

The Fairfax County FEDERATION

of Citizens Associations *Established 1940*

March 2008

THE BULLETIN

Volume 57, Number 7

General Membership Meeting



Thursday, March 27, 2008

(Please note this is the fourth Thursday of the month.)

7:30 p.m.

**Packard Center Main Conference Room
4022 Hummer Road, Annandale**

**Topic: The Fairfax County
Fiscal Year 2009 Budget**

**Guest Speaker: Fairfax County Executive
Anthony Griffin**



Upcoming Membership Meetings

April 17, 2008 7:30 p.m.

Federation Representation on County
Boards, Authorities, and Commissions

May 15, 2008 7:30 p.m.

Wrap-up Report from Richmond
Election of Federation Officers for 2008 - 2009

June 19, 2008 7:00 p.m.

Federation Picnic and
"State of the County"

Guest Speaker: The Honorable Gerry Connolly
Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors



Federation Board Meetings

Packard Center Main Conference Room 7:30 p.m.

April 24

May 22

June 26



President's Message

At this month's Annual Federation Banquet (thanks to all Federation members who attended), I was privileged to serve as the Master of Ceremonies. And ceremonious it was, as we honored John Horejsi's selection as 2007 Fairfax County Volunteer Citizen of the Year (COY). We also honored the immediate past members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors for their past efforts in support of the County. Luminaries, such as County Board Chairman Gerry Connolly and 11th District Congressman Tom Davis served as the keynote speakers, and they did a fantastic job of honoring the award recipients and entertaining the banquet attendees.

I think the best we can do is let the 2007 COY recipient tell us in his own words what it meant to him to be honored by this recognition:

I have much to be thankful for. I've received a flood of cards letters and messages. I'm deeply moved that so many SALT members & Federation members came out for the award ceremony. It was a splendid ceremony.

I'm humbled to be honored for community activism but I know that behind SALT are so many remarkable volunteers that make successful advocacy possible. In response to the many requests I've received, including an initiation to appear on a Television show . . .

I'm very thankful to the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations & to the Washington Post for this high honor and to each of you for your recognition, good wishes and prayers as well. I'm very touched by the recognition of "you all."

John Horejsi

I look forward to seeing you at our March Membership meeting, to discuss the County's proposed FY 2009 budget and adopt the Federation's resolution on the budget plan. Enjoy,

Jeffrey Parnes, President
FedPres2007@FairfaxFederation.org
703-424-2956

The Fiscal Year 2009 Fairfax County Budget

The Fiscal Year 2009 Advertised Budget Plan will be discussed at this month's Federation membership meeting. The advertised budget, and supporting documentation, is available on the county website: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb. Reference copies of all budget volumes are also available at all Fairfax County Public Libraries. The public hearings on the budget will be held March 31, April 1, and April 2, at 7:00 p.m. Speakers are given three minutes to testify. To sign up to speak, call the Clerk to the Board at 703-324-3151. Please check the starting time of the hearings earlier in the day, as the time may change somewhat.

**Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations
Membership Meeting of February 21, 2008**

DRAFT MINUTES

(for approval at the March 27, 2008 membership meeting)

The meeting of FCFCA was held at the Packard Center at 7:30 p.m. (Attendance list is attached to file copy.) The preceding month's planned meeting on January 17 was canceled due to inclement weather.

President Jeff Parnes introduced the evening's program, which included two topics. The first was a presentation by Dominion Virginia Power regarding the proposed new power transmission line, as a counterpoint to the presentation in opposition to the line from Virginia's Commitment at the November membership meeting. The second was the originally scheduled topic of the meeting, presentations on several transportation subjects.

Program

The Dominion Virginia Power presentation was introduced by Phil Sparks, the local senior manager for state and local affairs. He apologized for being unable to attend the November meeting due to a schedule conflict with a meeting at the Council of Governments (COG). He introduced Kevin Curtis, director of transmission planning and marketing for Dominion Virginia Power.

