

Laurel Dispatch

Live, Work, Play

Government to the People

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Government Meetings

October	
10/6	Historic District Commission - 7pm
10/7	Work Session - 7pm
10/12	Columbus Day
10/14	Mayor and City Council Meeting - 7pm
10/15	Laurel Train Stop Town Hall Meeting - 6pm
10/20	Planning Comm. - 7pm
10/22	Board of Appeals - 7pm

November	
11/4	Work Session - 7pm
11/9	Mayor and City Council Meeting - 7pm
11/10	Planning Comm. - 7pm
11/11	Veterans' Day
11/17	Historic District Commission - 7pm
11/19	Laurel Train Stop Town Hall Meeting - 6pm
11/23	Mayor and City Council Meeting - 7pm
11/26-27	Thanksgiving

December	
12/2	Work Session - 7pm
12/8	Planning Comm. - 7pm
12/14	Mayor and City Council Meeting - 7pm
12/15	Historic District Commission - 7pm
12/17	Laurel Train Stop Town Hall Meeting - 6pm
12/25	Christmas

Coming Soon to a Polling Location Near You

Local elections are right around the corner. The General Election for the City of Laurel will be held **November 3, 2015**. Residents will be voting for the Mayor and five City Council Members (two from Ward 1, two from Ward 2 and one At-Large) in this election.



Polling locations are at the Laurel Municipal Center, 8103 Sandy Spring Road, Laurel, MD (Ward 1) and the Robert J. DiPietro Community Center, Cypress Street, Laurel, MD (Ward 2). Polls will be open from 7:00am to 8:00 pm. Voting is also available via absentee ballot.

Make your vote count! Get ready for the election now:

Registering to vote is easier than ever! Register [online](#) through Maryland's Online Voter Registration System. You can also pick up a Maryland Voter Registration Application at the Laurel Municipal Center, 8103 Sandy Spring Road, Laurel, MD, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

Have you registered to vote?

Can't make it in?

If you're more of an early bird, early voting will take place on **Saturday, October 31, 2015**, from 8:00am to 5:00pm at the Laurel Municipal Center, 8103 Sandy Spring Road, Laurel, MD.

Planning on voting early?

Request an absentee ballot. [Download an application](#) from the City's website or call the Board of Election Supervisors at 301-725-5300, Extension 2120. Mail or drop off completed applications to the Office of the Clerk to the Board of Election Supervisors by **Tuesday, October 27, 2015**. (No email or faxed applications will be accepted.)

For more information, visit the State Board of Elections at www.elections.state.md.us or the Prince George's County Board of Elections at www.princegeorgescounty.md.gov.



Halloween Safety Tips for Adults

Parents of trick-or-treating kids can get so caught up in the fun themselves that they might forget some simple safety ideas that could keep everyone out of trouble. Keep these tips in mind for a fun and safe Halloween!

- 🎃 If you take your kids to a sponsored event, like a safe Halloween party thrown by your church or community center, make sure to keep an eye on them at all times.
- 🎃 Make sure that your child has a pre-programmed cell phone with him/her if they go out on Halloween night. Have important numbers entered and ready to use.
- 🎃 Before your kids head out on Halloween, check the safety of the neighborhood by visiting your local state website for sex offenders. Look up your zip code for a list of registered offenders in the area and make sure your kids avoid these areas.
- 🎃 Make sure an adult is accompanying kids on Halloween night.
- 🎃 If you aren't going with your children, know the route they will be taking. Have them check in with you every hour (either by phone or by stopping back at home). Know what other activities or events they may be attending, such as parties and school or mall functions.
- 🎃 Help your young child pick out or make a costume that will be safe - make sure that it's fireproof or treated with fire retardant. If they are wearing a mask, make sure that the eyeholes are large enough for good peripheral vision. If your child is carrying a prop, check that the tips of things such as knives or pitchforks are smooth and flexible.
- 🎃 Make sure you set a time that your kids should be home by. Have them call if something happens or if they are going to be delayed.
- 🎃 Kids will be kids. With that said, explain to them the difference between tricks and vandalism. Throwing eggs can seem like a harmless prank, but the clean up and damages can ruin Halloween for everyone.
- 🎃 Serve a filling meal before children go trick-or-treating to keep them full and less tempted to dig into their candy stash. Check their candy when everyone returns home.
- 🎃 Teach your children about the dangers of talking to strangers. Explain to them that they should never go into a house or car that they aren't familiar with. If something like this does happen, teach them to yell as loud as they can to draw attention and to run away somewhere safe.
- 🎃 Show your children how to cross a street safely. Have them look both ways before crossing at a corner or crosswalk. If you have more than one child, encourage the older child to take the hand of the younger child when they cross the street.

