THE POCOMOKE PAPERS

NOVEMBER 2026 | VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

Stay Informed - Stay Connected



TRASH PICKUP REMINDERS

- **Bulk Pickup**
  - Tuesday, November 10
- **Thanksgiving & Native American Heritage Day Route Adjustments**
  - No pick-up November 26 & 27
  - Thursday & Friday Routes will be picked up Wednesday, November 25

CITY HALL CLOSED

- Wednesday, November 11, 2026
- Thursday, November 26, 2026
- Friday, November 27, 2026
  - In an emergency please call 911



UPCOMING CITY EVENTS

- **Drive-Thru Food Pantry**
  Saturday, November 7
  10 AM–While Supplies Last
  First Baptist Church Pocomoke City
- **Are you Prepared for Winter Weather**
  Tuesday, November 17
  6 PM
  Pocomoke Community Center: Maryland Room
- **Pocomoke City Christmas Parade**
  Monday, November 30
  7 PM

CITY HALL MEETINGS

- Mayor & Council:
  November 2: 6:30 PM
- Board of Zoning Appeals:
  November 4: 6:30 PM (Cancelled)
- Beautification Committee:
  November 18: 6:00 PM
- Planning & Zoning:
  November 19: 6:30 PM

CONTACT INFO
410-957-1333 ext. 102
cityofpocomoke.com

FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK | Moving Pocomoke Forward Together



Let Your Voice Be Heard!

Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2026. Before Election Day, confirm your polling location, review the candidates and ballot questions, and make a plan for when and how you will vote.

Polls will be open from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM.

For official candidate listings, sample ballots, polling-place information and other voting resources, visit:

MORE INFO

Welcome to the second edition of *The Pocomoke Papers!* I am excited to continue using this publication to keep our residents informed about the progress we are making and the opportunities ahead for our community.

One of my top priorities remains making Pocomoke City a more affordable place to live. Recently, I proposed to the City Council that we reduce the Homestead Property Tax Credit assessment cap from 10% to 4%, providing greater protection for eligible homeowners against rising property assessments. I also remain committed to maintaining the Constant Yield Tax Rate to help prevent increases in property assessments from automatically resulting in additional property tax revenue for the City. **Our ultimate goal is to lower property taxes while continuing to provide the quality services our residents deserve.**

In addition, I have tasked our Economic Development Department with reviewing and updating the City's existing economic development incentives, while exploring new ways to reduce costs for residents and encourage investment in our community. We must continue finding creative solutions that make Pocomoke City more affordable for families and more attractive to businesses.

On October 28, 2026, we proudly welcomed Richard Andrew McGee as our new Chief of Police. Chief McGee began his law enforcement career right here in Pocomoke City, and I am confident that his experience and leadership will help us continue strengthening public safety and building relationships throughout our community.

Infrastructure improvements also remain a priority. Our Safe Paths Initiative continues to move forward as we work to improve neighborhood streets and pedestrian safety. Additionally, we anticipate that the ongoing bridge construction will be completed by November 8, 2026. I sincerely appreciate everyone's patience throughout this process.

As we approach the holiday season, I am especially looking forward to our annual Christmas Parade! This is always a wonderful opportunity for our community to come together, celebrate our traditions, and support our local businesses. I hope to see you and your families there.

Finally, I want our residents to know that we are not simply focused on what Pocomoke City is today, but what it can become tomorrow. From economic development and public safety to infrastructure and affordability, every decision we make should move our city in a positive direction.

There is still much work ahead, but I remain optimistic about our future. Thank you for your continued support, your engagement, and the opportunity to serve as your Mayor.

Together, we are building a stronger, safer, and more affordable Pocomoke City!

Written by Mayor Todd Nock

Investing in Our Community, Supporting Our Residents, and Preparing for Growth



Many residents have asked why Pocomoke City has added new positions within City Hall. As our community grows, the responsibilities of municipal government grow with it. Planning, code compliance, infrastructure, economic development, community engagement, and daily administration each require dedicated attention. These positions provide dedicated support in key areas, helping the City improve services, support residents and businesses, and prepare responsibly for future development.

Positions Explained

- Senior Planner
- Code Enforcement Officers
- Project Operations Manager
- Economic Development Director
- Events and Facilities Coordinator
- Community Outreach Coordinator
- Administrative Assistant to the City Manager

Positions Explained on Following Pages

Although each position serves a distinct purpose, they all support the same priorities:

- Providing residents and businesses with focused assistance and better access to City services.
- Planning carefully for responsible growth.
- Improving accountability and protecting the City's investments.
- Supporting existing businesses and encouraging new economic opportunities.
- Strengthening community partnerships and creating opportunities for residents to become involved.
- Giving City Hall the capacity to manage daily responsibilities while continuing to move important projects forward.