Mr. Curtis provided a color printout of a slide presentation, which he reviewed. Among other points, the presentation noted that the population of northern Virginia has grown by about 43 percent since 1990, but the energy demand has increased by about 73 percent. He said that at present Dominion Virginia Power imports about 10 percent of its energy needs; it has a conservation program; and it encourages renewable energy sources. However, he said there is still a significant long-term challenge in meeting the projected demand for energy in the region, which has been named one of the nation's two "critical congestion areas" by the Department of Energy. In the short term, he said, the transmission line is needed in service by 2011 to avoid rolling blackouts in northern Virginia at times of peak demand. The line would be located within or adjacent to the right of way for the existing line. According to a study by the consulting firm KEMA, it represents the least intrusive, least adverse impact solution, he said. He noted that the next step will be an evidentiary hearing on February 25. In response to a question, he said construction needs to begin in April 2009 for the line to be ready for the summer of 2011. In response to another question he said that the additional nuclear plant for which Dominion Power has applied would be available no sooner than 2014.

President Jeff Parnes then introduced the speakers on transportation. Roger Boothe from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) spoke on the Beltway HOT (high-occupancy/toll) lanes project, with additional comments from Nick Nicholson, also of VDOT. The HOT lanes are a private-public partnership with Fluor and TransUrban. The project involves widening the Beltway by two lanes over the section of the Beltway from Springfield to just north of the Dulles Toll Road (but ending before Old Georgetown Pike), then allocating two inside lanes to high-occupancy vehicles, vehicles choosing to pay a toll, and rapid transit buses. As with HOV lanes, motorcycles will not pay a toll. The Beltway HOT lanes are due to come online in December 2012.

Tolls will vary according to traffic in the HOT lanes, with the goal of managing traffic volume to ensure a predictable travel time.

They will be collected electronically by use of transponders in the vehicles, similar to SmartTag transponders, and will go to the concessionaire. The tolling will be "at speed," meaning that vehicles will need to slow down somewhat on entry, but not much. Virginia state police will enforce the HOV restriction for those not paying a toll and not qualifying as high-occupancy vehicles.

The project is a capacity improvement for the Beltway that will also provide connectivity for transit (via the bus rapid transit) and for existing HOV lanes. Planning has included environmental aspects. Major interchanges will be rebuilt so that the new bridges or overpasses are wide enough to allow the full number of lanes underneath. Almost every overpass will include bicycle and pedestrian treatment.

Many questions involved the likely toll rates, which will be high, and concerns about possible congestion chokepoints prior to getting to the HOT lanes or after exiting from them. In response to other questions, Nick Nicholson stated that a study of rail on the Beltway had found that approach was not feasible. He also made the point that he considers road capacity for major routes to be a safety issue; without enough capacity, congestion spills over into neighborhood streets that were not designed for commuter traffic.

The next speaker, Mark Canale of the Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT), is the Fairfax County coordinator in addressing the major relocation of personnel to Fort Belvoir under BRAC (the federal Base Realignment and Closing Commission). The county's BRAC staff includes six positions: himself, two transportation planners, and three land use planners. Issues include transportation, impact on local schools, and county services. He noted that BRAC mandated that an additional 19,300 positions will move to Fort Belvoir and associated areas by September 2011. In practice, the military, civilian, and contract workforce associated with Fort Belvoir will increase from 21,500 to 47,500. This increase includes discretionary moves by the Army above and beyond the BRAC requirements.

(see DRAFT MINUTES - continued on page 3)

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations

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www.fairfaxfederation.org

2007-2008 President: Jeffrey M. Parnes

Newsletter Editor: Carol A. Hawn

The Bulletin is the newsletter of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations. It is usually 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@verizon.net with newsletter name and address changes, comments, or suggestions.

Federation 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, although speakers may be asked to attend an upcoming meeting. We will make every attempt to post the cancellation on www.fairfaxfederation.org or you can call 703-266-6872 for more information.