Contact Us!

General Information

Phone 301-725-5300
Fax 301-490-5068

Mayor

Phone Ext. 2124
laurelmayor@laurel.md.us

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Parks and Recreation

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Permits and Code Enforcement

Phone Ext. 2238
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Public Works

Phone 301-725-0088
DPW@laurel.md.us

Police Department

(non emergency)
Phone 301-498-0092
LPD@laurel.md.us

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Commercial Armed Robbery Prevention Tips

- Keep the outside of your business well lit at night;
- Practice good cash control. Keep a minimum amount in your cash drawer and make regular drops into a safe;
- Use video camera surveillance and make it well known;
- Carry cash in a variety of ways - a lunch sack, attaché case, flight bag, pocket, etc. Money bags are pretty obvious;
- Vary the times and routes that you use to go to the bank;
- Be alert for "customers" who seem to be loitering or glancing around the store while appearing to shop or browse through a magazine; and
- Two people should be on hand at opening and closing times.



Be sure to follow these tips and your business will lower the risk of being robbed. But most of all be sure to have the Laurel Police Department's emergency number on hand - 301-725-3000 - just in case you need to call them quickly!

Holiday Crime Prevention Tips

Members of the Laurel Police Department would like to offer the following tips for your safety during the Holiday Season, which is quickly approaching:

College students:

- When leaving home for an extended time, have a neighbor or family member watch your house and pick up your newspapers and mail;
- Consider taking all items of "high value" back to your primary residence; money, jewelry, TV, VCR, stereo, computer;
- Leave a radio or television on so the house looks and sounds occupied;
- Large displays of valuables should not be visible through the windows and doors of your home; and
- Indoor and outdoor lights should be on an automatic timer.



When shopping:

- Stay alert to your surroundings and the people around you;
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash;
- Pay for purchases with a check, credit or debit card;
- Watch purchases while eating in mall food courts. Bags can easily be switched or taken;
- Have your car keys ready in hand before leaving the store; and
- If you do return to your vehicle to unload purchases, place them in the trunk of the vehicle.

In parking lots:

- Shop early and leave early to avoid evening darkness;
- Park in a high visibility area and well lit areas in case you leave during hours of darkness;
- Prior to arriving at the shopping center, lock all your valuables in the trunk of your vehicle;
- Ask security to escort you to your vehicle if you feel uncomfortable; and
- Watch for people who may be following you. This can occur inside as well as outside. If you suspect someone following you, report it to security immediately.

At home:

- Keep the outside of your home well lit with doors locked and window curtains closed;
- Don't display gifts beneath the Christmas tree that can be seen from windows or doors; and
- After the holidays, don't advertise gifts received by the boxes left for the garbage collection. Destroy boxes and place in a sealed, non-clear garbage bag.

Wishing you all a Happy and Safe Holiday Season!

Parks & Recreation

Put away the bathing suits and break out the sweaters as the autumn weather brings plenty of cool activities to Laurel.

Calling for all little ghosts and ghouls to don your costumes and join us for the annual Halloween Spooktacular on Saturday, October 24, 2015, at the Robert J. DiPietro Community Center. The event, co-sponsored by the Lions Club, is free to all, but it begins promptly at 2pm!



Next, take in the cool November night air, warm yourself by the roaring bonfire and join in a sing-a-long at the Harvest Moon Hayride on Friday, November 6, 2015 from 6-9pm at Riverfront Park.

Santa Claus rides into town on Saturday, December 5, 2015, at the Annual Holiday Parade and Armory Illumination at 5:00pm. The parade will make its way from the Municipal Center down Montgomery Street to the Armory where Santa will await you indoors for visits!

If you miss the parade, don't worry, you can visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus, as well as other seasonal characters, at the annual Breakfast with Santa, on Saturday, December 12, 2015, at Partnership Hall, but register early because spaces go fast!

Looking for a place to hang out with friends? Join us at one of the Community Centers for plenty of after school fun. Youth and teens can drop in every day with an annual admission pass and play basketball, pool, air hockey or one of the various video games on our big screen TVs in the new gaming lounge. Lots of fun to be had once they've finished their homework!



