents at www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer.

Boards and Commissions

Anyone interested in serving on a board or commission may write to: Mayor and Council, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, call 240-314-8280, or fill out and submit an expression of interest form at www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions.

While some meetings are canceled, other boards and commissions meetings will take place virtually. See times and dates, and ways to participate on city's online calendar: www.rockvillemd.gov/calendar.aspx.

- **Jan. 12 and 26 Planning Commission 7 p.m.** (Meetings will be held by teleconference. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter for details closer to the meeting dates.)

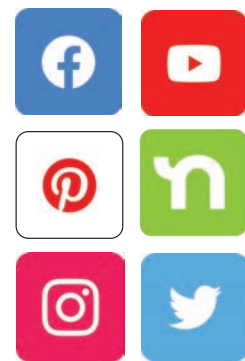
Vacancies

The Mayor and Council are seeking applicants for the following boards and commissions:

- Board of Appeals (1)
- Community Policing Advisory Board (3)
- Compensation Comm. (1)
- Cultural Arts Commission (2)
- Ethics Commission (1)
- Historic District Comm. (1)
- Human Rights Comm. (2)
- Recreation and Parks Advisory (1)
- Retirement Board (1)
- Rockville Housing Enterprises (1)
- Traffic and Transportation Commission (1)

For more, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions or call 240-314-8280.

Connect with us on Social Media.



► SPEAK UP ◀

Report potential fraud, waste and abuse related to City of Rockville government services and employees.

Call 1-866-921-6714

Email rockvillemd@integritycounts.ca
Visit www.integritycounts.ca/org/rockvillemd
For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/fraud-waste-abuse.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS: Main: 240-314-5000

Police Non-emergency: 240-314-8900

24-Hour Utility Emergency Report Hotline: 240-314-8567



STAY INFORMED: The Mayor and Council meeting schedule and agendas can be found at www.rockvillemd.gov/mayorcouncil. Staff reports with background information are included with the agendas, which are posted several days before each meeting.

Winter Weed Warriors Wanted

Rockville's Weed Warriors are seeking volunteers for winter weed pulls aimed at removing non-native and invasive plants from parkland, woods and open space in our city.

- Weed Warrior winter workdays are from 1-3 p.m. on:
- **Sunday, Jan. 9** at Twinbrook Park.
 - **Monday, Jan. 17** (Martin Luther King Jr. Day) at Woottons Mill Park.
 - **Sunday, Jan. 23** at RedGate Park.
 - **Tuesday, Feb. 1** at Dawson Farm Park.
 - **Monday, Feb. 21** (Presidents Day) at RedGate Park.

Space is limited. Online registration is required at www.rockvillemd.gov/weedwarriors. Volunteers work at the direction of a team leader. Student Service Learning credits are available. Volunteers under 14 must be accompanied by an adult.

The Jan. 17 and Jan. 23 workdays are part of the city's Martin Luther King Jr. Day week of service. Learn about other week of service activities in the article on page 1.



Go Green in Your Inbox

Get regular updates about the city's environmental efforts and events, including news about Rockville's first Climate Action Plan, and tips for living greener year-round.

Sign up for the "Environment and Sustainability News" email newsletter at www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters.

Recycling the Holiday Season

When the post-holiday cleanup begins, remember: Rockville collects and recycles electronics, such as cell phones, computers, televisions and holiday lights through requests for special collections, and collects Christmas trees as part of its recycling and trash collection.

Place trees at the curb for pickup on regular recycling and trash collection days after removing all ornaments and metals, wires, stands and decorations, including tinsel. Trees should not be bagged. There is no deadline for curbside collection of trees. (Note that the Montgomery County Recycling Center, which formerly converted the trees into mulch, no longer offers this service.)

Artificial trees should be placed in the gray trash cart for regular weekly collection. Artificial trees that are too large to fit in the cart can be collected by appointment, as one of six bulk collections allowed per year, or taken to the transfer station.

Getting rid of old batteries? Don't dispose of them in your trash or recycling cart, where they could start a fire. Instead, bring batteries of any size to the household hazardous waste drop-off at the county transfer station at 16105 Frederick Road.

For batteries larger than 9 volts, including rechargeable batteries found in phones, laptops and power tools, cover the terminals with packing tape or duct tape and place them in a plastic bag or container, separate from batteries that don't require being taped.

Find more information, including locations that accept batteries for recycling, at bit.ly/BatteryDisposal.

For more information about how Rockville recycles, including printable holiday schedule calendars for your collection day, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash. For a bulk waste or electronics recycling collection appointment, select "Bulk Waste" or "Electronics & Metal" from the red sidebar at the left of the webpage.

Rockville Seeks Excellent Environmentalists for Earth Month Accolades

The City of Rockville's Environmental Excellence Awards recognize individuals and organizations that contribute to Rockville's environmental health and sustainability.

Nominations are being accepted in the following categories through 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 18 for awards to be presented during Earth Month in April:

- Outstanding Individual Environmental Stewardship.
- Outstanding Leadership in Environmental Practices.
- Outstanding Achievement in Green Building Technology/Design.
- Outstanding Environmental Education and Academic Achievement.