(DRAFT MINUTES - continued from page 2)

The major agencies involved are the National Geospatial Agency (NGA), the US Medical Command (part of the former Walter Reed), the Washington headquarters service or WHS, and various Army units now in leased space, usually referred to as Army Lease. The current plan is for the NGA to go to the former Engineering Proving Grounds (EPG) property south of Springfield, the hospital and the Army Lease group to the South Post on Fort Belvoir, and the WHS to one of several possible destinations. At one point, it was planned for the WHS to go to the old GSA warehouses in Springfield, but there are now two other possibilities, the Mark Center in Alexandria and the Victory Center in Alexandria.

The changes resulting from BRAC will include a projected 6.5 million additional square feet in building construction and another 7 million square feet in parking. The transition also emphasizes a shift from transit use by employees to vehicle use. He also noted that the impact of the BRAC project and other large projects has been treated in a piecemeal fashion. Planning for the Army Museum and its impact has been handled separately, for example. The Army has estimated that the needed road improvements to accommodate the BRAC workforce changes will cost \$626 million. Fairfax County and VDOT have estimated the cost at \$1.6 billion. Very limited road improvements (some ramps and the like) have been DAR-certified by the Army, meaning they would be paid for as part of this transition. Fort Belvoir has also committed to hiring a traffic demand management (TDM) staff person in 2009. The missing segment of the Fairfax County Parkway, from Rolling Road to Fullerton Road, will be completed. Funding of \$114 million had been set aside to build it, but it will cost \$174 million, so not all aspects of that project will be built. Federal assistance in paying for the many improvements required to accommodate the BRAC impact is critical, but has been hard to obtain. The area is competing for resources with many other localities affected by BRAC. Growth installations also attract less sympathy than areas with base closures.

The third and final speaker was Nick Nicholson, who described the transportation management planning (TMP) for major planned projects, including the Beltway HOT lanes and rail to Dulles. TMP aims at maintaining traffic mobility during the construction period and was used recently for the Wilson Bridge project and the Springfield Mixing Bowl project. Challenges include loss of road shoulders and off-hours lane closures. The plan for the upcoming projects includes obtaining and sharing real-time information on congestion on the Beltway (including via websites); placing a high priority on clearing incidents rapidly, with increased safety service patrols and more state police; and the acquisition of live traffic information from sensors and detectors in scheduling contractor closure requests. Other efforts will include subsidizing use of transit, encouraging flexible work hours, adding park and ride lots and a bus circulator service, and coordinated efforts to get information out ahead of time about major closures.

Business Meeting

- a. The minutes for the December 13 membership meeting, as published in the January newsletter, were unanimously approved.
- b. The Treasurer's Report was reviewed and received.
- c. A proposed fax to Mary Peters, the US Secretary of Transportation, reiterating the Federation's support for rail to Dulles, was approved unanimously.
- d. Jeff Parnes suggested the possibility of a joint board

meeting with the Montgomery County Federation at some time. He also noted the upcoming COG community leadership institute and need for a citizen representative to the COG Transportation Planning Board. There was also a discussion of the request for art judges for community art work (art in public places) at a particular site.

- e. Carol Hawn stated the newsletter deadline is March 9.
- f. Charles Dane noted that he had circulated a memorandum on the status of the FCPS budget and the views of the Education Committee.
- g. Flint Webb stated that the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) had approved and suggested for adoption the PM 2.5 particle state implementation plan (SIP). He had hoped to prepare testimony for the membership meeting's review on the upcoming policy plan amendment regarding upstream protection, but had not been able to do so in time. Instead, he would testify as an individual (not on behalf of the Federation) at the hearing, the following Monday.
- h. Sally Ormsby reviewed some key pieces of state legislation on issues that the Federation has included in its legislative package, including the cash proffers/impact fees bill, redistricting reform (defeated in subcommittee), tree conservation, and payday lending.
- i. Charles Dane reported that he is returning to a focus on Federation membership after dealing with the pressing Education issues related to the FCPS budget. We have another eight or nine member associations more than the same time last year.
- j. Esther Ferington reported on behalf of Art Wells for the Braddock District Council that the Braddock workshops on putting the green in Braddock (beautification) and helping seniors to stay in place were reasonably well-attended and successful. Roger Hoskin reported that the Mason District Council will be seeking greater visibility. Jim Davis reported on the Mount Vernon Council's last meeting, which included a discussion of the problem of systematic delivery of unwanted newspapers. Sally Ormsby reported that the next Providence District Council meeting would be on the school and county budgets. Jeff Parnes reported on a recent meeting of the Sully Council on the Route 50 corridor, with Loudon board members.