While there is still some nice weather, be sure to make your way around town and visit one of the City's great parks and playgrounds. With picnic pavilions, tennis courts, hiking paths and playgrounds, there are many ways to stay active and enjoy the outdoors!

If you miss one of these great events, then be sure to grab one of our brochures and check out all of the great classes and activities offered for tiny tots to senior adults. Don't want to commit to a full session of classes, then stop by one of the Community Centers for the many drop-in activities that are sure to keep you fit and healthy!

Join a sports league or start a new workout routine at one of the Community Center's fitness rooms. Our fitness equipment will help you shed those holiday pounds! Whatever your age, the Department of Parks and Recreation has something for you, just check out our web site at www.cityoflaurel.org, and like us on Facebook to get up to the minute information.



Public Works

The busy season is coming up for Public Works. As you'll see below, they have the leaf pick up starting, Mother Nature will start dropping that four-letter word, snow, on us before you know it and they'll be bringing the annual calendar to your door soon enough. And all of this while they do their regular trash and recycling pick ups and road work. Take a look at their monthly events below and start planning accordingly.

October

Tree Planting: The Public Works street crews will be doing Fall tree planting along the City's public right-of-ways. Crews will be replacing dead and/or dying trees. Please look for any parking restrictions in your neighborhood!

Columbus Day Holiday: Refuse and recycling will shift one day for the Columbus Day Holiday observed on Monday, October 12, 2015.

Electronics Recycling and Paper Shredding Event: Public Works will have an electronics recycling and paper shredding event on Saturday, October 17, 2015, at the Public Works facility. Residents and City businesses can bring their electronics and paper products to Public Works between the hours of 8:00am to noon. Proof of residency is required.

Leaf Collection: Beginning in October, the City provides weekly leaf vacuum services. The leaf vacuum will continue through the end of November. A map of the leaf collection route can be found in the 2015 Calendar on page 16.



November

SPECIAL PICKUP CHANGES: Beginning in November, the days for special pickups and yard debris are scheduled for twice per month. Dates for collections can be found in the 2015 Calendar and on the City's website.

Veterans Day Holiday: Refuse and recycling scheduled for Wednesday, November 11, 2015, will be collected on Thursday, November 12, 2015. No change to Thursday's schedule.

America Recycles Weeklong Event: Public Works will be accepting electronics from residents and City businesses during the week of November 16, 2015. Residents can stop by Public Works between the hours of 9:00am to 3:00pm. Crews will be on hand to help unload electronics. There is no cost to residents and/or local businesses. Proof of residency is required.

Thanksgiving Day Holiday(s): There will be no refuse and recycling collection on Thursday, November 26, 2015, and Friday, November 27, 2015. Thursday and Friday's refuse and recycling will be collected on Wednesday, November 25, 2015. There is no change to Wednesday's collections.

December

SNOW EMERGENCY ROUTES: The City's snow emergency plan can be found on page 16 in the 2015 Calendar. Please check the map to see if you live on a snow emergency route and familiarize yourself with the parking restrictions.

Christmas and New Year's (2016) Holiday: Refuse and recycling scheduled for Friday, December 25, 2015 and Friday, January 1, 2016, will be collected on the day before (December 24, 2015, and December 31, 2015 respectively).

2016 Calendars: Be on the lookout for the 2016 Public Works Calendar.

Community Planning

Master Plan Under Review

Once every 10 years, the City of Laurel is required to review its Master Plan and if necessary, revise or amend it with any recommendations given by the Master Plan Committee. It also takes input from the community to help bring the City's vision to life.

The Master Plan, also called a Comprehensive Plan, helps the Mayor and City Council determine the appropriate use of lands, protect the public health and safety of a community, and promote general welfare.

If you like the City's parks, it helps with that too! The Master Plan provides opportunities to extend and/or improve open space, recreational areas, and civic facilities.

And all those new shops on Main Street and at the Towne Centre of Laurel were made possible by the Master Plan; it provided the City strategies on how to increase economic development. It also provides for historic and cultural resources that need conservation.

The Master Plan also reviews the Emergency Services capabilities for the City of Laurel, designates how much parking should be in your neighborhood and if bikes, sidewalks or other street improvements are needed.

To help the City develop a Master Plan that meets your vision of Laurel, plan to attend one of the upcoming Master Plan Committee meetings. Call 301-725-5300 ext. 2238 and find out when the next meeting will be held and give us your input.