Eligible individuals must live, work or study within

the city. Eligible organizations must have an office in Rockville or must be able to demonstrate significant operations within the city limits. Building projects considered as part of a nomination must be within the city.

The awards are presented to an individual or organization by the Mayor and Council. Nominations and supplemental materials are received by the Environment Commission, which reviews the materials and recommends awards to the Mayor and Council.

For more information about the award categories and guidelines, application forms and eligibility, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/environment/awards, email environment@rockvillemd.gov, or call 240-314-8870.

Pesticide Law Applies – So Don't Apply Weed and Feed

The new year brings a new law regarding lawn care in Rockville.

The Mayor and Council voted in April to allow Montgomery County's pesticide law to apply in the city, effective Saturday, Jan. 1. The law restricts the use of certain pesticides on private lawns, playgrounds, mulched recreation areas and child care facilities, prohibiting most synthetic pesticides.

Organic lawn care is healthier for children, pets and the environment. And it doesn't mean your lawn has to be any less healthy or green. Find tips about making a successful switch to organic lawn care this spring at montgomerycountymd.gov/lawns.

To learn more, find the April 26 Mayor and Council agenda at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter.

How to Think Green When You See the White Stuff Environmentally Friendly Removal Tips

Walking in a winter wonderland can be wonderful. But it can also prove hazardous. Follow these tips to keep your sidewalks and driveway snow- and ice-free, while minimizing the environmental impact:

Shovel Early, Shovel Often: Removing fresh snow before it has a chance to harden into ice is the best way to keep your pavement clear. Deicers work best on thin layers of snow or ice that need to be melted, so shovel first, break up any ice patches you can and then add the salt.

Apply Salt Sparingly: Scatter the deicer and leave space between the grains. A

12-ounce coffee mug full of salt is enough to treat a 20-foot driveway or 10 sidewalk squares. Using more than the recommended amount of salt won't speed up melting but can harm soil and water quality.

Buy Early and Check Labels: Buy your deicing product before the big storm, so you don't end up staring at empty shelves in the stores. Check the label before you buy — although slightly more expensive, calcium chloride (CaCl2) requires less salt, works at lower temperatures and does not contain cyanide, unlike sodium chloride (NaCl, also known as

continued on pg. 7...

Attention Dog Owners Clean up after your dog.

Your dog did his duty, please do yours.

Rockville Recycling and Trash Collection - Holiday Schedule 2022

DATE	HOLIDAY	COLLECTION CHANGES
Friday, Dec. 31	New Year's Day (observed)	No changes. Collections occur as usual this week.
Monday, Jan. 17	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Monday, Feb. 21	Presidents Day (observed)	No changes. Collections occur as usual this week.
Monday, May 30	Memorial Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Monday, June 20	Juneteenth (observed)	No changes. Collections occur as usual this week.
Monday, July 4	Independence Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Monday, Sept. 5	Labor Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Monday, Oct. 10	Columbus Day	No changes. Collections occur as usual this week.
Tuesday, Nov. 8	Election Day	No changes. Collections occur as usual this week.
Friday, Nov. 11	Veterans Day	No changes. Collections occur as usual this week.
Thursday, Nov. 24	Thanksgiving Day	Thursday collections occur Friday. No other changes this week.
Monday, Dec. 26	Christmas Day (observed)	No changes. Collections occur as usual this week.

Find 2022 holiday collection schedule calendars for each collection day at www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.

City of Rockville
Get Into It

www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash • 240-314-8568

Make Sure Your Cart:

- Does not block sidewalks.
- Does not block mailboxes.
- Wheels are on the curb.
- Does not exceed a maximum weight of 165 pounds.
- Is removed within 24 hours of collection.

Thank you for helping to keep our community and collection crews safe.

Why Recycle?

Recycling conserves natural resources, prevents pollution, saves energy, reduces waste and sends less stuff to a landfill.

What Can be Recycled?

For a complete list of recyclable items, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.

No Plastic Bags

The city does not accept plastic bags or film of any type in recycling collections. Find grocery or retail stores that offer plastic bag collection bins near their entrances at bit.ly/howtorecyclebags.

A NEW WAY TO PAY ... City of Rockville water customers can now use Google Pay and Apple Pay to pay utility bills without having to visit City Hall or use snail mail. Visit www.invoicecloud.com/rockvillemd to pay online. And visit www.rockvillemd.gov/utilitybilling for information about paying bills, checking water rates and starting or stopping service.



WHAT IS VISION ZERO?

Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic and pedestrian fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, fair mobility for all.

Vision Zero is a strategy for a safer community.



Sets a goal of reducing, and eventually eliminating, traffic-related deaths or serious injuries.



Recognizes that people make mistakes and crashes will occur, but also that no one should lose their life or suffer life-altering injuries because of such mistakes.



Acknowledges that many factors contribute to safe mobility and requires an approach to examine the whole system.



Recognizes that while transportation safety benefits everyone, some members of the community are more at risk for experiencing a serious crash.