k. Jeff Parnes reminded those present that the next Federation Board meeting is March 6, due to the county budget timing. Also, the next membership meeting is March 27, which is the fourth rather than the third Thursday, for the same reason.

Next Membership Meeting: March 27 – County's Proposed FY09 Budget Presentation by the County Executive (4th Thursday)

Next Board Meeting: March 6, review of proposed position on county budget.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

In Memoriam

The Federation extends its condolences to the family of Georgette Kohler who passed away suddenly this month. Georgette was an at-large member of the Fairfax County Park Authority Board, and had served as the liaison to the Board of Supervisors on the recently completed Cross-county Trail project. She was also active in western Fairfax County organizations.

**Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations
Draft Resolution**

**Fairfax County Advertised Fiscal Year 2009 Budget
and FY 2009-2013 Capital Improvement Program**

(for consideration and adoption at the March 27, 2008 meeting)

This draft resolution was developed using information available to the Federation Board as of Thursday, March 6, 2008. At that time, the FY 2009-2010 state budget had not yet been considered. Please note that state and county decisions since that time may lead to amendments to this draft resolution.

Background

The County Executive's proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Budget Plan totals \$6.06B (billion), of which the General Fund portion is \$3.32B. Of the latter amount, \$1.74B would be transferred to the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) including the debt service, \$125.2M (million) would be transferred for Metro, transit systems, etc. Debt service will total \$113.2M. The Board of Supervisors Guidelines, anticipating the shortfall in revenue, provide that both the County and the school system will hold their FY 2009 budgets flat – no increases.

Property Tax Rates – The current real estate tax rate would remain at \$0.89 per \$100 of assessed value or could be increased by up to 3 cents per \$100 valuation. One real estate tax penny will represent \$22.8M in tax revenue. The County Executive proposed no tax rate increase or reduction, but the Board of Supervisors advertised an increase up to 3 cents per \$100 of assessed value. Total real estate values will increase only 0.51% with residential values decreasing from a gain of 20.57% in FY 2007 to a loss of 0.33% in FY 2009.

Revenue

- General Fund revenues are estimated to be \$3.30B, an increase of only 0.45%, with real estate tax receipts representing 60.0% of the revenue base.
- Residential property foreclosures have increased considerably and are expected to continue in FY 2010 and FY 2011, thereby reducing residential real estate tax revenue considerably.
- The deficit for FY 2010 and FY 2011 will be an estimated \$200M.
- Revenue from personal property taxes will be 15.6%, nearly 70% of which is provided by the state.
- Property taxes comprise 75.6% of General Fund revenues. Other local taxes, e.g., sales, Business, Professional, and Occupational License (BPOL), utility, auto licenses, etc., total 5.27%. Revenue from the federal and state governments will be 0.9% and 2.8%, respectively.

Revenue Enhancements – Some fees would be increased to offset increases in the cost of providing service, as follows:

- Refuse collection fee increase from \$330 to \$345 per year
- Sewer service rate increase from \$3.74 to \$4.10 per 1,000 gallons of water used
- Sewer availability charge increase from \$6,506 to \$6,896 for new single-family home.

