



OFFICIAL NEWS FROM THE CITY OF LAUREL

# THE City of Laurel Ledger

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MARCH 2024

## FIRE MARSHAL & PERMIT SERVICES: PERMIT TIPS AND TRICKS OF THE TRADE !

Finally time to ditch the parkas and grab picnic baskets! In preparation for the joy and fun to come during the Spring and Summer months, please keep in mind some house keeping items...

Before you head to your garden and try the latest TikTok gardening hacks, please be sure to cut your grass. Grass in the City of Laurel is deemed excessive when the height of the grass is about 8 inches tall. The only exception is during No Mow April and you MUST sign up for that program to participate or you will get a notice on your door that the grass is too high! Details under Green Living section in this edition.

**Permits:** We understand the desire to put in a new patio, build a beautiful gazebo or the urge to get a new deck built. However, please be sure to apply for all necessary permits before starting your project. If you have any questions about permits or the permitting process, please visit [www.cityoflaurel.org/fmps](http://www.cityoflaurel.org/fmps) or call 301-725-5300 ext. 2238. A member of our Permit Team will be happy to assist you.

**Spring Life Safety Tip:** Clean your dryer vent! This service should be performed annually. If you have noticed that your washed clothes are coming out of the dryer damp, it may be time to grab the vacuum, gloves, dryer vent kit and get busy. This necessary task will go a long way towards ensuring your family's safety.

**Fire Fatalities Increased in Maryland for 2023.** Please do your part and check your smoke detectors, have an escape plan, and practice that plan. Try to practice your escape plan at different times of the day and night. Have a meeting place so when the fire department arrives, you can account for your family members. Remember, when you get out of the fire, NEVER re-enter the burning building/house. Help us decrease the number of fire deaths in 2024!

Also, if you have an attached garage to your home, gas appliances or a wood burning fireplace, you are required to have a carbon monoxide detector on each level of your house!

Tricks of the Trade from the FMPS Team:



**Danny Selby, Director:**

**You cannot control disasters, but you can control your response!**

After spending 33 years in the fire service and fighting countless fires, Director Selby's best piece of advice he can give you is that disasters happen all the time

and the best way to prepare is to plan. When creating your safety plan, make sure you are not creating obstacles for yourself. Ensure that you are not blocking your paths of travel with furniture, and all of your windows are functioning properly. Have a "To Go Bag" ready in case of emergency. The unfortunate reality of disasters is that sometimes displacement happens. These safety plans are vital to doing your part and protecting yourself, and your family. These small adjustments go a long way in the event of a disaster.



**T'Amani Hamlett,  
Chief Building Official:**

*The only dumb question is the one not asked.*

"Good, Cheap or Fast? Pick two" is an ongoing dilemma people find themselves dealt with when taking on huge projects. Especially construction! The best way to avoid feeling overwhelmed by each project is taking inventory of the situation and coming to terms with the cost of your decision. Bearing that age old statement that seasoned contractors throw at you begins to rain true. Use your resources available...US! FMPS is always here to help. If the major renovation you are taking on is taking a turn, we'll let you know. We will not make the decision for you, but we will tell you the truth, even when it doesn't make you happy. BTW...this only applies to the services we provide.

**Edwin Monge, Fire Marshal:**

**Smoke Detectors NEED to be checked!**

Checking your smoke detector is a simple task that is frequently neglected. This small task can ultimately make the largest difference in the event of a fire. Smoke detectors that are NFPA compliant can cover a radius of 21 feet, and should be located in all bedrooms and in common areas. By checking your smoke detectors and making sure they are installed properly and in the correct locations, you are increasing your chances of survival!



**Tracy Dix, Building Inspector:**

*If you think you need a permit, you probably DO!*

Before hiring a contractor, picking out paint colors or putting down a deposit for materials, make sure you verify that your contractor is properly licensed and has pulled the proper permits. Not all projects will require a permit, however, to avoid the unnecessary headache of project delays, do a little research before you get started. I promise you won't regret it.