Uses data to target the cause of crashes before they occur, in order to lessen the severity of injuries.



Learn more at www.rockvillemd.gov/visionzero

Experience a Near Miss? Tell Us About It!

A “near miss” is an incident in which a person driving, walking or bicycling avoids a crash by suddenly stopping, swerving or moving. Residents and visitors who have experienced near misses in Rockville are encouraged to submit details of the incident through the Vision Zero Near Miss Survey at www.rockville

[md.gov/visionzero](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/visionzero).

This information will supplement the city’s annual crash analysis and help the city better understand the transportation-, pedestrian- and bicycle-safety experience in Rockville.

For help completing the survey, call the Rockville Senior Center at 240-314-8816. ✚

New Oversight System Means Better Protection Against Fire Reporting Program to Track Testing in Commercial Buildings

Rockville’s fire marshal and the Inspection Services Division will start using a new online oversight program — the Compliance Engine — Saturday, Jan. 15, to monitor testing of commercial fire-protections systems such as fire alarms, sprinklers and smoke controls.

Accurate and timely inspection reporting, combined

with a new capacity for tracking, will reduce false alarms and expedite fire protection system repair, while helping to ensure a greater ability to save lives and protect property in the city.

Learn more at www.rockvillemd.gov/173/inspections. ✚

SIGN UP

FOR THE CITY'S MANY NEWSLETTERS –

from environment to our newest volunteer news!

www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters



Winter Special Edition Rockville Farmers Market

Saturday, Jan. 8

Winter Hours: 9 a.m.-noon
Location: Corner of Route 28 and Monroe Street.
WIC and EBT/SNAP Accepted

GETTING THERE: Metro: Red Line • Ride On: Bus 47 and 56. Free parking available.



www.Facebook.com/RockvilleFarmersMarket

www.rockvillemd.gov/farmers • 240-314-8620



GOOD NEWS TO PERUSE ABOUT GIVING BACK ... Looking to lend your time, talents and expertise to the City of Rockville? Look no farther than “Volunteer Rockville,” a new newsletter arriving in email inboxes every-other month with news about nonprofits, programs seeking volunteers, Student Service Learning credit opportunities and profiles of volunteers and organizations serving as agents of change in our community. Sign up to receive the newsletter at www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters. Find the latest issue at mailchi.mp/rockvillemd/volunteer-martin-luther-king-service-week.



Help Make Rockville More Walkable!

The City of Rockville is developing its first Pedestrian Master Plan.

The plan will help guide the development, construction and maintenance of safe, convenient and equitable pedestrian facilities across the city.

Help envision – and design – the future of walking in Rockville.

Take our survey, engage with us and stay informed at engagerockville.com/pedestrian-master-plan



TAKE THE SURVEY
REALIZA LA ENCUESTA
参加调查




ROOM TO RIDE ... The city completed construction this fall on new bicycle lanes in both directions on Maryland Avenue between South Washington Street and Great Falls Road. The lanes improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians, including students walking to Julius West middle and Richard Montgomery high schools. They were recommended in 2017 as part of Rockville’s Bikeway Master Plan. At the request of the West End Civic Association, and with support from the Mayor and Council and city manager, \$60,000 was added to the city’s Capital Improvements Program budget for asphalt repair and replacement to build the project this year.



Baltimore Road Reopens as Improvement Project Continues

Baltimore Road has reopened to vehicle and pedestrian traffic between Gladstone and Broadwood drives as construction continues to improve safety and access along the corridor between Rockville Town Center and the city’s east side.

The road had been closed between Gladstone and Broadwood drives since June while a city contractor replaced the roadway culvert at the stream crossing near Rockville Cemetery, relocated water lines, installed storm drain connections and restored the stream.

Contractors completed base paving, sidewalk installation and restoration on Baltimore Road between Denham and Woodburn roads last month. They previously installed drainpipe and inlets, new curb and gutter, and pervious sidewalks along the roadway between First Street and Woodburn Road.

Crews continue to install new sanitary sewer along westbound Baltimore Road, on the roadway’s north side, between Woodburn Road and Edmonston Drive. Relocating the sewer, which is designed to avoid conflicts with the proposed storm drain, is expected to be completed by the end of January. Project progress is dependent on weather and supply-chain issues, which delayed the reopening of the previously closed segment of roadway.

Storm drain and sidewalks between Woodburn Road and Edmonston Drive will be installed during a future phase of the project. Residents will be notified before that work begins. Roadway resurfacing will be one of the final steps of the project, which is expected to be completed in spring 2022.

Learn more at www.rockvillemd.gov/baltimoreroadproject.

Rockville and Shady Grove Metro Stations to Reopen Jan. 16

Metro’s Rockville and Shady Grove stations will reopen Sunday, Jan. 16 after a four-month shutdown to repair and replace the stations’ aging canopies, Metro announced.

