City of Bowie

15901 Fred Robinson Way
Bowie, Maryland 20716

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2026

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The Regular Meeting of the Bowie City Council was held on Monday, January 5, 2026, in Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Adams called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:

Mayor Adams led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

QUORUM:

In attendance were Mayor Adams, Councilmembers Brady, Estève, Ndebumadu (arrived 8:07pm), Rogers, Truesdale and Woolfley, City Manager Lott, Assistant City Manager Mears, City Attorney Levan, City Clerk Hernandez and Staff.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/AMENDMENTS:

Councilmember Brady motioned to move New Business Item (B) Economic Development Discussion to the January 20, 2026 meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley second the motion. Motion passed 4-2-1 (Nay - Ndebumadu, Rogers; Abstain – Adams).

Mayor Adams motioned to move Old Business Item (A) Adoption of Charter Amendment Resolution CAR-3-25 to the January 20, 2026 meeting. Councilmember Truesdale second the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Councilmember Ndebumadu motioned to move Consent Agenda Item (F) Adoption of Resolution R-3-26 to New Business for further clarification. Councilmember Brady second the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

1. Carmen Hubbard – Spoke regarding public safety concerns at Bowie Town Center.
2. Brian Hubbard – Spoke regarding public safety concerns at Bowie Town Center.
3. Dawn Denbow – Copy of comment attached.
4. Diane Polangin – Copy of comment attached.
5. Pauline Markward – Copy of comment attached.
6. Kathy Mason – Chair of Friendship Aspire Charter School, formally requested time on a future Council agenda to present a detailed proposal for the use of Kenhill Center.

PRESENTATIONS:

Council presented a proclamation to H. Byron Matthews, Director of Finance, for 32 years of distinguished service to the City of Bowie. The proclamation acknowledge his leadership, fiscal stewardship, and contributions to maintaining AAA bond ratings and national finance awards and well wishes upon his retirement.

CITY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:

A. Appointments and Swearing-in:

1. Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley motioned to appoint Valerie Mikles to the Environmental Advisory Committee as a regular member for a 2-year term. Councilmember Brady second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Councilmember Brady motioned to appoint Sherri Cook to the Public Safety Committee as a regular member for a 2-year term. Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Councilmember Rogers motioned to appoint Wendy Pohlhaus to the Diversity Committee as a regular member for a 2-year term. Councilmember Brady second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Adams swore in the members to their respective committees.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Councilmembers offered remarks, including extensive appreciation and well wishes to H. Byron Matthews for his service and retirement, highlighting professionalism, integrity, fiscal leadership, and the City's strong financial standing.

Councilmember Ndebumadu reported several education-related community engagements and the importance of timely economic development discussions. She requested that Friendship Aspire be scheduled to present at the next meeting.

Mayor Adams asked City Manager Lott for an estimated number that would be needed to get started on creating an Economic Development Corporation. City Manager Lott provided a preliminary estimate of $500,000 based on professional experience, with broader start-up needs potentially higher.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

City Manager Lott reported the death of a long-term Parks and Grounds employee, William Schomp, who suffered a workplace accident on December 19 while cutting up a tree and later died from injuries. The Council observed a moment of silence and expressed condolences to his family, friends, and coworkers.

The City Manager also reported that departmental budget reviews would begin the following day, starting with Public Works.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley motioned to approve Consent Agenda items: A) Approval of December 1, 2025 Council Meeting Minutes; B) Approval of December 12, 2025 Special Council Meeting Minutes; C) Approval of December 17, 2025 Special Council Meeting Minutes; D) Adoption of Resolution R-1-26 Creating the Thrive Small Business Grant Program; E) Adoption of Resolution R-2-26 Approving a Lease

Agreement Between the City of Bowie and T-Mobile USA Tower, LLC, at 2200 Mitchellville Road; G) Adoption of Resolution R-4-26 Authorizing the Issuance of a Purchase Order to KCI Technologies, Inc. for Task Order/RFP#3-19A in the Amount of $150,254.04 in Accordance With the Master Contract Approved on October 31, 2018; H) Introduction of Ordinance O-1-26 Amending the Adopted Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2025, and Ending June 30, 2026, as Embodied in Ordinance O-4-25 and Amended by Ordinances O-11-25 and O-13-25, to Appropriate Funds in the Amount of $47,900 for the Replacement of a Message Board. Councilmember Rogers second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Old Town Bowie Revitalization Update – Councilmember Rogers recused herself from discussion and voting on this agenda item due to a personal conflict of interest.