Property Standards and Code Enforcement

The Department of Community Planning and Business Services enforces City Codes and Ordinances relating to building and property standards. These standards ensure the protection of the public health and safety. The full collection of regulations enforced by the Department is contained in several portions of the Municipal Code. However, city residents, particularly property owners, should be aware of the following property standards, as they impact a significant number of residents and consequently are the most frequently violated.

Snow and Ice Removal: The owner or occupant of a property is responsible for the removal of snow and/or ice from any sidewalk abutting the property.

Removal of snow must be completed within 12 hours of the cessation of any snowfall. Likewise, removal of ice must be completed within 12 hours of the formation of such ice. Due to the public safety issues attributed to snow and ice, any violation issued must be corrected immediately. Failure to comply can be result in a fine being levied against the property owner.



Trash and Debris: It is a violation to allow large accumulations of trash and refuse or allowing pools of foul or stagnant liquids to collect on a property within city limits. Once a property has been posted with a violation, the City allows three (3) days to correct the violation. If the violation persists beyond this three day period, the City is empowered to correct the situation, i.e. cut the violating grass and weeds, at the property owner's expense and potentially place a lien and/or levy fines.

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Contact Us!

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Reporting Violations: Aside from surveying the City for potential violations, the Department of Community Planning and Business Services is obliged to respond to citizen complaints relating to building and property standards. Violations can be reported via phone and email and complaints can be registered anonymously. When reporting a violation, the street address of the violating property is usually needed in order to code enforcement officers to investigate.

If you have any questions, please call the Department of Community Planning and Business Services at 301-725-5300 ext 2238.

Fire Marshal

Carbon Monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that can cause serious illness and death if a leak goes undetected. Carbon Monoxide Detectors are an inexpensive “must have” for your home to ensure the safety of the entire family.

- Install Carbon Monoxide detectors (make sure they are approved by a recognized laboratory) inside your home to provide warning of accumulating Carbon Monoxide. Carbon Monoxide detectors should be installed in a central location outside of each sleeping area;
- Test your Carbon Monoxide Detectors and Smoke Alarms at least once a month;
- Be sure to replace Carbon Monoxide Detectors based on manufacturer's instructions;
- Never use the oven to heat your home;
- Make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, fireplace, and stove are clear of snow build-up after snow storms;
- When using your fireplace, open the flue to ensure adequate ventilation; and
- Be sure to thoroughly clean dryer vents once a year. Clean out the lint filter of your dryer after each use.

Fire can spread rapidly through your home. Your ability to get out depends on advance warning from smoke alarms and planning. A home fire escape plan that your family is familiar with can make all the difference in an emergency.

- All heaters need space. Keep things that can burn (paper, bedding or furniture) at least three feet away from heating equipment;
- Make sure the venting for exhaust is kept clear and unobstructed. This includes removal of snow around the outlet to the outside;
- Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional; and
- Turn space heaters OFF when you leave a room or go to sleep.

Portable generators are useful during power outages, but there are risks involved. To avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, electrical shock or electrocution and other fire hazards, remember these tips:

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Passport Information 301-725-5300

Hours of Operation

Closed for Lunch
12:30 - 1:30pm
Monday - Friday

Mon/Wed/Thurs/Fri
10:00 AM - *4:00PM

Tuesdays
(Special Evening Hours)
10:00 AM - *5:15 PM

*Times reflect when last application is taken

Service Fees

Passport Fee (Check/Money Order ONLY)

Age 16 & Over
\$110.00
Under Age 16
\$80.00

Application Fee (Cash/Credit ONLY) \$25.00

Expedite Fee (Add to Passport Fee) All ages \$60.00

What documentation is required?

Proof of U.S. Citizenship

1. A previous U.S. Passport.
2. If you were born in the U.S., a certified copy of your birth certificate issued by the State, County or City of your birth.
3. If you were born abroad, bring a certificate of naturalization, or a certificate of birth abroad.
4. All children, 15 years and under, must appear with a parent or legal guardian.

Proof of Identity

1. A previous U.S. Passport.
2. A certificate of naturalization or citizenship.
3. A valid driver's license, government or military ID or other photo ID.

Two (2) identical full front poses, 2" by 2" color photographs on white or light-colored backgrounds.

- Generators should be operated in well ventilated locations outdoors away from all doors, windows and vent openings;
- Never use a generator in an attached garage, even with the door open;
- Turn off generators and let them cool before refueling. Never refuel a generator while it is running; and
- Store fuel for the generator in a container intended for the purpose and labeled as such.

