

The Fairfax County

FEDERATION

of Citizens Associations

Established 1940

February 2007

THE BULLETIN

Volume 56, Number 6

Membership Meeting



Thursday, February 15, 2007

8:00 p.m.

**Sunrise Valley Elementary School
10824 Cross School Road, Reston**

*Please note the meeting will be held
at the above location,*

*NOT at the Packard Center;
beginning at 8:00 p.m.*

Guest Speaker:

The Honorable Catherine M. Hudgins
Supervisor, Hunter Mill District

**Topic: Growth: What if . . .
the Washington Region grew differently?**



Upcoming Membership Meetings

March 29, 2007 7:30 p.m.

Packard Center Main Conference Room
(Please note this is the last Thursday of the month.)

Guest Speaker: Tony Griffin
Fairfax County Executive

**Topic: The County Executive's Advertised
Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Plan**

April 19, 2007 7:30 p.m.

**Tourism in Fairfax County:
the "FX Marks the Spot" Campaign and
Jamestown 2007**



2007 Federation Board Meetings

All Board meetings at 7:30 p.m. at the Packard Center.

February 22

March 8 (the second Thursday of the month)

April 26 May 24 June 28



ON THE ROAD AGAIN: THE FEDERATION GOES TO RESTON

The NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING is THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, at 8:00 pm at Sunrise Valley Elementary School, 10824 Cross School Road (*not the Packard Center*). Thanks to *Hunter Mill District Supervisor Cathy Hudgins*, we will have a program on **Growth: What if . . . the Washington Region grew differently?** cosponsored by The Federation and the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB). Supervisor Hudgins, who is also TPB chair, will help lead the discussion at the event that offers hands-on, interactive participation. See the enclosed flyer; an RSVP to my number, below, would be appreciated so we know how many people to prepare for.

Our **January 18 membership meeting** featured a program on Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) with **Dr. Richard Moniuszko**, Deputy Superintendent, and **Deidra McLaughlin**, Chief Financial Officer. We were also pleased to have **Janet Oleszek**, At-Large School Board Member, as a special guest. Please see the enclosed minutes for a nice wrap-up of the presented FCPS budget, status and goals copiously written by **Esther Ferington**, our Secretary. Also, the membership unanimously adopted the **Resolution on Tyson's Tunnel** brought to the floor by **Bill Hanks** our Resolution Chair. Thanks to **Jeff Parnes** for leading the meeting in my absence.

Our Legislative Chair, **Sally Ormsby**, is tracking bills that are similar to our **2007 Legislative Program**. My testimony in January and the program are posted on our website for access and downloading.

It is time to look forward to the election of the Executive Board of Directors for 2007-08. If you are interested in serving, please contact me and I will forward your name to the Nominating Committee chaired by **Carol Hawn**, our immediate past president.

The Federation is extremely pleased to have **Congressman Tom Davis** (11th District) as the guest speaker for The Federation and **The Washington Post Citizen of the Year Awards Dinner Banquet** on **March 11** at the Fairview Marriott. Please see the information on *page three* of this newsletter.

Looking ahead, our **March 29 Membership Meeting** will be with **County Executive Tony Griffin**, who will discuss the upcoming **County Budget Plan**, to be released later this month. Our **April 19 Membership Meeting** will feature "Tourism in Fairfax County-FX Marks the Spot," and **Jamestown 2007**. On **May 17**, we will have a "Report From Richmond". We will wrap up the year on **June 21** with a **Picnic** and **Chairman Gerry Connolly** presenting his annual mid-year "State of the County". Our Human Services Committee Co-chairs **Tania Hossain** and **Bettina Lawton** continue to work on an upcoming **Emergency Preparedness Forum** with time and place to be determined.

John Jennison, President

FedPres2006@FairfaxFederation.org

(703) 591-5586

**Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations
Membership Meeting of January 18, 2007**

DRAFT MINUTES

For approval at the February 15, 2007 membership meeting.

The meeting of FCFA was held at the Packard Center at 7:30 p.m. (Attendance list is attached to file copy.) In President John Jennison's absence, First Vice President Jeff Parnes chaired the meeting. He introduced the evening's speakers, Dr. Richard Moniuszko, Deputy Superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), and Deirdre McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent for Financial Services. He also introduced Janet Oleszek, an at-large member of the School Board, who attended the meeting.

Program

Dr. Moniuszko noted that the Fairfax County Public Schools system is one of the best in the nation. *Newsweek* ranked all FCPS high schools in the top 3 percent nationwide. Eighteen months ago, the School Board began developing a vision for the system's future that includes three strategic goals: academics, essential life skills, and responsibility to the community. Each goal has several sub-goals.