Who Does What at City Hall?

Planning and Code Compliance Department

Previously, the City's Planning and Zoning Department was managed by one employee. Following the vacancy in that position, the City's Code Enforcement Director maintained those responsibilities while the City evaluated how to better meet the community's needs. Through that process, we recognized that Pocomoke City needed additional planning capacity to manage development, support responsible growth, and address code compliance concerns. As our community grows, we must ensure that development is thoughtfully planned and that our existing neighborhoods remain attractive, safe, and well-maintained.

Senior Planner

The Senior Planner works alongside the Planning Director to review development proposals, support daily and long-term planning, and identify opportunities for responsible growth. This provides greater attention to how development fits Pocomoke City's character, infrastructure, and community needs while ensuring residents, property owners, and developers receive timely guidance.

Benefit to the Community: More efficient planning services and a proactive approach to growth that preserves Pocomoke City's character.

Code Enforcement Officers

Code Enforcement Officers enforce City ordinances related to vegetation, property maintenance, nuisances, and other code requirements. Addressing violations helps protect neighborhood appearance, support public health and safety, and maintain consistent standards throughout the City.

Benefit to the Community: Cleaner, better-maintained neighborhoods and a more attractive environment for residents, visitors, and businesses. Together, Planning and Code Compliance balance responsible growth with the care and preservation of the community we call home.

Project Operations Manager

The Project Operations Manager provides dedicated, hands-on oversight of municipal infrastructure projects and developer-installed improvements, including streets, sidewalks, water lines, and sewer systems. Consistent oversight helps ensure work meets approved plans and standards while identifying concerns early, reducing future repairs, delays, and costs. It also allows Public Works, water, and wastewater staff to remain focused on essential services.

Benefit to the Community: Greater accountability, better protection of the City's infrastructure investments, and improvements that meet the City's expectations.



Who Does What at City Hall?

Economic Development Department

The Economic Development Department brings together three complementary roles: the Economic Development Director, Events and Facilities Coordinator, and Community Outreach Coordinator. While each has distinct responsibilities, they work together to support local businesses, attract investment, strengthen community partnerships, and make Pocomoke City a stronger place to live, work, visit, and do business.

Economic Development Director

The Economic Development Director supports existing businesses, assists prospective business owners, identifies grant opportunities, and develops strategies to attract new businesses and residents to Pocomoke City. This includes connecting businesses with available resources and potential funding, promoting local economic activity, and pursuing initiatives that encourage investment and strengthen the City's economic base.

Benefit to the Community: Greater support for local businesses, increased opportunities for business development, improved access to grant resources, and continued efforts to expand Pocomoke City's economic opportunities and tax base.

Events and Facilities Coordinator

The Events and Facilities Coordinator organizes City events throughout the year and helps oversee the use and upkeep of public facilities, including Cypress Park and the Horse Stables. Community events bring residents together, create activities for local families, attract visitors, and encourage spending within the community. Oversight of City facilities helps ensure these public spaces remain welcoming and available to residents and visitors.

Benefit to the Community: More opportunities for community engagement, improved use and maintenance of public facilities, and events that support local businesses while showcasing Pocomoke City.

Community Outreach Coordinator

The Community Outreach Coordinator builds relationships with churches, schools, nonprofits, civic groups, and other community partners to identify needs and create opportunities for collaboration. This position maintains connections between City Hall and those who contribute to the community while exploring initiatives residents value, including efforts to restore activities such as a farmers market.

Benefit to the Community: Stronger partnerships, improved communication, increased collaboration, and programs that respond to residents' interests and needs. Together, the Economic Development Department supports business development, tourism, events, community involvement, and Pocomoke City's continued improvement.



Who Does What at City Hall? — Continued

Administrative Assistant to the City Manager

The Administrative Assistant provides direct support to the City Manager and helps manage the daily operations of the City Manager's Office. The position organizes activities, manages administrative tasks, coordinates information, and helps identify which matters require the City Manager's immediate attention. This support allows the City Manager to focus on departmental oversight, major projects, resident concerns, operational issues, and the priorities established by the Mayor and Council.

Benefit to the Community: Improved administrative efficiency, more organized communication, better coordination of City business, and appropriate attention to important municipal matters.