**Adrian Lacey,  
Rental Housing Inspector:**  
*Inspection and preparedness go a long way!*

Prior to calling in an inspection, be sure to check our website and review the checklist for your rental inspection. Our list is detailed and allows both the owner and the tenants the opportunity to see what we are inspecting prior to the inspector arriving. As always, if you have any questions, feel free to contact us.

**Brinda Albert,  
Permit Coordinator:**  
*Pulling the permits is easier than you think!*



Before you talk to the inspectors, you reach me. I promise I'm easy to talk to. Our permitting process is done digitally and every step of the way, you will be given instructions. The hardest part about our process now is remembering your password!



**Kriss Phipps,  
Code Enforcement  
Specialist:**  
*Correction Orders are NOT Citations.*

A common misconception is that a correction order is a citation. When you receive a correction order, it is simply that. A chance to correct whatever the violation is without worry.

**Mike Thomas,  
Electrical Inspector:**  
*Good Electricians are easy to find. Just ask your neighbor!*



Starting a huge project can seem stressful. However, the best way to combat that stress is to ask your friend, neighbor or relative who recently completed a huge project. The best reward for any electrician is your business.



**Jocelyn Barrera,  
Administrative Specialist:**  
*Help us help you!*

The most effective way for us to be of assistance is to have all your information ready when you call. When scheduling an inspection or meeting with anyone from our staff, be sure to have a way for us to identify what you need from us. Whether that be your permit number, full address, or a full description of work. Having your ducks in a row allows us to provide seamless service.



# It's Easy Being Green!



## THE CITY OF LAUREL 2024 CALENDAR NOW AVAILABLE

### Updates on Green Initiatives

Early spring is a time where floral resources are often limited for pollinators, especially in urban and suburban landscapes. The City's **No Mow April** initiative allows residents to pause mowing their lawns during the month of April to allow flowering plants to help provide food for pollinators. Environmental Programs and the Environmental Affairs Committee is hosting a No Mow April registration event on March 18, 2024, from 6:30 - 7:30pm at the Joseph R. Robinson Laurel Municipal Center, 8103 Sandy Spring Road. Residents will be able to register and collect their yard sign, as well as learn about the importance of native plants and pollinators. Check the Green Living web page for more information!



**Farmers' Market News!!!** Our Farmer's Market is stepping it up this year and will be weekly! Starting on Thursday, May 2nd, and running through the end of September, residents can enjoy fresh fruits/vegetables from our local farmers and enjoy other vendor's fare. Last year's favorites will be returning, and new vendors will be added. Music and cooking demonstrations are just a few of the special activities we have planned for our 2024 market season. Updates will be posted to the Green Living web page and social media at the Laurel Quill Lot. Let us know what you would like to see at the market this year!

**Recycle Coach!** Do you have questions about what goes into your blue cart? Not sure when the next yard debris or special pick up is? Sign up for Recycle Coach! You can type in your question (what do I do with household batteries? When is my collection day?) to get the answer and download our digital calendar right to your phone. Set up reminders about collections, holiday schedules and special pickup days. It is free and easy! Find the app on the City's web site at <https://www.cityoflaurel.org/green> -- Recycle Coach.



Thank you to Councilwoman Johnson for inviting us into her home to talk about how easy it is to compost and to sign up for the program! The video will be posted to Green Living and is part of our **"Composting with Our Council"** series. You can get your FREE composting kit delivered to your house. Just e-mail [DPW@laurel.md.us](mailto:DPW@laurel.md.us) – remember to provide your name, address, phone number and e-mail. For more information about the program, contact Michele Blair at [mblair@laurel.md.us](mailto:mblair@laurel.md.us).

Learn more about going Green on our Green Living web page at <https://www.cityoflaurel.org/green> and sign up for "What's New" to stay up to date on green initiatives.