Expenditures and Reductions – General Fund disbursements total \$3.32B. The original deficit was \$120M, but the County Executive made budget adjustments before presenting his Advertised FY 2009 Budget Plan. As cost-saving measures, the County Executive has taken the following actions:

a. Compensation

- A 4.0% reduction in agency salary budgets - 2% earlier in the fiscal year and 2% more recently.
- A reduction of 50% in employee compensation increases, including the Pay for Performance program for general County employees and the Market Rate adjustment applied to public safety salaries and all pay scales.
- Partially funding inflationary adjustments or those required by population increases, federal/state mandates, or new service requirements.

b. Other Reductions

- Cut in capital project funding to \$6.9M plus \$22M in the Capital Improvement Program.
- Use of \$4.4M of the stormwater management real estate tax penny to fund 34 positions in support of this program.
- Use of \$0.6M of the affordable housing real estate tax penny to fund six (6) positions in support of this program.
- Use of one-time balances.

c. Possible Further Reductions – As the proposed budget was being printed, the Federal Reserve lowered interest rates and new state budget forecasts indicated further losses, resulting in County FY 2009 revenues of \$32M less than expected. On February 25, the County Executive proposed a list of additional reductions to offset this deficit.

New Initiatives – There will be no new initiatives because of the lack of funding. The penny each for affordable housing and stormwater management will remain, but capital renewal funds would be reduced to only \$6.9M. County and school athletic field maintenance will receive \$5.1M. The County Executive proposed adding an Energy Coordinator (\$0.1M) in a redirected position to develop energy efficiencies, conservation and cost savings.

(DRAFT BUDGET RESOLUTION - continued from page 4)

Various environmental projects, in furtherance of the Board's Environmental Agenda, will total \$0.6M.

The Human Services area of the budget addresses all programs that serve the needs of various populations, from low-income residents to the homeless to seniors. The proposed FY 2009 budget for the Community Services Board programs would increase only \$1.47M, a 1.45% increase.

Public Schools – The proposed schools transfer is \$1.59B, the same level as in FY 2008. In February 2008, the School Board asked for \$1.65B, or 3.8% above the FY 2008 transfer, a difference of \$63.75M. In addition, the County's transfer for School Debt Service will be \$154.63M, an increase of 4.6% over the FY 2008 revised budget. The operations and debt service transfer totals \$1.74B, which is 52.4% of General Fund disbursements.

Other County expenditures for schools include \$63.5M for school nurses, clinic room aides, Comprehensive Services Act (CSA), Head Start, School Age Child Care (SACC), school crossing guards, and School Resource Officers.

Capital Improvement Program – The advertised FY 2009-2013 Advertised Capital Improvement Program (CIP) provides for capital projects from all funding sources - bonds, General Fund, proffers, etc. The FCPS has a separate CIP for which the County pays the bonded indebtedness. The proposed total debt service is well within the parameters set by the County's financial principles, e.g., it represents 8.0% of General Fund disbursements (10% allowable maximum) and 0.09% of the market value of taxable property (3% allowable maximum). There will be two bond referenda on the November 2008 ballot - \$60M for parks and \$40M for public safety facilities.

Proposed Resolution

WHEREAS, residential real estate equalization assessments have dropped dramatically this year to a 0.33 % decrease, but the non-residential equalization assessments have maintained a healthy increase of 13.57%, which will help to balance County revenues; new growth shows a 1.68% increase, down from 2.94% in FY 2007;

WHEREAS, the advertised FY 2008 budget links its spending program to the Board of Supervisors' Priorities to carry out its vision elements - education, public safety and gang prevention, affordable housing, environmental protection, transportation improvements, and revenue diversification to reduce the burden on homeowners;

WHEREAS, the County is largely reliant on real estate tax revenue, which represents 60.0% of General Fund receipts. Including new growth, the real estate tax base will increase 4.15% in FY 2009, compared with a 22.7% increase in FY 2007.