Our Commitment to Pocomoke City

These positions were not created simply to increase staffing. They reflect the City's recognition that Pocomoke City's needs are expanding and that we must have the appropriate personnel in place to meet those needs effectively.

Pocomoke City is a unique community with a rich history and significant opportunities for the future. Preparing for that future requires planning, coordination, investment, and the right people in the right roles. Our responsibility is to ensure that City government continues to meet the needs of the people it serves.

These positions are part of that commitment—to provide better services today while building a stronger, more vibrant Pocomoke City for tomorrow.

Distinct Positions Supporting the Same Objectives

- **Better service:** Providing residents and businesses with more focused assistance and improved access to City services.
- **Responsible growth:** Ensuring that development is planned carefully and that infrastructure improvements receive appropriate oversight.
- **Accountability:** Identifying problems early, enforcing applicable standards, and protecting the City's investments.
- **Economic opportunity:** Supporting existing businesses, encouraging new investment, and pursuing resources that benefit the community.
- **Community engagement:** Strengthening partnerships, supporting events, and creating more opportunities for residents to participate in community life.
- **Efficient government:** Ensuring that City Hall has the capacity to manage daily responsibilities while continuing to move important projects forward.

Written by Brandy Matthews, City Manager

POCOMOKE PROUD

Pocomoke Proud celebrates the people, organizations, and accomplishments that make our community stronger. This month, we recognize those whose service, dedication, and contributions reflect the very best of Pocomoke City.



This Veterans Day, Pocomoke City proudly honors the men and women who have served in the United States Armed Forces. Their courage, commitment, and sacrifice have helped protect the freedoms we enjoy today.
We extend our sincere gratitude to every veteran in our community and beyond, as well as to the families who have supported them throughout their service. Thank you for answering the call to serve and for the lasting contributions you continue to make in our community.

NOMINATE FOR POCOMOKE PROUD



Know an organization or community group doing something notable? Help us recognize those who represent the best of Pocomoke! Send the organization's name, your name and contact information, photos, and a brief description of why they deserve to be featured. Submissions are due by the 15th for consideration in the following month's Pocomoke Proud section.

Amanda Russell
arussell@pocomokemd.gov



POCOMOKE SCHOOLS SHINE

Pocomoke's schools are giving our community even more to celebrate. Pocomoke Elementary School has earned a five-star rating on the Maryland Report Card—an achievement reflecting the hard work of its students, dedication of its staff, and continued support of its families. Pocomoke Middle earned four stars, while Pocomoke High earned five stars, ranked 12th statewide, and achieved a 98% graduation rate.

Spring 2026 assessment results brought additional good news. Among Pocomoke Elementary third graders, 80% demonstrated proficiency in English/Language Arts, compared with 50.4% statewide, while 85.7% demonstrated proficiency in mathematics, compared with 42.6% statewide. These accomplishments give all of us another reason to be Pocomoke Proud.

GETTING AROUND POCOMOKE



Pocomoke River Drawbridge

SAFE PATHS PHASE TWO BEGINS IN NOVEMBER

Phase Two of the Mayor's Safe Path Initiative is expected to begin in November, weather permitting. Planned work includes **Snow Hill Lane, Payne Avenue, Dorchester Avenue, and Somerset Avenue**. Additional scheduling and resident-impact information will be shared as it becomes available.

BRIDGE CLOSURE REMINDER

The Pocomoke River drawbridge is currently expected to remain closed through November 8. This date is subject to change based on the project schedule. Motorists should continue to follow the posted detour using MD 364, US 13, MD 250A and US 13 Business. Questions or concerns regarding the closure should be directed to the Maryland State Highway Administration.

US 13 and Stockton Road Signal Project

The Maryland State Highway Administration is continuing improvements at the US 13 and Stockton Road intersection. The project will replace the existing flashing beacons with a full traffic signal and add updated signs, pavement markings, and advance warning lights. Completion is currently anticipated by the end of 2026, weather permitting.

ROAD OR SIDEWALK CONCERN?

CITY STREETS & SIDEWALKS

For concerns involving City-maintained streets, sidewalks, potholes, or drainage, contact Pocomoke City Public Works at 410-957-0107 or email reportconcerns@pocomokemd.gov.

STATE HIGHWAYS

US 13, US 13 Business, MD 366/Stockton Road, and the drawbridge are maintained by the Maryland State Highway Administration. Contact District 1 at 410-677-4000.

STAY INFORMED

Construction schedules may change due to weather and project conditions. Follow City announcements at cityofpocomoke.com/news and @Pocomoke for updates.