The overall enrollment, or membership, of the system grew rapidly between about 1998 and 2003, then leveled off. It has been stable for the last four years. The composition of the membership is changing, with a 16 percent increase from FY 2003 to FY 2008 in students who require instruction in English as a second language and a 7.5 percent increase in those who qualify for free or reduced-price meals. One in three families with students in the system speaks a native language other than English in the home.

Performance continues to improve, with an increase of 25 percent in AP tests taken in just the last three years (this statistic is in addition to the International Baccalaureate tests at other schools). SAT scores are the highest in the region with the exception of Falls Church; scores for Asian-American, black, Hispanic, and white students are also among the highest for each of those groups within the region. All of the county's schools are accredited. The system has the highest graduation rate of the top 50 high school systems in the country. A total of 93 percent of graduates go on to post-secondary education, including 60 percent of special-education graduates. Standards of Learning results continue to improve.

FCPS initiatives include full-day kindergarten (there are 137 elementary schools in the system, of which about 70 have full-day kindergarten already); foreign language in elementary schools, including French, German, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, and other programs; teacher leadership, which refers to grants to schools for teachers to work year-round; and competitive salaries and benefits.

The proposed FY 2008 budget reflects an increase of 4.6 percent in the county transfer to the schools above the FY 2007 figure, which is the lowest proposed transfer increase since 2004. The Board of Supervisors target for FY 2008 was 3.5 percent.

The \$2.2 billion operating budget is for a system with 198 schools and centers, 164,490 students (the 13th largest system in the country), and 22,199.3 FT-equivalent positions, making FCPS one of the largest employers in Virginia. The proposed budget is shaped by the goals and initiatives described above, as well as the recognition this is a very tight budget year due to changes in residential real estate values. The county transfer makes up about 73 percent of the FCPS budget, and

comes principally from real estate and personal property taxes.

Starting teacher salaries remain the highest in the region at \$42,400; a teacher with a master's degree and several years of experience receives, on average, \$58,067, which is in the middle of the regional salary rankings; the maximum salary is \$88,394, which ranks seventh out of nine local systems.

About 85 percent of expenditures goes to instructional programs, which means salaries; 5.4 percent to support, human resources, finance, and the like; and 5 percent to transportation, primarily meaning the school bus system. A total of 73.7 percent of anticipated revenues come from the transfer from the county; additional funds come from the City of Fairfax under an agreement outsourcing teaching in City schools to the County school system, and from the state, the sales tax, and federal aid. The state aid is about 12.8 percent of the revenues and is mainly related to Standards of Quality (SOQ); the sales tax revenue, which is projected to be down 10 percent next year, is budgeted at 7 percent; and the federal aid is roughly 1.8 percent.

The budget was proposed January 11, the School Board hearings are January 29, and the proposal should be adopted on February 7. The Board of Supervisors will review the budget on April 10 and the final budget will be adopted on May 24.

Dr. Moniuszko and Ms. McLaughlin responded to questions on No Child Left Behind, particularly the county's objection to the type of testing mandated for ESOL students, the teacher-student ratio in classrooms, the Department of Vehicle Services budget and diesel fuel costs, bus maintenance and years in service, types of teachers who are most challenging to recruit (special education and math and science), timing of the program budget proposal, teacher benefits, International Baccalaureate programs, methods of managing discipline problems, including a pilot program based on a positive behavior support model, and changing start times for high schools. Janet Oleszek also responded from the audience on the high-school start time issue, explaining the arguments that have been put forward in support of a later start time and stating that it remains of great importance to many Board members.

Business Meeting

- a. The minutes for the December 14, 2006, membership meeting were presented by Esther Ferington and were approved unanimously as published in the Bulletin.
- b. The Treasurers Report was received from Scott Schlegel, who presented it to the meeting.
- c. Sally Ormsby reported the previous auditor has supplied a summary letter for each of the past two audits, but cannot provide the full records because the files are on an older computer and are no longer readable. This summary letter is attached to the file copy of the minutes.
- d. Sally Ormsby provided a historical item of interest, Who's Who biographical data on the first Federation president, Thomas Powderly Martin (1887–1963; served as Federation co-founder and president, 1940–42). This is also attached to the file copy. A February 1970 memo on the forecast for the county's future and a November 1970 memo on "the cost of growth" have also come to light in response to an author's recent research request to the Federation for a book being written for the GMU press on Fairfax

(see **Draft Minutes** - continued on page 3)

(Draft Minutes - continued from page 2)

County growth in the 1970s.

e. Sally Ormsby, chair of the Legislative Committee, gave a report on General Assembly actions to date on issues included in the Federation's legislative package. It was agreed unanimously to take a position on another matter; the Regional Cooperation Act provides an exemption for requiring regional strategic planning for those planning districts that are part of a multi-state Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), such as the Northern Virginia Regional Commission within the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, yet such planning is needed. The membership voted to support eliminating that exemption.

