

**THE TOWN OF MOUNT AIRY
TOWN COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 2026-1**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MOUNT AIRY
FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING ACQUISITION, IMPLEMENTATION,
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF, AND PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL
PUBLIC OUTREACH ABOUT, HAZARDOUS WEATHER ALERT SIREN
SYSTEM WITHIN THE TOWN TO ENHANCE PUBLIC SAFETY.**

WHEREAS, one of the most fundamental responsibilities of a government is to provide for the safety of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, when life-threatening weather is approaching, minutes or even seconds can make a difference; and

WHEREAS, hazardous weather alert sirens are a proven technology for alerting people to seek safety; and

WHEREAS, out of all twenty-four Maryland counties and jurisdictions, Frederick County ranks first, and Carroll County ranks seventh in number of recorded tornadoes; and

WHEREAS, tornadoes and floods often hit hardest in areas where resources are scarce, where low-income and vulnerable community members may live in older, less resilient housing, who may lack access to traditional emergency notification systems; and

WHEREAS, there have been thirteen tornadoes within ten miles of Mount Airy since 2010, three of which touched down within town limits of Mount Airy, two in 2012 and one in 2018; and

WHEREAS, since 2020 (just the last five years), there have been three tornado warnings, three flash flood warnings, and one destructive severe thunderstorm warning (having winds of greater than eighty mph), all of which triggered the highest tier of National Weather Service (“NWS”) warnings on cell phones and as such would trigger Town weather alert sirens; and

WHEREAS, two serious and impactful hazardous weather events have occurred in Mount Airy over the span of only the last seven years, as described below; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 Mount Airy was hit by a damaging Enhanced Fujita scale (EF)-2 tornado, the impact of which included the destruction of trailer homes in a nearby trailer park and damage to other residences and businesses within our community; and

WHEREAS, in July of 2025 Mount Airy experienced a serious storm with flash flooding resulting in a devastating loss within our community; and

WHEREAS, many citizens, including low-income community members, may not have access to smart phones or internet services which are used to disseminate NWS emergency warnings, and there are citizen-identified reports of cell phone dead zones in several areas of the Town; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council finds that moving forward, a hazardous weather alert siren system and associated education will help to reduce and prevent fatalities, injuries, and property damage from such natural disasters and severe weather events; and

WHEREAS, to this end, on August 20, 2025, Mayor Larry Hushour established the Inclement Weather Task Force (hereafter “the Task Force”) to provide recommendations to the Mayor and Town Council on ways to better anticipate, prepare, educate, respond to and clean up following significant weather events in Mount Airy; and

WHEREAS, a key priority was to research and provide a recommendation on the need for and feasibility of a hazardous weather alert siren system for the Town; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force has now completed its research in this regard, to include gathering weather alert siren system costs, capabilities, operational needs and requirements, possible locations for placement within town boundaries, and benchmarking of many other municipalities to obtain lessons learned on their selection and operation of such systems; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that such siren systems are typically set up to be activated when NWS highest tier weather alerts are issued; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force has received numerous letters of support from residents and businesses, and elected officials for the addition of a weather alert siren system to our town; and

WHEREAS, on October 28, 2025, Task Force members reached a unanimous recommendation that the Town Council should pursue and approve the acquisition and operation of a weather alert siren system to enhance public safety; and

WHEREAS, accordingly, this Resolution formalizes the Town Council of Mount Airy’s decision and commitment to acquire, operate, maintain, and provide educational public outreach on a hazardous weather alert siren system, given that the Town Council has concluded that implementation of this siren system will enhance the Town of Mount Airy’s overall approach to imminent hazardous weather preparation, warning, and response for public safety; and

WHEREAS, by way of this Resolution, the Council commits to securing and allocating needed funding conservatively estimated by the Task Force to be \$93,500 for a weather alert siren system and its components to include: two weather alert sirens, associated hardware and software, poles for mounting, installation, and development of associated public notification and educational outreach materials; and

WHEREAS, the Council encourages pursuit of outside funding sources through partnerships with other municipalities, government entities, grants and private sector donations of resources, equipment and services to achieve a goal of at least fifty percent co-funding.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of Mount Airy that the Town hereby:

- A. Commits to acquiring, implementing, operating, maintaining, and providing educational public outreach on a weather alert siren system within the Town as described herein and below in order to enhance public safety by enhancing the response time to and chances for surviving natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornados, severe thunder storms and flooding; and
- B. Commits to secure and allocate needed funding conservatively estimated by the Task Force at \$93,500 for a weather alert siren system and its components to include: two weather alert sirens, associated hardware and software, poles for mounting, installation, and development of associated public notification and educational outreach materials; and
- C. Encourages Town Staff under the direction of the Mayor to pursue outside funding sources through partnerships with other municipalities, government entities, grants, and private sector donations of resources, equipment and services to achieve a goal of at least fifty percent co-funding.

ADOPTED:

This 5th day of January, 2026 by a vote of _____ in favor and _____ opposed.

ATTEST:

Jason Evans, Secretary

Tim Washabaugh, President of the Council

ATTEST:

Jason Evans, Secretary

Larry Hushour, Mayor

Reviewed and approved as to legal sufficiency
this 5th day of January, 2026

Thomas V. McCarron, Town Attorney