During the closures, Metro demolished the canopy at the Rockville station, erected a new steel canopy structure, and made improvements that include installation of new information screens, brighter lighting, modern fare gates, higher-quality announcement speakers and new closed-circuit television cameras. The Park and Ride has been repaved for safer, more accessible parking. At Shady Grove, the platform canopy, roof and escalators are being repaired, and modernized fare gates are being installed.

Parking remains available free-of-charge, but is limited, at the Shady Grove and Rockville stations while the stations are closed. Free shuttle buses are being provided during the closures, connecting the Shady Grove, Rockville and Twinbrook stations. The Twinbrook station remains open. Red Line trains are operating between Twinbrook and Glenmont at normal service levels.

While the stations will be open in January, the canopies will provide cover for customers but will remain temporarily unfinished until Metro determines the best type of exterior cladding needed to complete the project, it said.

Learn more at wmata.com/rockvillecanopy.

'Bad Seeds' Sewn on Fitzgerald Stage

Rockville Little Theatre will present "Bad Seeds" over six performances this and next month at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, 603 Edmonston Drive.

Showtimes are 8 p.m. Jan. 28-29, and Feb. 4-5; 2 p.m. Jan. 30 and Feb. 6. Tickets: \$22; \$20, seniors (62 and older) and students.

Christine Penmark seems to have it all, but when a child drowns under suspicious circumstances, the whole town starts to speculate about what really happened. Was it truly an accident? Was it a classmate? Who knows more than they're telling? Christine's secret past is revealed and the fear grows to a chilling finale in this psychological thriller.

Written by Maxwell Anderson from William March's novel. Directed by Pauline Griller-Mitchell.

Learn more about performances and events at Rockville Civic Center Park: Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/theatre; call 240-314-8690; or visit the box office, 2-6 p.m., Tuesday-Saturday. Note that the box office is closed through Monday, Jan. 10. For more info, email theatre@rockvillemd.gov.

A Little Piece of Land to Grow Your Own Registration Open for Garden Plots

If your yard's too small to cultivate the seasonal bounty you've always dreamed of, maybe it's time for an upgrade.

The City of Rockville has 193 garden plots, approximately 25-by-25 feet, available for rent at Woottons Mill Park for growing food and other plants.

The cost is \$85 per plot for nonresidents; Rockville residents pay \$75 per plot. Registration for the garden plot program opens Monday, Jan. 10. The season runs April 1-Nov. 13.

The city provides water spigots and mulch; gardeners are responsible for fencing, weed barriers, hoses, tools and other gardening supplies.

Registration forms can be found at www.rockvillemd.gov/gardenplots. Call the Rockville Civic Center's main office at 240-314-8660 or email woottonsmill@rockvillemd.gov for more info.

Lunar New Year: Save the Date

Celebrate Rockville's Asian cultures with performances, to-go activities and snacks at the city's Lunar New Year celebration.

The annual celebration will be held from 6-8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre at Rockville Civic Center Park, 603 Edmonston Drive. Multicultural performances begin at 6:15 p.m. and include dancing, drumming, martial arts, singing and instrumental performances.

Admission is free, but tickets will be required, with a maximum of four per household. Find additional details, as they become available, and tickets, beginning Monday, Jan. 10, at www.rockvillemd.gov/lunarnewyear.

In its 14th year, the Lunar New Year celebration is a source of pride for the city's Asian community and an educational opportunity for neighbors to learn about Asian culture. The city is organizing the celebration in partnership with Rockville's Asian Pacific American Task Force.

The celebration will mark 4720, the Year of the Tiger on the Chinese Zodiac calendar. One in three Rockville residents was born outside the United States and 54% of the city's foreign-born population was born in Asia, according to the city's planning department.

Glenview Mansion Art Gallery to Host Rockville Art League

The Rockville Art League Members' Juried Winter Show is on display at the Glenview Mansion Art Gallery through Friday, Jan. 14. Learn more about the league at rockvilleartleague.org.

The ADA-accessible gallery, on the second floor of Glenview Mansion at 603 Edmonston Drive, is open 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday and closed on official city holidays.

Health and Wellness, Language Skills and Social Security: What's Coming Up at the Senior Center

Stay home and stay healthy, and improve your English, with free online seminars from the Rockville Senior Center in January.

Register with the course number at www.rockvillemd.gov/registration. Learn about 60-plus programs, courses, activities and services at www.rockvillemd.gov/seniorcenter or by calling 240-314-8800. See the "Adults 60+" recreation guide at www.rockvillemd.gov/life for more.

Activities are held 1-2 p.m., except where noted.

Medical Management of Chronic Pain: Interventional vs. Noninterventional

Discuss the options and variations in care of chronic pain syndromes, ranging from injection therapeutics, use of physical modalities to integrative medicine methods to minimally invasive surgeries. Presented virtually by Dr. M. Massumi of Massumi Associates, Pain Management and Rehabilitation.

Register with course #20997. Wednesday, Jan. 12.

Better Breathers Club

Facilitated by an American Lung Association instructor, Kerri Donnelly, director of business development/community relations for Collingwood Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center. The club meets virtually on the third Thursday of each month, from Jan. 20-March 17, and features presentations on a variety of topics, including how lung disease affects the

lungs, breathing techniques, exercise, talking with your doctor, medication and other treatment options.