### BOMBEROS Y SERVICIOS DE PERMISOS: ¡QUÉ PERMISOS SE NECESITAN, CUÁNDO!

¡Por fin es hora de deshacerse de las parkas y recoger una canasta de picnic! En preparación para la alegría y la diversión que se avecinan durante los meses de primavera y verano, tenga en cuenta algunos elementos de mantenimiento del hogar...



Permisos: Entendemos el deseo de instalar un nuevo patio, construir una hermosa glorieta o la necesidad de construir una nueva terraza. Sin embargo, asegúrese de solicitar los permisos necesarios para cualquier renovación importante que desee realizar. Si tiene alguna pregunta sobre los permisos o el proceso de obtención de permisos, visite [www.cityoflaurel.org/fmps](http://www.cityoflaurel.org/fmps) o llame al 301-725-5300 ext. 2238. Un miembro de nuestro equipo de permisos estará encantado de ayudarle.

### LAUREL POLICE MONTHLY CRIME REPORT

#### JANUARY 2024

List of Laurel Police Crime Reports can be found at [www.cityoflaurel.org/police/community-info/crime-reports](http://www.cityoflaurel.org/police/community-info/crime-reports).



# Laurel Council Connections



## Legislation

Listed below are recent actions taken by the Laurel City Council. For further information on any of these actions, please feel free to contact the Office of the City Clerk at **301-725-5300 ext. 2121** or at [clerk@laurel.md.us](mailto:clerk@laurel.md.us). For the full agendas, visit [www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org).

### Adopted Legislation:

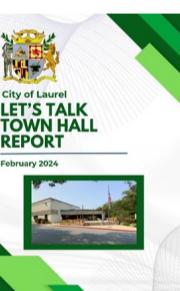
- Ordinance No. 2021 - To amend the General Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program for FY July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024; and to provide an effective date.

### Bid Recommendations:

- Fleet Acquisition - 2024 M2 Freightliner 25 Yard Rear Loader Refuse Truck - Public Works
- Bid recommendation for Engineering and Design Award for 4th and 5th Street Renovations - Public Works
- Bid Recommendation (Sole Source Purchase) for ongoing replacement of Street Lighting and Conversion to 150W LED Fixtures - Public Works

### Appointments/Reappointments:

- Michael Maxwell (Appointment) - Environmental Affairs: 2/12/24 - 2/12/26
- Nakia Cheeks (Appointment) - Environmental Affairs: 1/12/24 - 2/12/26
- Alvin Upton (Appointment) - Juneteenth Committee
- Frederick Carmen (Reappointment) - Emergency Services Commission: 2/12/24 - 2/12/29
- Marlene Frazier (Reappointment) - Historic District Commission: 2/12/24 - 2/12/27
- James Cornwell-Shiel (Reappointment) - Dir., Information Technology
- Danny Selby (Reappointment) - Dir., Fire Marshal and Permit Services
- Tim Miller (Reappointment) - Director, Public Works



## Let's Talk Town Hall Follow Up

Mayor Keith R. Sydnor is pleased to announce that the City of Laurel's Let's Talk Town Hall Report is now available online!

If you were one of the residents in attendance at the January 25<sup>th</sup> Town Hall, Mayor Sydnor, the Laurel City Council and City staff are most appreciative that you stepped up and expressed your concerns.

Department Heads and City staff gathered the answers to the questions presented by the Community and organized them in the Report that can be found on the City's web site at [www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org).

Mayor Sydnor encourages everyone to read the Let's Talk Town Hall Report. Call his office at 301-725-5300 ext. 2125 if you have any questions.