WHEREAS, FCPS has requested a County transfer of \$63.7M, a 3.8% increase; the County budget guideline to

FCPS for FY 2009 was no increase over FY 2008 because of flat County revenues;

WHEREAS, the proposed FCPS budget totaled \$2.26B or a 2.9% increase over the FY 2008 approved budget, the projected deficit was about \$100M, while dealing with planned opening of two new elementary schools, and the unexpected and unbudgeted enrollment increase of about 1400 students in FY 2008, which coupled with a new expected increase of as many as an additional 1100 students in FY 2009, including at least 200 students with special education needs, results in \$14.4M;

WHEREAS, the FCPS Superintendent has kept department budgets below FY 2007 levels and proposed \$46M in budget reductions or increased fees (fees for taking of AP, IB and PSAT tests and participation in activities except that those students on free or reduced lunch programs would not be required to pay these fees), and as instructed by the FCPS Board (FCSB) included expansion of all-day kindergarten to 21 schools, expansion of the Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools (FLES) program to 16 schools, and the phased-in development of a computerized district-wide student information system (SASI) that will ultimately reduce the workload on teachers in this extensive record keeping era, thereby reducing the budget shortfall to \$55.8M or a 3.3% increase in transfer funding from the County;

WHEREAS, more than 200 individuals (students, parents, teachers, and interested citizens) presented testimony on the proposed FY 2009 budget to the FCSB on two public hearing dates and more than 7500 e-mails were sent to FCSB members;

WHEREAS, some of these reductions proposed by the Superintendent are expected to result from reprogramming efficiencies, especially from some Central Office cuts and redesign of the summer school program, other reductions affected programs for special education students and students at risk, and to a lesser degree gifted students, even though there is a pressing need to reduce the academic achievement gaps involving some minority groups;

WHEREAS, the FCSB (1) recognized the need to restore or partially restore some programs, (2) eliminated the Superintendent's proposed additional fees for tests and participation, and (3) agreed to offset some of these increases with reduction in all-day kindergarten from 21 to 10 schools, reduction in the FLES program from 16 to 8 schools, and some reduction in funding for the SASI program, and the FCSB has requested a County transfer increase of \$63.7M, which is the smallest percentage increase requested, and if fully funded, would be the smallest percentage transfer increase in many years.

WHEREAS, except for the real estate tax, nearly 90% of County revenues are capped, limited or controlled by the state, costing the County millions in possible revenue to

(see DRAFT BUDGET RESOLUTION - continued on page 6)

(DRAFT BUDGET RESOLUTION - continued from page 5)

offset real property taxes because it does not have the same taxing authority as cities and towns;

WHEREAS, the County Executive directed a 2% across-the-board personnel service reduction as part of the FY 2008 budget and has ordered a second 2% reduction totaling \$16.5M for FY 2009;

WHEREAS, the County Executive addresses a number of human services programs, among them:

- The Child Care Assistance and Referral (CCAR) Program would increase \$2.6M to offset a state reduction, but the County is providing child care to about 1600 fewer children than before the \$10.6M state funding reductions of FY 2007 and FY 2008.
- Places in reserve \$4.1M to offset an anticipated expenditure shortfall for the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA). A reduction of 25% of the reserve (\$1M) and a reduction of \$1M in the CCAR program – a total of \$2M – is proposed to help offset revenue shortfall.
- Adds \$2.0M to fund limited contract rate increases to providers, many of which address mental health, substance abuse treatment, and needy family situations. An additional \$0.6M is included for mental health adult outpatient services.

WHEREAS, the County is faced with significant financial obligations in its health care and retirement obligations;

WHEREAS, the County Executive has released the Advertised CIP for FY 2009-2013, which proposes \$22.06M for Paydown Capital Projects from the General Fund in FY 2009, a decrease of \$13.3M from the FY 2008 level. In addition, the County Executive proposes bond referenda in November 2008 in the amounts of \$60M for parks (\$50M for Fairfax County and \$10M for the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority) and \$40M for public safety facilities.