Register with course #21062.

Ask A Nurse Q & A: Blood Pressure

High blood pressure is often referred to as the "silent killer" because it may show no symptoms and increase the risk for heart disease, heart failure and stroke. Covers the basics and beyond, with blood pressure questions answered, led virtually by a registered nurse. Presented by Adventist HealthCare.

Register with course #21005. Tuesday, Jan. 18.

Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body: Tips from the Latest Research

Covers four areas of lifestyle habits associated with healthy aging and designed for individuals of any age looking for information and hands-on tools to incorporate recommendations into a plan for healthy aging. Presented virtually by the Alzheimer's Association.

Register with course #21004. 1-2:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 19.

Your Heart, Your Life Series, Session 4: Help Your Heart, Control Your Blood Pressure

An evidence-based virtual NIH program with lessons providing information to understand, build skills, assess and set goals for healthy lifestyle changes.

Register with course

#21008. Tuesday, Jan. 25.

Stress Reduction/ Meditation

This virtual class offers the tools to focus, relax and come to a more peaceful sense of being, with time for both meditation and discussion. Presented by Betty Figlure.

Register with course #20996. Mondays, Jan. 10-March 21. \$30 for members, \$40 for nonmembers.

Improve Your English

Virtual online classes include reading, speaking, listening and pronunciation for seniors whose first language is not English. New students must schedule an English skills assessment before registering. Email program coordinator Amoke Alakoye at aalakoye@rockvillemd.gov to schedule an evaluation.

Returning students should register for the class recommended by their teacher. Courses are held 10 a.m.-noon on their respective days. \$20 for members, \$27 for nonmembers.

• **Basic English:** Register with course #21012. Mondays and Wednesdays, Jan. 10-March 16.

• **Beginning/High Beginning English:** Register with course #21013. Tuesdays and Thursdays, Jan. 11-March 17.

• **Intermediate English:** Register with course #21014. Tuesdays and Thursdays, Jan. 11-March 17.

• **Advanced English:** Register with course #21015. Mondays and Wednesdays,

Jan. 10-March 16.

English Conversation Virtual Classes

Speak more confidently about everyday topics. \$14 for members, \$18 for nonmembers.

• **Beginning Conversation: Let's Talk:** Register with course #21017. 1-3 p.m. Mondays, Jan. 10-March 14.

• **Advanced Conversation: More Talk:** Register with course #21016. 1-3 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 12-March 16.

Social Security

Join Diana Varela, a public affairs specialist with the Social Security Administration, for a virtual two-part program on Social Security. Both are 10-11:30 a.m.

• **Already receiving Social Security benefits:** Register with course #21612. Wednesday, Jan. 12.

• **Not receiving Social Security benefits:** Register with course #21729. Wednesday, Jan. 19.

Rockville Housing

Resident Services Programs Supervisor Stephanie Moore will provide a virtual overview of the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County, established in 1974 to better respond to the county's need for affordable housing, its locations in Rockville and the programs it offers.

Register with course #21238. 10-11 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 27. ✚

Free, Reconditioned Bikes for TERRIFIC Kids

Rockville has outstanding kids, and every T-E-R-R-I-F-I-C kid needs a bike. How do you prove you're TERRIFIC? Show us you're Trustworthy, Earnest, Respectful, Responsible, Involved, Fair, Industrious and Caring!

The TERRIFIC challenge gives free bikes to Rockville residents in grades 1-5 who fulfill six good deeds, such as volunteering with a charity, picking up litter in a public place or helping someone who is sick or elderly.

Due to the limited number of bicycles, participants must preregister for the free program by Friday, Feb. 18. Selected participants will be emailed information by

Tuesday, March 1 on how to track and submit their good deeds.

To be eligible, students must attend a school within Rockville's city limits and have a sponsor, e.g., a parent, grandparent, teacher, coach or guardian, to monitor their progress. Successful participants receive a certificate for taking part in the program and will be recognized for their TERRIFIC work at a Mayor and Council meeting on Monday, May 2.

Awardees will receive their reconditioned bike and new helmet during a special event Saturday, May 21, hosted by Rockville Bike Hub. Participants will

continued on pg. 7...



TAKE A BOOK, SHARE A BOOK ... Falls Grove residents can now take a book and share a book at a new Little Free Library at Falls Grove Park in Thomas Farm, made possible by the efforts of Girl Scout Troop 1890 and a donation from Thomas Farm Community Center to register the library.

Learn more about Little Free Libraries at littlefreelibrary.org. Find Falls Grove Park at rockvillemd.gov/2155/Falls Grove-Park and learn more about Thomas Farm Community Center at www.rockvillemd.gov/thomasfarm.



MORE NEWS, MORE OFTEN, ON YOUTUBE ... Now on Rockville 11's YouTube channel, (youtube.com/cityofrockville): See the lights go on at the Rockville Town Square tree lighting ceremony; learn about the Washington Street and East Middle Lane road diet; and celebrate Rockville's perfect score on the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index (also, see the article on page 1).

January CALENDAR

FACILITIES LEGEND:

- CC** Croydon Creek Nature Ctr., 852 Avery Rd., 240-314-8770.
- GM** Glenview Mansion, 603 Edmonston Dr., 240-314-8660.
- FSF** F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, 603 Edmonston Dr., 240-314-8690.
- LP** Lincoln Park Community Ctr., 357 Frederick Ave., 240-314-8780.
- CH** Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., 240-314-5000.
- SR** Rockville Senior Ctr., 1150 Carnation Dr., 240-314-8800.
- SFC** Rockville Swim and Fitness Ctr., 355 Martins Lane, 240-314-8750.
- TF** Thomas Farm Community Ctr., 700 Falls Grove Dr., 240-314-8840.
- TC** Twinbrook Comm. Rec. Ctr., 12920 Twinbrook Pkwy., 240-314-8830.

- V** Virtual Program/Offering
- F** Facebook Live Event



1

1 FIRST DAY HIKE Start the new year off on the right foot. Join a naturalist for a casual nature walk on the Heritage Trail (about 1 mile) on the first day of 2022. Bring water, appropriate footwear, a mask and be sure to dress for the weather. Ages 2 and older. \$4R/\$6NR. 10-11 a.m. **CC**

6 WINTER WANDERS FOR ADULTS: WINTER TREE ID Enjoy an easy hike through the Hayes Forest Preserve while you learn about the environment. Program is entirely outdoors. Dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes. Ages 18-plus. Registration required. \$5 R/\$6 NR. 11 a.m.-noon. **CC**

7 V DRUG INTERACTIONS: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW Learn about common drug interactions and what you need to know for optimal health and safety. Register with course #21860. Free. 1-2 p.m. **SR**

8 ROCKVILLE FARMERS MARKET A special winter edition of the Rockville Farmers Market. Jury parking lot at East Jefferson (MD 28) and Monroe streets. 9 a.m.-noon.

10 MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING See page 3 for details. 7 p.m.

12 V MEDICAL MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC PAIN: INTERVENTIONAL VS. NONINTERVENTIONAL See article on page 6. 1-2 p.m. **SR**

13 V GLENVIEW MANSION AND PEERLESS ROCKVILLE SPEAKER SERIES: THE HISTORY OF ROCKVILLE'S SISTER CITIES PROGRAM See article on page 8. 7 p.m.

17 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY City government and some city facilities closed. See page 1.

17 V MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY CELEBRATION See article on page 1. 10 a.m.

17 MLK DAY OF SERVICE TRAIL CLEANUP Improve your community and the environment. Participants receive gloves, a garbage bag and a set of trash pickers for the morning. Return the trash pickers to receive your SSL form! Children younger than 14 must be accompanied by an adult. Ages 12-plus. Register with course #21611. For more service week activities, see article on page 1. 10 a.m.-noon. **CC**

18 V ASK A NURSE Q & A: BLOOD PRESSURE See article on page 6. 1-2 p.m. **SR**



8



18

19 V HEALTHY LIVING FOR YOUR BRAIN AND BODY: TIPS FROM THE LATEST RESEARCH See article on page 6. 1-2:30 p.m. **SR**

20 V BETTER BREATHERS CLUB See article on page 6. 1-2 p.m. **SR**

23 FAMILIES OUTSIDE: TRACKS & TRAILS Explore John Hayes Forest Preserve habitats with naturalist-led nature outings. Adults and children must register; all children must be accompanied by an adult. Ages 3 and older. Register with course #21215. \$5 R/\$6 NR. 2-3 p.m. **CC**

24 MAYOR AND COUNCIL WORK SESSION See page 3 for details. 7 p.m.

25 V YOUR HEART, YOUR LIFE SERIES, SESSION 4: HELP YOUR HEART, CONTROL YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE See article on page 6. 1-2 p.m. **SR**

26 OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB — ACORNS Spending time in nature builds resilience, self-confidence and creativity. Form a nature exploration pod and spend the hour outdoors investigating and learning about nature. Dress for the weather; wear a mask. Roam the forest preserve with experienced naturalists. Meets every other week for four sessions. Ages 6-8. Register with course #21226. \$40 R/\$50 NR. 4-5 p.m. **CC**

29 LITTLE EXPLORERS Go on hiking adventures with our naturalists, play games and discover outdoor fun. Spaces limited. Dress for the weather; wear a mask. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Ages 2-5. Register with course 21220#. \$8 R/\$10 NR. 9:30-10:30 a.m. **CC**

29 LITTLE EXPLORERS Go on hiking adventures with our naturalists, play games and discover outdoor fun. Spaces limited. Dress for the weather; wear a mask. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Ages 2-5. Register with course 21221#. \$8 R/\$10 NR. 11 a.m.-noon. **CC**

30 OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB — SAPLINGS Spending time in nature builds resilience, self-confidence and creativity. Form a nature exploration pod and spend the hour outdoors investigating and learning about nature. Dress for the weather; wear a mask. Roam the forest preserve with experienced naturalists. Meets every other week for four sessions. Ages 9-11. Register with course #21227. \$40 R/\$50 NR. 2-3 p.m. **CC**

31 MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING See page 3 for details. 7 p.m.



30

R = Residents • NR = Nonresidents • MEM = Member • NM = Nonmember

FOR MORE INFO AND UP-TO-DATE EVENT LISTINGS: WWW.ROCKVILLEMD.GOV/CALENDAR.ASPX

TERRIFIC Kids and Free Bikes

continued from pg. 6...



receive a brief orientation on safety.