Mr. Lawrence, with Inncuvate Community Development Partners, updated Council on their progress. They launched a new brand: "Crafted in Bowie", conducted survey outreach and continued community engagement, focused on implementation and fundraising and coordinating with state partners. Ongoing real estate/ownership constraints and resident skepticism rooted in past stalled efforts; emphasis on showing "something real" through visible projects and property activation.

Councilmember Esteve thanked Mr. Lawrence for the community outreach, partnerships, and moving toward actionable property strategies.

Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley asked for clarification on the shared food kitchen/food hall ("Stove House") concept. Mr. Lawrence described it as a multipurpose space with small stalls and shared commercial kitchen capacity.

Councilmember Ndebumadu cited statewide economic development funding priorities and asked what core economic outcome the revitalization effort optimizes for jobs, business formation, tax base, destination traffic. Mr. Lawrence responded that the initial emphasis is on tax-based growth through real estate activation and infrastructure, with job and entrepreneur outcomes to be measured as implementation progresses.

Councilmember Brady raised interest in ensuring the redevelopment concept connects to Old Town Bowie's railroad history.

Mayor Adams thanked Mr. Lawrence for his update.

B. Budget Guidance for FY 2027 – Ms. Lola Ogunremi, Assistant Finance Director, presented an overview of the FY 2027 Budget Guidance Framework, highlighting the City's current financial position and key policy considerations for the upcoming budget cycle. The City exceeded the General Fund balance policy target of 25% of expenditures; maintained its AAA bond rating from all three credit rating agencies; maintained a constant property tax rate of $0.40 for the past 16 years. The City continued to deliver robust core services and experienced development growth in areas including South Lake, Melford, and Mill Branch Crossing. Revenues and expenditures have increased over time, with shortfalls supported by use of fund balance. Main framework items for FY2027 budget are to reaffirm core services and set property tax rate for FY2027; evaluate new capital needs, CIP funding strategy, and water/sewer rates; consider debt affordability and long-term operating impacts of capital projects.

Councilmember Rogers discussed the need for clearer Council priorities and referenced "priority-based budgeting," emphasizing that uncertainty in cost escalation makes prioritization essential and that the Council should be more proactive rather than reactive.

Mayor Pro Tem Wolfley provided budget priorities and concerns including preference to avoid tax increases, while recognizing fiscal realities. He request an analysis of fiscal benefits from new developments (Melford, Mill Branch, South Lake) and the impacts of the South Lake TIFF. Review whether the 25% fund balance target remains appropriate, including consultation with the Financial Advisory Committee.

Councilmember Brady supported speed camera analysis distinguishing revenue increases due to added cameras vs. increased speeding. He referenced historical fund balance levels that supported major facility investments and emphasized the need for a structured economic development approach, potential corporation establishment, staffing capacity, and review of growth boundaries for commercial/industrial development opportunities. He also noted concerns regarding unfunded mandates and highway user fund diversions, and suggested exploring revenue opportunities such as solar installations, including on City-owned land and the racetrack area.

Councilmember Ndebumadu identified two primary priorities: Homeowner protection, including minimizing residential tax impacts due to economic pressures and job loss. Suggested exploring annexation opportunities, including interest expressed by residents of Fairwood and being more aggressive on economic development.