WHEREAS, the advertised General Fund budget includes adding 41 positions to the Office of Transportation from new funds to be received as a result of General Assembly action in 2007. *(However, the 2008 General Assembly rescinded some of those funding sources, and the Supreme Court found on February 29 that the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) cannot impose taxes and fees so the Office of Transportation will not receive all of the funding they had expected.)*

WHEREAS, the proposed budget would transfer \$34.7M for County transit system funding and \$17.5M (a decrease of \$4.8M or 13.8%) for Metro capital, operations and maintenance obligations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations (the Federation) appreciates the County Executive submitting to the Board of Supervisors a fiscally responsible proposed FY 2009 budget recognizing a significant reduction of anticipated revenues.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Federation offers the following observations regarding the FY 2009 Advertised Budget Plan and the FY 2009-2013 Capital Improvement Program:

- a. County Vision and Board Priorities – We again commend the budget's focus on the Board's six priorities in carrying out the seven elements of the County Vision. Further, we support each of the priorities - education, public safety and gang prevention, affordable housing, environmental protection, transportation improvements, and revenue diversification to reduce the tax burden on homeowners.
- b. Real Estate Tax Rate – We appreciate Fairfax County having one of the lowest real estate tax rates in the Northern Virginia region. Because the County provides programs and services mandated but not funded by the federal and state governments that cost County taxpayers about 50 cents on their real estate property tax dollar, according to the County Executive's message, we encourage the Board of Supervisors to continue urging our state and federal legislators to fully fund their mandates.
- c. Legislative Authority – It is essential that the General Assembly grant counties, specifically Fairfax with the Urban County Executive form of government, the same taxing authority as cities and towns, which would allow diversification of the County's revenue base. We will strongly support the County's efforts to obtain such enabling legislation.
- d. Revenue Additions – We recognize the need to increase the refuse collection fees to prevent a financial loss in providing this service. We also recognize the necessity of increasing the sewer service rate in order to ensure that the County's sewage treatment plants meet discharge standards set by EPA. Finally, we do not oppose an increase in the sewer connection fee.
- e. Real Estate Tax Rate – We support an increase in the tax rate by two [three] cents per \$100 valuation until such time that the average property values return to the January 2007 level, at which time the rate should revert to 89 cents per \$100 valuation. Further, neither the County nor FCPS should undertake new programs or expand current programs, such as no expansion of all-day kindergarten and no expansion of the FLES program. Finally, the revenue from the increased real estate tax rate should be divided approximately two-thirds for FCPS and one-third for the County.
- f. Programs
 - (1) Stormwater Management Program – We strongly support continuation of dedicating one penny on the real estate tax rate for the storm water management program because 70% of County streams are in only fair to poor condition. We realize that much more

(see DRAFT BUDGET RESOLUTION - continued on page 7)

(DRAFT BUDGET RESOLUTION - continued from page 6)