f. Jeff Parnes noted the next newsletter deadline is January 26. He solicited volunteer assistance with folding, which includes collating, applying stamps, and other steps. The last issue took two people six hours, so a group of volunteers would be ideal. There is a window of only a few days between printing and mailing, however, so scheduling is a consideration. Anne Johnson indicated a second-grade Brownie troop might be available.

g. Steve DelBianco, Land Use Committee chair, reported that the Planning Commission has decided to defer a decision by two weeks on the minimum lot width zoning ordinance amendment on which the Federation recently passed a resolution. He reminded the membership of the portable storage containers issue that had been brought up in June, which was deferred. The topic will be revisited at the next Planning Commission hearing on February 8.

h. Charles Dane, chair of the Education and Youth Committee, reported the committee had met on the proposed budget and drafted testimony, which it would forward to the Federation Board for approval.

i. Bill Hanks, Resolutions Committee chair, presented the resolution on the Tysons tunnel for the Metrorail line extension. The resolution was adopted unanimously with minor amendments.

j. Art Wells had to leave early, so Esther Ferington provided his report on the Braddock District Council. January 3 was the first meeting of the Braddock District / George Mason University Forum on issues of mutual concern and the forum will meet again in April. On January 17, the District Council sponsored a successful workshop on safety issues, including personal safety, community safety, 911 operations, and more.

k. Sally Ormsby reported that the most recent Providence District Council meeting included a presentation on homelessness in the county. Jeff Parnes reported that the most recent Sully District Council meeting was on land use and transportation.

l. Merrily Pierce noted that the next Federation membership meeting will be a public forum on alternative land-use and transportation co-sponsored by the Federation, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), and Fairfax County Supervisor Cathy Hudgins, who is the TPB chair. **PLEASE NOTE** this public meeting will be held "on the road" at Sunrise Valley Elementary School in Reston, not at the Packard Center.

Next Membership Meeting: February 15, 8:00 p.m., cafeteria of Sunrise Valley Elementary School in Reston. (Not the Packard Center!) Public forum on alternative land-use and transportation co-sponsored by Supervisor Cathy Hudgins and the National Capital Region

Transportation Planning Board.

Next Board Meeting: January 25, 2007.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

**The Fairfax County Federation
of Citizens Associations
and
The Washington Post
request the pleasure of your company at the
Fifty-seventh Annual Awards Banquet
honoring the
2006 Fairfax County Citizen of the Year
Guest Speaker
The Honorable Thomas M. Davis
U. S. Representative, Eleventh District
Sunday, the Eleventh of March
at the
Fairview Park Marriott Hotel
3111 Fairview Park Drive
Falls Church, Virginia
Reception 6:30 p.m.
Dinner 7:30 p.m.**

For more information, please call Sally Ormsby, Banquet Chair, at (703) 273-2048.

Meeting Cancellation Policy

If either Fairfax County Government or Schools are closed after 12:00 noon the day of a Federation membership meeting, or if it is announced that Fairfax County Government or Schools will be closed the day after a scheduled Federation membership meeting due to inclement weather or other emergency, the Federation will not hold that event. This does not pertain to regularly scheduled closures. Membership meetings will not be rescheduled. We will attempt to post the cancellation on www.fairfaxfederation.org or you can call (703) 266-6872 for more information.

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations

4022 Hummer Road, Annandale VA 22003

www.fairfaxfederation.org

2006-07 President: John Jennison
Newsletter Editor: Carol Hawn

The Bulletin is the newsletter of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations. It is published monthly, with the exception of July and August. The purpose is to provide information to member communities, federal, state, and local officials, and other interested persons in Fairfax County. Articles reflect the view of their author and may be reprinted with the use of the following citation: *The Bulletin* of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations.

Please contact Carol Hawn at (703) 266-6872 or cahawn@att.net with name and address changes, comments, or suggestions.

Fairfax County
FEDERATION
of Citizens Associations

4022 Hummer Road
Annandale, VA 22003

Membership Meeting

**Thursday,
February 15, 2007**

8:00 p.m.

Sunrise Valley Elementary School
10824 Cross School Road, Reston

(please note the change in location
and time)

*Growth: What if . . . the Washington
Region grew differently?*

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Directions to

**Sunrise Valley Elementary School
10824 Cross School Road, Reston**

Take I-495 (Capital Beltway) to the Dulles Toll Road
(Route 267 – Exit 45);

Go west toward Reston.
(Please note this portion of the road is a toll road.)

Take the Hunter Mill Road exit (Route 674 – Exit 14).
Turn left onto Hunter Mill Road.

Turn slight right onto Sunrise Valley Drive.

Turn left onto Cross School Road. The school is on the left at 10824 Cross School Road.

www.fairfaxfederation.org