Community Investment Spotlight

@pocomoke



Investing in a Downtown Landmark: Improvements at the MAR-VA Theater

As an “Aspiring” member of the Main Street Maryland program, the City of Pocomoke received a $10,000 Main Street Improvement Grant from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. The funding supports beautification and revitalization efforts within the downtown area. The City awarded the funding to the historic MAR-VA Theater to support marquee improvements, new signage, and exterior murals that enhance its historic façade.

These improvements will help preserve the theater’s distinctive character while contributing to the continued revitalization and beautification of downtown Pocomoke City.
The City is grateful for this investment and for the continued partnerships supporting our downtown and community.



Artist Spotlight: Olga DeShields

The artwork outside the historic MAR-VA Theater was created by local muralist and public artist Olga DeShields. Known for her colorful murals, hand-painted signs, and historic restoration work, Olga’s creativity can also be seen on painted windows throughout Pocomoke City. Her work brings color to our community while helping local businesses and landmarks tell their stories.



Business & Development Spotlight

Spotlighting the people and projects shaping Pocomoke.



Celebrate the Season at The Christmas Sweet

The Christmas Sweet combines a full-service bakery with an extensive year-round collection of Christmas décor, including Santa figures, angels, nutcrackers, elves, ornaments, and gifts. Visit the shop's **Christmas Extravaganza** on **November 20 and 21 from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Santa** will also visit on **November 28 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**, with no admission charge. The Christmas Sweet is normally open Wednesday through Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Learn more at ChristmasSweet.store.

Holiday Shopping at Enchanted Florist & Gifts



Celebrate the season at Enchanted Florist & Gifts! Shop flowers, gifts, clothing, home décor, and seasonal merchandise while supporting a local Pocomoke City business.

Christmas Open House
Friday, November 13 • 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
Saturday, November 14 • 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Enjoy store prizes, special discounts, and plenty of holiday inspiration. Enchanted Florist will also offer discounts for **Small Business Saturday on November 28.**



Christmas Arts & Crafts Festival

Kick off the holiday season at the Pocomoke Area Chamber of Commerce's biggest Christmas Arts & Crafts Festival yet! More than 40 vendors will fill the Pocomoke Community Center with handmade crafts, unique gifts, seasonal treats, and plenty of holiday cheer.
Visitors can enjoy festive Christmas music, giveaways every half hour, food and beverages from the concessions area, and a free coloring station for children. **Santa will also visit from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

Saturday, November 7
9 a.m.–3 p.m.
Pocomoke Community Center
1410 Market Street

Admission is $5 per person. Children ages 12 and younger are admitted free, and no family will pay more than $20. Plenty of parking is available, and the event is wheelchair accessible.

2026 Corporate Sponsor: Hickman Heating • Plumbing • Air Conditioning, Inc.





SAMARITAN SHELTER:

Helping Our Neighbors Move Forward

As colder weather and the holiday season approach, the Samaritan Shelter continues providing food, shelter, and support to people throughout our community.

Operating 24 hours a day, 365 days a year involves much more than providing a bed. Staff members serve three meals each day, maintain a safe and welcoming facility, respond to residents' needs, and help people work toward stability and self-sufficiency.

Behind the scenes, the Shelter helps residents apply for jobs and benefits, obtain identification documents, arrange transportation, and connect with housing, healthcare, counseling, addiction treatment, veterans' services, and other community resources.

The City of Pocomoke recently provided a $10,000 donation to support this work. According to Director Shelly Wise, the funding is especially important as some traditional funding sources are no longer available. It will help cover essential expenses including utilities, food, household supplies, maintenance, repairs, transportation assistance, and support services.

"One thing I wish more people understood is that homelessness can happen to people for many different reasons," Wise said. "The people we serve are people in our community. They are our neighbors, and they deserve the opportunity to get back on their feet."

As temperatures fall, the Shelter expects an increased need for:

- Coats, warm blankets, and gloves
- Paper products
- Lunch foods
- Personal hygiene products

Community members can also help through financial donations, volunteering, fundraising, and sharing information about the Shelter's work. Donations may be dropped off at the Samaritan Shelter, 814 Fourth Street. For questions about donations, call 443-944-3889 or 410-957-4310.

To donate online, complete a volunteer form, or learn more, visit thesamaritanshelter.org.

November Health & Wellness Highlights



Diabetes Awareness Month

Prediabetes can develop without noticeable symptoms and increases the risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Talk with your healthcare provider about blood-sugar testing, particularly if you are age 35 or older, have high blood pressure, are not regularly active, or have a family history of diabetes.