- than the one penny per year will be required to solve the significant, accumulated stormwater management problems that need to be addressed. This is an important countywide issue that we hope receives timely attention and will support enhancing the pace of resolving the current situation. Because the County must cut costs this year, and in the years to come, we agree that a portion of the penny can be used to pay the salaries of personnel whose work supports this program if other County revenue will not cover these service costs.
- (2) Affordable Housing – The ability of lower- and middle-income workers to afford housing in the County is becoming increasingly difficult with high housing costs. We strongly support the County's program to preserve existing affordable housing stock and to invest in programs that will provide such housing so that employees can live closer to their places of employment. We support continued dedication of one penny of the real estate tax rate for affordable housing.
- (3) Human Services – We support each of the small increases proposed in the human services area, such as \$2.6M for the Child Care Assistance and Referral (CCAR) program to offset the most recent cut in state funding, placing in reserve \$4.1M for anticipated expenditure shortfall for the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA), and adding \$0.6M for mental health adult outpatient services. These are very small increases to serve growing needs for all aspects of human services throughout the county. However, we oppose the proposed reduction of the CSA reserve by 25% and the reduction of the CCAR program by \$1M as well as the proposed elimination of the increase of \$0.3M in the Consolidated Community Funding Pool.
- (4) Transportation – [This section will be discussed and adopted at the membership meeting, as we are waiting to obtain information on the impacts of Supreme Court and General Assembly decisions.]
- (5) Elections – While revenues are scarce, consider inclusion in the budget the replacement of the current touch screen voting machines with a sufficient number of optical scanning machines that are fully compliant with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA).
- (6) Health Care and Retirement Obligations – Long-term County obligations for health care and retirement for current employees and retired employees should be analyzed with an eye on Health Savings Accounts and retirement programs based on "defined contributions" rather than "defined benefits."
- g. Public Schools – Recognizing that FCPS is one of the highest rated school districts in the country and that this contributes to attracting businesses to Fairfax County and enhancing our property values and quality of life, the Federation urges the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to contribute approximately two-thirds of an increased real estate tax rate of two [three] cents to FCPS for the FY 2009 budget year. This represents an amount that the Federation believes is necessary to maintain the current educational program.
- h. Capital Improvement Program
- We commend the County for providing some funding for some capital improvements, such as major maintenance, from the General Fund to supplement use of bond financing for major capital projects, which we understand the bond rating houses appreciate. We regret that the General Fund allotment for this purpose had to be decreased to \$6.9M.
 - We also commend the County Executive for establishing a Capital Inflation Reserve to present a more realistic picture of actual construction costs in future years. For future budgetary planning, we continue to recommend that each proposal for a new facility should include the projected annual costs of operation and maintenance.
 - We agree with the County Executive's program to address security issues at new facilities by applying Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles. In addition, we recommend the application of "green building" principles to conserve energy and mitigate stormwater runoff and its impacts.
- i. Citizen Participation – Once again, we encourage the Board of Supervisors to re-establish the Citizens Budget Advisory Committee to follow the budget process, look at long-range trends, and submit recommendations on important budget issues to the Board for their consideration. Also, each Supervisor should establish such a committee in his/her district, as has been the case in Springfield District.
- j. Value Analysis and Value Engineering – The Federation membership approved at its September 2005 meeting and sent to the Board a resolution encouraging the County to use the Value Analysis and Value Engineering process to assess its programs to determine how they might be accomplished more efficiently. As an example, we cited the savings realized by New York City, which has been following this approach in its programs. It is appropriate at annual budget preparation time that we reiterate our support for this efficiency approach to county programs to realize any cost savings possible while carrying out operations efficiently and effectively.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Federation appreciates the challenges that you, the Board, face and the hard choices that you will be making because of reduced revenues and increasing needs throughout the schools and services sectors of the County.

For more information, contact Jeffrey Parnes, Federation President, at fedpres2007@fairfaxfederation.org.

Fairfax County
FEDERATION
of Citizens Associations

4022 Hummer Road
Annandale, VA 22003

Membership
Meeting

Thursday,
March 27, 2008

7:30 p.m.

The Packard Center
4022 Hummer Road, Annandale

Topic: Fairfax County
Fiscal Year 2009
Advertised Budget Plan

<i>Contents of this Issue</i>	
<i>President's Message / Announcement of March 27, 2008 Meeting</i>	1
<i>Draft Minutes of the February 21, 2008 Meeting</i>	2 - 3
<i>Draft Resolution on the Fairfax County Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Plan</i>	4 - 7

Directions to the

Packard Center, located in Annandale Community Park

Take I-495 (Capital Beltway) to Little River Turnpike
(Route 236 - Exit 52B);
go east toward Annandale.

Turn left at the first stop light onto Hummer Road.

Go 200 yards to the entrance of Annandale Community Park on the left.

Keep right to the large parking lot.

Please use the left entrance into the Packard Center Building.

www.fairfaxfederation.org