City Manager Lott asked whether Council consensus was to maintain current service levels and tax rate. Discussion followed regarding the fundamental tradeoff between maintaining services and the need for sufficient revenue, and the importance of identifying creative strategies to address costs.

City Manager Lott stated he would attempt to maintain service levels and the current tax rate; however, if necessary, the proposed budget may include a recommendation to increase the property tax rate to sustain core services.

Mayor Adams requested staff analysis of what millage rate would be required to sustain current services without using fund balance, and the City Manager indicated he would provide that information after departmental reviews and calculations.

C. Adoption of Resolution R-3-26 Approving a $75,000 Grant to Inncuvate Community Development Partners for Use as a Matching Funds for a TEDCO Grant – Mr. John Henry King, Economic Development Director, explained that the 2023 Old Town Bowie strategic plan recommended engaging a community development corporation to implement the plan; the City subsequently contracted with Inncuvate Community Development Partners. Staff reported that during the prior budget development cycle, TEDCO grant funding became available and the adopted budget included matching funds for the City's portion. Inncuvate applied for the grant and was successful. The action before Council was the disbursement of the already appropriated matching funds.

Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley motioned to adopt Resolution R-3-26 approving a $75,000 grant to Inncuvate Community Development Partners as matching funds for a TEDCO grant. Councilmember Rogers second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT AND MOVE TO CLOSED SESSION:

Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley motioned to adjourn the regular City Council meeting and move to closed session under the authority of Md. Annotated Code, General Provisions Article § 3-305(b)(3): "To

consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto" and § 3-305(b)(7): "To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice". Councilmember Truesdale second the motion. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:27 p.m.

Awilda Hernandez, MMC
City Clerk

Approved by the City Council of the City of Bowie, Maryland on January 20, 2026.

Good evening, Mr. Mayor, and members of the City Council.

My name is Dawn Denbow, and I reside at 12403 Millstream Dr, Bowie, MD., and I am here tonight as a resident of Bowie. I am not here to speak about the details of leases or finances, but about something much simpler and very important to me as a member of this community.

The Kenhill Center began its life as Foxhill Elementary School. For many families in Bowie, that building represents learning, growth, and opportunity for young children. I would love to see it return to that original purpose.

An elementary school brings energy, families, and a sense of continuity to a neighborhood. It supports children at a formative age and helps strengthen the community around it. Seeing the Kenhill Center used once again as an elementary school feels like a meaningful and positive step for Bowie.

I hope you will consider this opportunity to return the building to its roots and allow it to serve our youngest students once again.

Thank you for your time and for listening.

Good evening, Mr. Mayor, and members of the City Council.

My name is Diane Polangin. I am a former Councilmember, and former Council Liaison to the Education Committee. I reside at 3006 Savoy Lane, Bowie. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you tonight regarding the Friendship Aspire Public Charter School, serving grades kindergarten through 5th, which has been awarded a charter to locate in the City of Bowie.

As I understand it, Friendship Aspire is interested in entering into a long-term lease with the City for the entire Kenhill Center. I also understand that the Academy has expressed a willingness to make rooms available for after-hours community meetings. This is important, as it reflects a commitment to remaining connected to – and supportive of – the broader Bowie community.

I also understand that the Kenhill Center currently operates at a deficit. Under the proposed arrangement, Friendship Aspire would cover all building improvements, ongoing maintenance, security, groundskeeping, and janitorial services. A lease at market rate would eliminate the existing deficit and provide the City with a reliable and significant source of revenue.

From a fiscal standpoint, this proposal represents a sound and responsible opportunity. It stabilizes an underutilized facility, reduces long-term costs – and benefits Bowie taxpayers without requiring tax increases or reductions in City services.

Beyond the financial considerations, the Kenhill Center has a meaningful history. It originally opened as Foxhill Elementary School, serving the children of Bowie and strengthening our neighborhoods. Education has always been central to this building's purpose.

Approving Friendship Aspire as a kindergarten through fifth grade elementary school allows the Kenhill Center to return to its original use. It brings consistent activity, investment, and care back to the facility, while supporting families and students in our community.