For questions or more information, call 240-314-8620.

Preregistration is required to be eligible to participate in the TERRIFIC Bike Award program. Register for course #21794 at www.rockvillemd.gov/registration.

Do you or someone you know have a bike to donate? Email info@rockvillebikehub.org or visit www.rockvillebikehub.org for more information. ❖

FY 2021 Financial Reports

continued from pg. 3...

fund reserve of \$22.9 million, equal to 27% of the total general fund, which is the main source of funding the city's day-to-day operations.

The city maintains a triple-A bond rating. Triple-A is the highest possible rating and saves Rockville taxpayers money by allowing the city to borrow at the lowest possible interest rates.

The city created the first PAFR in 2007 to explain, in layman's terms, the information

contained in Rockville's recently renamed Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, which DiSpirito presented to the Mayor and Council on Dec. 20. The ACFR is prepared by the Finance Department in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and is audited by certified public accountants.

The FY21 PAFR describes:

- City government and services.
- The city's financial structure, including governmental funds, such as the general fund, capital projects fund and

enterprise funds.

- The overall financial health of the city.
- The city's capital investments and debt.
- Property taxes and utility rates, including how to read tax and utility bills.

The PAFR and ACFR are available at www.rockvillemd.gov/budget. To view the ACFR presentation to the Mayor and Council, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter and select the television icon next to the Dec. 20 meeting listing.

To learn more, call the Finance Department at 240-314-8400. ❖



Apply salt or deicer sparingly and leave space between the grains.

Greener Snow Removal

continued from pg. 4...

rock salt). Urea is sometimes promoted as lawn-friendly, as excess urea will act as a fertilizer. However, the application rate for urea is far greater than your lawn would require, and most of the excess urea will only end up fertilizing the stream.

Avoid Kitty Litter and Ashes: While these products are environmentally friendly, they are only marginally effective at adding traction and won't melt ice. If you need traction, a better option is to mix in a small amount of sand and use less salt. ❖

Charter Review Commission Has Some Questions About City Elections

Online Questionnaire and Town Hall Meeting to Gather Community Input

Rockville's Charter Review Commission will use an online questionnaire, and is planning a town hall meeting, to gather community input about how to improve city elections for all.

While the next City of Rockville election is not until 2023, the Charter Review Commission is asking Rockville residents to start thinking about how to increase voter turnout, update the city's election process and engage more communities. About 70% of registered voters in Rockville did not vote in the city's 2019 election.

The questionnaire presents a unique opportunity to share thoughts with the commission and help create meaningful change for the next decade. The commission will use the responses to inform its ongoing work and is planning a town hall meeting later this winter. Watch the city's webpage and social media for details.

Find the questionnaire at www.rockvillemd.gov/Charter-Review-Commission. The deadline for responses is Friday, Feb. 11.

Every 10 years or so, the Charter Review Commission looks at ways to update the charter so that it best serves all residents. In 2021, the Mayor and Council appointed 11 commissioners to review the city's charter, with a focus on examining city elections.

The charter is a legal document that is like a constitution. It outlines how the city is organized, runs elections, levies taxes, adopts ordinances, provides services and more. Find the charter at www.rockvillemd.gov/124/City-Code-Charter.

Glenview and Peerless Present the History of Rockville's Sister Cities

Rockville's sister cities are the focus of a Glenview Mansion and Peerless Rockville Speaker Series program at 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 13.

The nonprofit Sister Cities International was founded in 1956 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Learn about the sister cities initiative; Rockville's 64-year sister city relationship with Pinneberg, Germany; the development of the newest sister city relationship, with Yilan City, Taiwan; and other fascinating Rockville sister cities history.

This is an online presentation through Zoom. Visit www.peerlessrockville.org to register to receive the link to the Zoom broadcast.

Grant Program Seeks Projects

continued from pg. 2...

neighbors or neighborhoods. This may include improving safety, addressing a neighborhood challenge or conflict, serving low-income seniors or finding ways to welcome newcomers to Rockville.

To see the objectives for matching grants, and for an application form and additional information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/communityempowerment. For additional information, contact Hjarman Cordero at 240-314-8344 or hcordero@rockvillemd.gov. ✚

City Legend to Retire After 67 Years

After close to seven decades of service to the Rockville community, an iconic city employee and City Hall fixture is finally calling it quits.

Elaine Crutchfield Hebron, affectionally known among staff and the local community as "Ms. Elaine," retired in December.

Hebron joined the city in 1954, providing transportation for the city's after-school program.

