



WHEREAS, American Jewish history commenced in 1492 with the expulsion of Jews from Spain, and this action set off a period of intense Jewish migration; and

WHEREAS, seeking to escape the clutches of the Inquisition, some Jews in the sixteenth century sought refuge in the Calvinist Republic of the Netherlands; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of their descendants crossed the ocean to settle in the new Dutch colony of Recife in Brazil, where Jewish communal life became possible for the first time in the New World; and

WHEREAS, the American Jewish community was founded in 1654 by a group of 23 Jews – men, women, and children – fleeing persecution in Recife, Brazil; and

WHEREAS, Colonial Jews never exceeded one tenth of one percent of the American population, yet they established patterns of Jewish communal life that persisted for generations; and

WHEREAS, Jewish communities were established in cosmopolitan port cities of New York City, New York, Newport, Rhode Island, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where opportunities for commerce and trade existed, and people of diverse backgrounds and faiths lived side by side; and

WHEREAS, Jewish Americans serve in the Armed Services, support advancements in civil rights, human rights, and cultural and religious freedom for all; and

WHEREAS, May 2026, is **Jewish American Heritage Month**, and hundreds of organizations and Americans of all backgrounds are joining together to discover, explore, and celebrate the vibrant and varied American Jewish experience from the dawn of our nation to the present day.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Mayor and Council of the City of Rockville, Maryland, hereby proclaim **May 2026** as **Jewish American Heritage Month** in Rockville, and urge residents to celebrate the rich culture of their Jewish American neighbors, friends, and colleagues, embrace diversity and practice support for one another, and reflect on the need for respect of all people.




Monique Ashton, Mayor


Kate Fulton, Councilmember


Izola (Zota) Shaw, Councilmember


Barry Jackson, Councilmember


Marissa Valeri, Councilmember


David Myles, Councilmember


Adam Van Grack, Councilmember

May 4, 2026