If you have any questions about these tips, please be sure to call the Fire Marshal's Office at 301-725-5300 ext. 2250.

City Council

On June 30, 2015, at the convention of the Maryland Municipal League (MML) held in Ocean City, Maryland, MML elected their new officers. Donna L. Crary was elected as an At-Larger Member for her fifth term.

The Maryland Municipal League is governed by a 31 member Board of Directors comprised of elected and appointed officials from throughout the state. The composition of the Board includes: president, first vice president, past president, 11 district vice presidents, 10 members at large, and 7 department representatives. Board members are elected at the Maryland Municipal League's annual business meeting in June and serve one-year terms. The Board meets six times during the year unless a special meeting is called.

Consider volunteering!

We can help you to find the opportunity you are looking for.

Volunteers are needed to do just about anything from repairing computers to filing, landscaping or special projects. Time commitment can range from a few hours for a single project, to as much time as you have available.

Try something new, learn new skills and meet new people!

Call 301-725-5300 ext. 2110.



Communications

The Department of Communications has been busy!

Laurel TV held a Fall videography training class and now has seven new photographers ready to shoot stories for us.

We could always use more, so if you'd like to volunteer with us, go to the City's website, cityoflaurel.org, and fill out a Volunteer Application. Once approved, we'll add you to the roster and email you when the next training session is scheduled.

If you have other questions, contact Volunteer Coordinator, Christine Johnson, at 301-725-5300 ext. 2110.

Laurel TV is expanding our reach into the Latino community. Laurel resident, Julio Aliaga, has joined the Volunteer Corps and will be translating some of our stories into Spanish. He also tweaked our Spanish language bulletin board announcements for us and will help us find great stories in Laurel's Latino community. If you know of one, please email it to us at LaurelPIO@laurel.md.us and we'll make sure Julio gets the information.



Sneak peak of set designer Michael Farber of I O Scenic, Inc. hard at work.

Stay tuned for the unveiling of the brand new Laurel TV studio. Communications Director Audrey Barnes will be putting out more information about how you can use our beautiful new space soon.

To stay up-to-date on all that happens at Laurel TV, LIKE us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/laureltv.org) ([facebook.com/laureltv.org](https://www.facebook.com/laureltv.org)) so we can bring you the news as it happens!

Catch up on all the local news by tuning into Laurel TV!

You can watch them on Comcast, Channel 71, FiOS, Channel 12 or watch them live via web streaming at LaurelTV.org.

Turn Your Power On!





Mayor's Corner

Mayor Craig A. Moe
Phone: 301-725-5300
Email:
laurelmayor@laurel.md.us

Laurel City Council
301-725-5300 ext. 2121
council@laurel.md.us

Michael R. Leszcz
At-Large

Valerie Nicholas
Ward 1

H. Edward Ricks
Ward 1
President

Donna Crary
Ward 2

Frederick Smalls
Ward 2

So here we are, it's Fall again!

Back to school, football games, Halloween and Thanksgiving! Soon enough we will be celebrating the holidays and dealing with cold weather!

Get prepared for the cold winter weather now! When you check the City's events calendar, you'll see that there is enough to do to stay busy and warm, at the many events taking place around our city!

This is an election year in the City of Laurel, for the Mayor and all City Council seats. Please take the time to vote; whether you vote early on Saturday, October 31, by absentee ballot, or at one of the City's Polling places (Laurel Municipal Center and the Robert J. DiPietro Community Center) on November 3. The deadline to register to vote in the City of Laurel election is October 5. Complete information on the upcoming election may be found on our website, www.cityoflaurel.org, or by calling the Office of the Clerk at 301-725-5300, extension 2121.

You may have seen some new faces around the City lately. We have recently hired Deputy Chief of Police Keven Gray of the Laurel Police Department and William Goddard is our new Emergency Services Coordinator in the Emergency Services Department. We also have some new police officers coming onboard soon. So be sure to welcome them to Laurel if you see them!

Enjoy the season! Hope to see you around town!



General Election - November 3, 2015

7:00am - 8:00pm

Ward 1 - Laurel Municipal Center

Ward 2 - Robert J. DiPietro Community Center

Early Voting: October 31, 2015



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Twitter: @cityoflaurel
Facebook: City of Laurel - Government



Like us!



Follow us!