Since then, she has worked in various city departments, including Recreation and Parks as a Rockville youth employment program coordinator, summer counselor, community center supervisor and child-care director.

From 1999 until retirement, she was a facilities specialist stationed at City Hall's front desk,



Elaine Crutchfield Hebron

"where she selflessly stayed late for Mayor and Council meetings, and sometimes braved inclement weather to ensure that City Hall remained open," City Manager Rob DiSpirito told the Mayor and Council at their Dec. 6 meeting.

"Ms. Elaine's beautiful smile, warm greetings, love of people and love of conversation were a delight for employees and visitors coming into City Hall for decades," DiSpirito said. "She has been a true city treasure and will be greatly missed."

"God speed, Ms. Elaine," Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton said. "We wish you all the best!" ✚

Recycling and Refuse Workers Wanted!

Help Make a Difference in the Community!

- CDL Required
- \$3,000 Recruitment & Retention Incentive
- Job Stability & Great Benefits
- Opportunities for Learning and Promotion

To Apply: www.governmentjobs.com/careers/rockville Search: Sanitation

City Hall Opening Delayed

continued from pg. 1...

Other city facilities are open, including community centers, the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, Glenview Mansion and Croydon Creek Nature Center at the Rockville Civic Center, the Rockville Senior Center, and the Rockville Swim and Fitness Center.

Check the city's website at www.rockvillemd.gov for hours and availability.

Face coverings are mandatory for staff and visitors, aged 2 and older, to Rockville facilities, whatever their vaccination status. The City will not ask visitors to share their vaccination status.

See RockvilleReports.com for updates as news develops. ✚

Yard Waste Collection Update

Staffing shortages are causing delays in weekly yard waste collections throughout the city.

The city is working to bring staffing levels back to where it can once again resume regularly scheduled collections. We understand the importance of routine yard waste collections during this season and are making every effort to provide this service. We apologize for the inconvenience and appreciate your patience.

Place yard waste in bio-

degradable paper lawn bags or 32-gallon trash cans (the weight must be less than 50 pounds) in a safe location at the curb, so that crews can collect it as soon as possible.

Do not remove yard waste if it has not been collected and do not move items back and forth. Having yard waste at the curb will help crews assess collection needs and make plans to catch up as soon as possible, including collecting on Friday and Saturday. Learn more at www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash. ✚

Mayor and Council to Continue ARPA Discussion, Seek Budget Input

The Mayor and Council continue their work on the Fiscal Year 2023 budget in January and are scheduled to vote on how to spend some of Rockville's portion of funds received through the federal American Rescue Plan Act.

ARPA's goal is to aid state and local governments in recovering from the budgetary, economic and financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. On Dec. 13, the Mayor and Council directed staff to apply \$1.1 million of the city's \$9.6 million in ARPA funding to sewer and electrical infrastructure for the King Farm Farmstead, \$533,000 to the recycling transfer station at the city's Gude Drive Maintenance Facility, and \$300,000 to cybersecurity for the city's water treatment plant. They are scheduled to vote Monday, Jan. 10 to finalize the spending plan for that portion of the federal aid. A work session on Monday, March 21 will focus on how to apply the remaining \$3.8 million in ARPA funding.

In October, the Mayor and Council directed staff to apply nearly \$3.9 million in ARPA funding toward water infrastructure improvements and assisting city water and sewer customers in paying past-due utility bills incurred during the pandemic. New water and sewer rates and a new rate structure, adopted by the Mayor and Council in

November, take effect on Jan. 1.

For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/budget or call the Finance Department at 240-314-8400. A budget survey, on the webpage in English and Spanish, allows community members to identify their top budget priorities, initiatives for reducing the negative impacts of COVID-19 and options for maintaining a balanced budget. The public response to the survey will provide valuable input to the Mayor and Council for their FY23 budget discussions.

The Mayor and Council's upcoming budget process for FY 2023, which begins July 1, includes:

- **Monday, Feb. 28:** A presentation of the city manager's proposed FY 2023 operating budget and Capital Improvements Program.
- **Monday, March 7:** Public hearing.
- **Monday, March 21:** FY23 budget public hearing, and work sessions on the budget and the use of ARPA funds.
- **Monday, April 4:** Public hearing.
- **Friday, April 15:** Close of budget public record.
- **Monday, April 18:** Work session.
- **Monday, April 25:** Final direction on FY23 budget.
- **Monday, May 9:** Adoption of the FY23 operating budget and Capital Improvements Program.
- **Friday, July 1:** FY23 begins. ✚

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www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters



Questions, Concerns or Ideas?

Reach out to Rockville City Manager Rob DiSpirito at rdspirito@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8102.



Get Into It

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BACK IN THE DAY ... Ten years ago this month, Rockville was celebrating 50 years of summer camps programs. The first camps, with only a handful of families attending, were held in 1962, according to the January 2012 edition of "Rockville Reports." Now, 60 years on, the summer camps program has grown, and still offers adventures and a chance to build fun memories! See the article on page 2.