This partnership offers clear benefits for the City, for residents, and for our children. It preserves community access, improves a City facility, and restores an educational mission to a building designed for learning.

I urge you to give this proposal your serious consideration as an investment in Bowie's future.

Thank you for your time and for your continued service to our community.

Good evening Mayor and Members of the City Council.

My name is Pauline Markward. I am a proud Bowie resident and previously served as Executive Director of the Greater Bowie Chamber of Commerce from 2016 through 2022. I am here this evening to express my support for the City entering into a long-term lease with **Friendship Aspire Public Charter School**, under the leadership of **Kathy Mason**, for use of the **Kenhill Center**.

I believe this proposal represents a responsible and practical opportunity for the City. Leasing the Kenhill Center at market rate allows the facility to be fully utilized while generating steady revenue for Bowie and its residents.

Just as important, the school would assume responsibility for building improvements and daily operations, including maintenance, security, groundskeeping, and janitorial services. This approach protects the City from ongoing costs while ensuring the facility is well cared for over the long term.

There is also a positive economic impact to consider. With a school operating in this space, teachers and staff become part of the daily life of our community. They will eat lunch locally, shop at nearby businesses, and use local services. From my years working with Bowie's business community, I know how valuable consistent weekday activity can be for our local economy.

I respectfully encourage the Mayor and Council to support approval of a long-term lease and to move this opportunity forward for the benefit of the City of Bowie.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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

This form has two sides. *Complete items 1 – 4 before closing the meeting.*

1. **Recorded vote to close the meeting:** Date: 1-5-26; Time: 10:26 Location: City Hall;
Motion to close meeting made by: Woolfley Seconded by Truesdale;
Members in favor: All Aye; Opposed: _____;
Abstaining: _____; Absent: _____.

2. **Statutory authority to close session (check all provisions that apply).**
This meeting will be closed under General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) only:

(1)☐ "To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals"; **(2)**☐ "To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business"; **(3)**☑ "To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto"; **(4)**☐ "To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State"; **(5)**☐ "To consider the investment of public funds"; **(6)**☐ "To consider the marketing of public securities"; **(7)**☑ "To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice"; **(8)**☐ "To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation"; **(9)**☐ "To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations"; **(10)**☐ "To 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)**☐ "To prepare, administer, or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examination"; **(12)**☐ "To conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct"; **(13)**☐ "To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter"; **(14)**☐ "Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss 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." **(15)**☐ "To 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 . . . or (iii) deployments or implementation of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices."

Continued →

3. **For each provision checked above, disclosure of the topic to be discussed and the public body's reason for discussing that topic in closed session.**

Citation (insert # from above)	Topic	Reason for closed-session discussion of topic
§3-305(b) [3]	Property Acquisition	
§3-305(b) [7]	Consult with Counsel	
§3-305(b) [ ]		
§3-305(b) [ ]		
§3-305(b) [ ]		

4. **This statement is made by** Timothy Jr. Adams, **Presiding Officer.**

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WORKSHEET FOR OPTIONAL USE IN CLOSED SESSION: INFORMATION FOR SUMMARY TO BE DISCLOSED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT OPEN MEETING. (See also template for summary.)

➢ **For a meeting closed under the statutory authority cited above:**

Time of closed session: 10:33

Place: City Hall

Purpose(s): (3) Property Acquisition (7) Consult with Counsel

Members who voted to meet in closed session: Adams Rogers Brady Estave Woolfley Truesdale Ndebumadu

Persons attending closed session: Adams Brady Estave Woolfley Truesdale Ndebumadu King Levan Lott Lawrence Mears

Authority under § 3-305 for the closed session: (3) (7)

Topics actually discussed: Property Acquisition

Actions taken:

Each recorded vote:

➢ **For a meeting recessed to perform an administrative function (§ 3-104):** Time:

Place:

Persons present:

Subjects discussed: