

TOWN OF GALENA

MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, June 1, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.
Town of Galena, Maryland

ATTENDANCE

Present

- Tyler Carpenter — Mayor
- John Carroll — Council Member
- Jack Duhamel — Council Member
- Sarah Merrell — Council Member
- Cheryl Richwine — Council Member
- Mike Gibson — Maintenance & Facilities Coordinator
- Marisa Pisapia — Town Administrator
- Sue Bisbee — Finance & Administrative Clerk
- Kevin Best — Town Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Carpenter called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was conducted confirming all Council Members and staff were present.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Council Member Richwine and seconded by Council Member Carroll to approve the May 4th, 2026 record of motion and minutes. Council Member Duhamell noted he was not present at the May 4th meeting and abstained from the vote. The remaining members voted in favor.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Carpenter suspended the regular meeting at 7:02 pm and opened the public hearing to consider two (2) ordinances previously read into the record at the May 4th, 2026 meeting.

Ordinance 2026-05: Artificial Intelligence Use Policy

The Mayor summarized the Ordinance, noting it establishes governing guidelines for the appropriate use of artificial intelligence in municipal operations. Key provisions include prohibitions on sharing private personal information and limiting use to clerk-related duties such as creating forms and producing meeting minutes. The draft language was drawn from the Maryland Mayor's Association and has been reviewed and adjusted by the Town Attorney to fit the town's size and staff needs. No public comments were received. A motion to approve was made by Council Member Merrell and seconded by Council Member Carroll. Motion was approved unanimously.

Ordinance 2026-06: FY2027 Budget

The Mayor opened discussion on the FY2027 Budget Ordinance. The budget balances within \$383. Key discussion points include no major category changes from the prior year. The primary additions are "Growth Income" and "Growth Expense" accounts to track annexation-related revenues and capital expenditures. Anticipated annexation payment (50% of amount owed) is expected within this fiscal year and has been budgeted as a revenue offset to avoid raising taxes or utility rates. The property tax rate was slightly reduced this cycle as assessed property values increased, keeping the per-dollar burden on taxpayers level. The Town Administrator presented the following totals:

TOWN OF GALENA

Fund	Total Income	Total Expenses
General Fund	\$360,637	\$360,301
Sewer Enterprise Fund	\$437,110	\$437,063
Water Enterprise Fund	\$199,770	\$199,770
TOTAL	\$997,517	\$997,134

No public comments were received. A motion to approve was made by Council Member Merrell and seconded by Council Member Carroll. Motion was approved unanimously.

The public hearing was closed at 7:14pm and the regular meeting was reopened.

SHERIFF'S REPORT

The Sheriff presented the monthly activity report for the Town of Galena:

Incident Log (May)

- May 8 — A post office employee found a purse behind the building on Cross Street with no identifying information. The purse was secured at the sheriff's office pending a missing report.
- May 11 — A resident on Laura Lane received two fraudulent checks via mail from a subject on Craigslist for more than the asking price. The bank flagged the checks; no monetary loss.
- May 17 — Traffic arrest: male, age 64, Galena; charged with driving an uninsured vehicle.
- May 20 — Vehicle damage reported on Phelps Avenue. A Honda truck was backed into on the 16th causing superficial damage.
- May 27 — A resident on Cross Street reported a FedEx package as undelivered; FedEx required documentation before reimbursement. A subsequent call confirmed the package was received.

Activity Summary

- Speed enforcement: 22 sessions; 65 warnings, 12 citations, 1 traffic arrest
- Patrol checks: 26
- Overtime: 16 calls for service, 34 warnings, 9 citations, approximately 30 man-hours

Community Alerts

The Sheriff highlighted an ongoing wave of computer virus scam calls in the county. A county resident recently lost over \$120,000 after scammers gained remote access to her computer through a fake virus pop-up and accessed bank accounts. The Sheriff encouraged residents to warn neighbors and loved ones — especially elderly individuals — and suggested the town consider periodic social media reminders about these scams.

The Sheriff also congratulated the town on an outstanding Dogwood Festival, noting it was one of the best in recent memory. The Space Force demonstration and the world's largest potato travelling exhibit were noted as highlights.

GOOD OF THE TOWN

Fire Company — Water/Sewer Waiver

On behalf of the Galena Fire Company, Council Member Duhamell thanked the town for waiving water and sewer fees for the company.

Grass Clippings

Council Member Duhamell raised a concern about lawn care operators and homeowners blowing grass clippings onto roads and sidewalks, which poses a safety hazard. Council discussed whether a formal ordinance prohibition exists and agreed to have the Town Administrator draft a formal ordinance on the issue.

TOWN OF GALENA

Solar Feasibility Study

Mayor Carpenter provided an update on the solar feasibility project following a site visit with consultant Tom Dietz:

- The town is working with the County to apply for funding to engage a consultant for a feasibility study.
- Potential installation sites discussed: park parking lot (canopy arrays), wastewater treatment plant, fire company property, maintenance shed roof, and a parcel adjacent to the annexation area (town would explore lease or purchase).
- The goal is to offset the cost of the Wastewater Treatment Plant's electricity bill and create a distributed array system that meters together, potentially generating enough power to offer a community discounted solar rate — similar to a project underway in Chestertown by the same consultant.

Dogwood Festival — Recognition

Council Member Carroll and the Mayor recognized all staff and volunteers for an outstanding Dogwood Festival. The event was well attended throughout the day. A net profit of approximately \$2,500 was reported by Town Administrator Pisapia. Council Member noted that the Fire company has offered its property for future Dogwood Festival overflow vendor space as the event continues to grow.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Contract Anniversary Notice

Town Administrator Pisapia noted that her employment contract anniversary date is September 29, 2026. Per contract terms, notification is required three (3) months prior; this serves as the formal advance notice to the Mayor and Council for renewal consideration.

EV Charging Infrastructure Grant

The Town was awarded a Maryland Energy Administration EV Infrastructure Grant for \$27,500. The plan is to install a new dual-port Level 2 EV charger at Town Hall and a new dual-port charger at the park (two parking spaces each). The existing Delmarva Power charger at Town Hall was operating under an easement that expired in December 2025. Delmarva Power did not notify the town within the required 60-day window, so the easement lapsed. The Town has directed Delmarva Power to remove the unit but retain all underground conduit and hookups. Going forward, the Town will own and operate the charger, receiving revenue from its use.

Banking: Move from PNC Bank to Shore United Bank

Town Administrator Pisapia met with Shore United Bank regarding a move from PNC as the town's backup bank. Shore United offers:

- Basic interest checking account with no monthly fee
- \$500 minimum balance (vs. \$5,000 at PNC)
- 12-month CD at 3.85%
- Commercial financing available for future projects such as the Monopole Project

A motion to close PNC accounts and open accounts at Shore United Bank was made by Council Member Carroll and seconded by Council Member Merrell. Motion was approved unanimously.

Youth Entrepreneur Market

Town Administrator Pisapia introduced a concept for a Youth Entrepreneur Market — an event for youth sellers ages approximately 8 to 20 — proposed for late summer. The concept originated with the Mayor's wife (the "First Lady"). An initial Google Form received 18 positive responses. Plans include:

- Free participation for youth vendors
 - All participants under 18 must have a guardian present at all times
 - Possible food truck on-site; use of town bathrooms
 - No booth fees charged to participants
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TOWN OF GALENA

Health Insurance

Town Administrator Pisapia is exploring group health insurance options for town staff and elected officials. She requested Council Members to indicate interest so a group plan can be structured. Initial response: Mayor Carpenter indicated interest; others confirmed they have existing coverage. A retirement benefit option is also being explored simultaneously.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATIVE CLERK REPORT

Bank Balances

Account	Balance
General Fund (Checking)	\$56,039.79
General Savings	\$237,252.95
Sewer Fund (Checking)	\$133,869.93
Sewer Savings	\$541,175.62
Water Fund (Checking)	\$91,876.34
Water Savings	\$265,505.62
PNC General	\$5,000.00
TOTAL	\$1,330,720.21

A motion to approve the bank balances was made by Council Member Merrell and seconded by Council Member Carroll. Motion was approved unanimously.

Inter-Fund Transfers (Due-To / Due-From)

- Sewer to General: \$6,285.94
- Water to General: \$4,690.54
- General to Water: \$13,515.06

A motion to approve the due-to / due-from transfers was made by Council Member Merrell and seconded by Council Member Carroll. Motion was approved unanimously.

Diversified Billing Software

Ongoing team calls with Diversified (utility billing software) continue to go well. Data conversion is progressing smoothly. Staff are communicating regularly with the Diversified team to ensure a complete and accurate transition.

Audit Services

Two (2) audit quotes were received and reviewed:

- PKS & Company (Saltsburg, MD) — Three-year contract; responsive and local. Estimated cost for Year 1: \$18,500.
- Perry & Associates CPAs (Ohio) — One-year engagement; \$15,000 total. Quote arrived late after three requests.

Council discussed responsiveness, cost, and whether to solicit additional quotes. The Town Attorney provided two (2) additional referrals (Lindsay & Associates and SRC) for future consideration. A motion to accept the Perry & Associates quote pending research of other companies given by Town Attorney was made by Council Member Carroll and seconded by Council Member Duhamell. Motion was approved unanimously.

Federal Surplus Water Donation

Finance & Administrative Clerk Bisbee secured ten (10) pallets of bottled water at no cost through the Maryland Federal Surplus Program. The town retained approximately one (1) pallet; the remainder was donated to all fire

TOWN OF GALENA

companies in the county, as well as county EMS and ambulance services, to support emergency rehab operations. The effort was well received by recipient agencies.

MAINTENANCE & FACILITIES REPORT

Monopole Project — Special Exception Application

The special exception application and supporting drawings have been submitted to Kent County. A hearing is scheduled for June 10 at 10:00 a.m. The Town attorney raised the Zoning Immunity Doctrine, which holds that a municipality exercising zoning authority is immune from the zoning regulations of the county — even for property located outside town limits. He advised that the town should note this doctrine for any future county zoning applications. Because the application fee (\$350) has already been paid, no action was taken for this cycle; the principle is documented for future use.

Jarman Avenue Paving & Speed Humps

Paving of Jarman Avenue is scheduled to begin June 23 (weather permitting), performed by S&M Paving. The estimated duration is three (3) days, and the road will remain accessible during construction with temporary delays expected. The road will be milled prior to paving, and four (4) speed humps will be installed.

Speed humps were requested by multiple residents to address speeding on Jarman Avenue, where drivers cut through to avoid the traffic signal. Letters were sent to adjacent homeowners in advance. A weather delay contingency was noted; contractor was asked to honor the June 23 date given the advance notice already sent.

Wastewater Treatment Plant — Air Compressors

Kent County approved a \$35,000 allocation for replacement air compressors at the wastewater treatment plant. Due to a county fiscal year timeline change, the purchase must now be completed within FY26 (immediately). Total project cost breakdown:

- Two (2) new compressors (designed to run 24/7/365) plus dryer: \$36,220 — county will reimburse \$35,000; town out-of-pocket: \$1,220
- Electrical work by Clark German (corrosion-resistant conduit, stainless steel hardware, upgraded wiring): \$19,500 (town out-of-pocket)

A motion to approve the quote from Clark German for \$19,500 was made by Council Member Carroll and seconded by Council Member Merrell. Motion was approved unanimously. Maintenance & Facilities Coordinator Gibson was authorized to proceed with the compressor purchase through Cummins & Wagner (Annapolis).

2018 Ford F-350 / UTV Consideration

Maintenance & Facilities Coordinator Gibson presented a proposal to sell the older spare work truck (2018 Ford F-350 with tool body; approximately 20,000 miles) and invest proceeds in a Kubota-style UTV for park and in-town operations. Rationale:

- Current truck burns over \$150/week in fuel at 5 mpg idling around town
- A UTV would provide significant fuel savings and is better suited for park cleanups, event setup, weed spraying, and tree watering
- The Town's ARPA-funded newer truck would remain as the primary work vehicle
- A UTV can be outfitted with a plow, dump bed, and sprayer; the 50-hp CAT tractor at the wastewater plant handles heavy snow

Council supported the concept but requested Maintenance & Facilities Coordinator Gibson return next month with firm pricing on a UTV (government/municipality pricing) and the results of a sealed bid process for the truck sale. Staff will visit the MML Conference equipment expo to evaluate UTV options as well.

MEETING & EVENTS SCHEDULE

- June 6: Bites Cookie Company Grand Opening (111 N. Main Street Bldg. C), 12:00 p.m.
 - June 15-18: Town Hall closed for staff training week
 - June 19: Town Hall closed (Juneteenth Holiday)
 - July 3: Town Hall closed (observed Fourth of July Holiday)
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TOWN OF GALENA

- July 6 — Next Mayor & Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

A resident noted that youth cyclists have been observed riding recklessly (including wheelies on Main Street) without helmets. Staff will post a community safety reminder on social media and include a note in the next newsletter.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to approve the audio minutes and adjourn the meeting. All in favor. The meeting was officially adjourned.

MOTIONS SUMMARY

Motion	Motion By	Seconded By	Result
Approve May 4 th Minutes	Council Member Richwine	Council Member Carroll	All in favor - Approved
Ordinance 2026-05: Artificial Intelligence	Council Member Merrell	Council Member Carroll	All in favor - Approved
Ordinance 2026-06: FY2027 Budget	Council Member Merrell	Council Member Carroll	All in favor - Approved
Move banking from PNC to Shore United Bank	Council Member Carroll	Council Member Merrell	All in favor - Approved
Approve bank balances	Council Member Merrell	Council Member Carroll	All in favor - Approved
Approve due-to/due-from inter-fund transfers	Council Member Merrell	Council Member Carroll	All in favor - Approved
Approve Perry & Associates CPAs for audit (\$15,000)	Council Member Carroll	Council Member Duhamell	Pending research on Town Attorney recommended companies; All in favor - Approved
Approve Clark German electrical work for air compressors (\$19,500)	Council Member Carroll	Council Member Merrell	All in favor - Approved
Approve audio minutes	Council Member Carroll	Council Member Merrell	All in favor - Approved
Adjournment	Council Member Carroll	Council Member Richwine	All in Favor - Approved

Minutes recorded by: Susan M. Bisbee, Finance & Administrative Clerk with the use of Plaud.ai