Free Diabetes Support Group
Thursday, November 19
11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Pocomoke 50+ Center

Open to people living with diabetes and their caregivers. Connect with others, share coping strategies, discover meal ideas, and learn ways to stay healthy and active.

For information, call 410-632-1100, ext. 1113, or scan the QR code.

Health Department Resources

Are You Prepared for Winter Weather?

Winter weather and other emergencies can disrupt power, water, transportation, and access to stores. Keeping several days of essential supplies on hand can help your household remain safe and comfortable.



Include:

- Water and nonperishable food
- Medications and first-aid supplies
- Flashlights, a radio, and extra batteries
- Phone chargers and important documents
- Supplies for children, older adults, people with disabilities, and pets

Free Community Preparedness Workshop
November 17 at 6:00 p.m.
Pocomoke Community Center: Maryland Room

Learn how to prepare your household before an emergency occurs. Additional information will be available through the City of Pocomoke.

View the complete checklist at Ready.gov/kit.



Something's Always Happening in Pocomoke!

For the Kids

November 3 | 10:30 AM
Playtime at the Park
Cypress Park

November 4 | 4 PM
Ai Quest at Pocomoke Library

November 10 | 10:30 AM
Story Time DiNovember
Pocomoke Library

November 11 & 25 | 10 AM
Let's Give Thanks Story Time
Delmarva Discovery Museum

November 17 | 10:30 AM
Clay & Play
Pocomoke Library

November 17 | 4 PM
Early Readers Book Club: Sir Ladybug
Pocomoke Library

November 24 | 10:30 AM
Story Time: Turkey Tales
Pocomoke Library

November 28 | 10 AM - 1 PM
Santa Visit
The Christmas Sweet

Health & Wellness

Sundays | 1 PM
Yoga & Beer
Cypress Roots Brewing Co.

November 12 | 2 PM
Herbal Vinegars
Pocomoke Library

November 19 | 11 AM
Diabetes Support Group
Pocomoke 50Plus

Follow Us on Facebook

Arts & Entertainment

November 4 & 18 | 6 PM
Feral Fibers: A Knit Night
Cypress Roots Brewing Co.

November 5 | 2 PM
Pocomoke Book Club: Frozen River
Pocomoke Library

November 6 & 7 | 7 PM
November 7 & 8 | 2 PM
Cinderella Live Production
The Mar-Va Theatre

November 7 | 9 AM
Christmas Arts & Crafts Festival
Pocomoke Community Center

November 7 | 1 PM
Beginner/Intermediate Stained Glass Class
Wulfhause Productions

November 8 | 2 PM
Stained Glass Snowflakes
Cypress Moon Art Studios

November 11 & 25 | 6 PM
Stitch Circle
Cypress Moon Art Studios

November 13 | 9 AM - 5 PM
November 14 | 9 AM - 4 PM
Christmas Open House
The Enchanted Florist

November 13 | 6:30 PM
Purse & Cash Bingo
The Great Pocomoke Fair

November 14 & 15 | 11 AM
Sisters of the Heart Pow Wow
The Great Pocomoke Fair

November 14 | 11 AM - 4 PM
Through Native Eyes
Delmarva Discovery Museum

November 15 | 5 PM
Game Night at the Studio
Cypress Moon Art Studios

November 20 & 21 | 8 AM - 6 PM
Christmas Extravaganza
The Christmas Sweet

November 28 | 11 AM - 4 PM
Shop with a Purpose
Delmarva Discovery Museum

More to Explore

November 19 | 11 AM
Birds and Bagels
Pocomoke Library

November 21 | 1 PM
Let's Get Seedy - Pine Cone Bird Feeder Craft
Delmarva Discovery Museum

Have an upcoming Pocomoke City event?
Submit details to arussell@pocomokemd.gov by the 20th.
Scan for the complete, up-to-date community calendar.

Coming This November: PocoPod

A Pocomoke City Podcast

Your city. Your stories. Your voice.

1. **INSIDE CITY HALL**
   Get clear, approachable updates about City projects, services and decisions.

2. **COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS**
   Hear from the residents, organizations and local leaders serving Pocomoke City.

3. **BUSINESS & OPPORTUNITY**
   Meet local business owners and learn about programs, resources and opportunities.

4. **EVENTS & LOCAL STORIES**
   Discover what's happening around town and celebrate the stories that make Pocomoke proud.



THE FIRST EPISODE IS COMING IN NOVEMBER

Follow Pocomoke City on Facebook for launch details and information about where to listen.



@CityofPocomokeCity
www.cityofpocomoke.com
410-957-1333