## COUNCIL OFFICE

301-725-5300 ext. 2121

[clerk@laurel.md.us](mailto:clerk@laurel.md.us)

## Government Meetings

(Dates and Times Subject to Change)

### March 2024 Mayor and City Council Meetings

- ◆ March 25th - In-Person Mayor and City Council Meeting (6:00pm)

### March 2024 Boards and Commissions

- ◆ March 19th - Historic District Commission (6:00pm)
- ◆ March 28th - Board of Appeals \*\*\*CANCELLED\*\*\*

### April 2024 Mayor and City Council Meetings

- ◆ April 6th - Virtual Mayor and City Council Work Session (6:00pm)
- ◆ April 11th - Virtual Mayor and City Council Meeting (6:00pm)
- ◆ April 25th - In-Person Mayor and City Council Meeting - Chambers - (6:00pm)

### April 2024 Boards and Commissions

- ◆ April 9th - Planning Commission (6:00pm)
- ◆ April 9th - Environmental Affairs Committee Work Session (6:00pm)
- ◆ April 16th - Historic District Commission (6:00pm)
- ◆ April 25th - Board of Appeals (6:00pm)

## City Announcements & Events

(Dates and Times Subject to Change)

- ◆ **No Mow April Kickoff Event, March 18, 2024** at 6:30pm at the Joseph R. Robison Laurel Municipal Center, 8103 Sandy Spring Rd. Come out and register to not mow your lawn in April and create an environment to allow lawn flowers to bloom and feed hungry native bees emerging from hibernation .
- ◆ **Eggstravaganza - March 23, 2024** at 12:00pm SHARP! Granville Gude Park, 8300 Mulberry Street. Free event. Co-sponsored by the Laurel Lions Club.
- ◆ **To learn more or register for Parks and Recreation activities**, visit [www.cityoflaurel.org/parks/adult-sports-activities](http://www.cityoflaurel.org/parks/adult-sports-activities) or call 301-725-7800.
- ◆ **Patuxent River Cleanup - April 6, 2024** at 10:00am at Riverfront Park, end of Avondale Street. Dress appropriately. \*Volunteer Opportunity\*
- ◆ **Ecycle and Paper Shredding Event - April 20, 2024** from 8am - Noon at the Public Works facility, 305-307 1st Street. \*MUST be a City resident/business\*
- ◆ **Earth Day Cleanup, April 20, 2024** at 10am at Granville Gude Park Lakehouse, 8300 Mulberry Street. Dress appropriately. \*Volunteer Opportunity\*
- ◆ **City of Laurel Volunteer Fair, April 24, 2024** from 6 - 8pm at the Joseph R. Robison Laurel Municipal Center.
- ◆ **Lakefest, May 4, 2024** from 11am - 3pm at Granville Gude Park, 8300 Mulberry Street. Help Parks kick off the summer season!



Visit the City of Laurel web site at [www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org), to learn more about your local government!

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# Public Works Monthly Glance



CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE. PLACE ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR.



CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE. PLACE ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR.



**PUBLIC WORKS**



301-725-0088



DPW@laurel.md.us

## Community Resources and Emergency Management: Flooding Safety Awareness

Spring showers may bring lots of flowers, but it can also bring heavy rains and the possibility of floods!

Floods can result from rain, snow melt, coastal storms, and overflown rivers, and disrupt and/or damage infrastructures causing power outages, impassable roads, and rendering buildings uninhabitable. These dangerous conditions can quickly lead to death if you are not prepared for a potential flood. Take action to prepare you and your loved ones against potential flood risks. Use the following tips to be better prepared:

- Research what types of floods you may be vulnerable to, ie: river floods, flash floods, storm surge
- Visit the FEMA Flood Map Service Center (<https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>) and research if your home is currently in a floodplain.
- Reach out to your local Emergency Management Office for advice and additional safety information.
- Evacuate immediately, if told to evacuate! Never drive around barricades. Local responders use them to safely direct traffic out of flooded areas.
- Do not walk, swim, or drive through flood waters. Turn Around, Don't Drown!



Keep you and your family safe during severe weather! Learn more about flood safety and visit <https://www.ready.gov/floods>

### CITY CONTACTS

**MAYOR'S OFFICE**

301-725-5300  
ext. 2125

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR**

301-725-5300  
ext. 2242

**LAUREL POLICE**

Non-Emerg: 301-498-0092  
Emerg: 301-725-3000

**PARKS AND RECREATION**

301-725-7800

**COMMUNICATIONS**

301-725-5300  
Ext. 2208

[www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org)

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