

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations
Membership Meeting of March 27, 2008
MINUTES

The meeting of FCFCA was held at the Packard Center at 7:30 p.m. (Attendance list is attached to file copy.) The scheduled speakers were unable to attend. The evening was devoted to monthly business and to review, discussion, and approval of the Federation resolution on the proposed county budget.

Business Meeting —

a. The minutes of the February 21, 2008, membership meeting, as published in the March newsletter, were unanimously approved.

b. In the absence of Treasurer Scott Schlegel, President Jeff Parnes presented the Treasurer's Report and a detailed review of the costs and income for the Citizen of the Year banquet. Without the \$1500 grant from The Washington Post, which co-sponsors the banquet, the result this year would be a net loss. The Treasurer's Report was received and filed.

c. President Jeff Parnes praised the banquet, the choice of honoree, the joint presentation by Gerry Connolly, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, and Congressman Tom Davis, and the chosen setting. He thanked Sally Ormsby for arranging the banquet.

d. He noted that the Nominating Committee, chaired by the Federation's immediate past president John Jennison, has been formed, with members having been named at the most recent Board meeting.

e. He also reviewed the calendar of events for the rest of the year. In reference to the April membership meeting, which will include reports from several Federation representatives, Esther Ferington noted that the Federation is still seeking to representatives to serve on three bodies: the School Board Advisory Committee on Gifted and Talent Students, the Criminal Justice Advisory Board, and the Airports Advisory Committee. Anyone interested in serving should contact Esther Ferington through the Second Vice President e-mail address at the Federation website, or, for the Gifted and Talented position, contact Charles Dane through the Education Committee e-mail address.

f. Noting that the planned May meeting is a Report from Richmond, President Jeff Parnes mentioned that there has been a request from the Chamber of Commerce to present at a Federation meeting, and this could be a good alternative plan for that date if the General Assembly is in session at that time, making the senators and delegates unavailable.

g. Charles Dane noted that the Federation's 18th president, Yves Maroni, has passed away. He served as president in 1958. President Jeff Parnes expressed the Federation's regret. Mr. Maroni's son has offered the Federation his father's Federation-related records, and we have accepted them. Sally Ormsby suggested that these could be added to the Federation archive in the Virginia Room of the Fairfax County library system.

h. Charles Dane, chair of the Education and Youth Committee, reported the committee is closely following the budget process. The committee's next meeting will be in May. Majority and minority reports from the Transportation Task Force have been filed with the School Board. The next step will be for the School Board to put forward its plan on the topic and to hold public meetings on that plan.

i. Jeff Parnes noted that the next FCPS Community Leadership Council meeting will be April 25, and he plans to attend.

j. Flint Webb, chair of the Environmental Committee, noted that Fairfax County will observe Earth Day on April 19. He also noted that Saturday, April 5, will be Potomac Watershed stream clean-up

day. He discussed the lights-out hour on Saturday, March 29, from 8 to 9 pm. This is a movement that began in Australia last year to show how much energy is consumed by lights in an hour.

k. Sally Ormsby, chair of the Legislative Committee, noted legislative action since our last meeting on tree preservation legislation, the Virginia Energy Future Act, payday lending, and the extension of HOV privileges to hybrid vehicles.

l. Charles Dane, who as First Vice President is head of the Membership Committee, reported that he and Jeff Parnes are scheduled to present to the McLean Citizens Association meeting, with the goal of enlisting more member associations, and that Jeff Parnes and Esther Ferington will present in May at the Providence District Council. [Note: It was subsequently clarified that he and President Jeff Parnes will present at both meetings.]

m. Charles Dane proposed that for associations joining after April 15, their membership fees would pay for next year's membership as well, since we are near the end of the fiscal year. In other words, new member associations can pay for 12 months and get 15 months in all, counting the last few months of this fiscal year. This proposal was unanimously approved.

n. Bill Hanks, as chair of the Resolutions Committee, moved that the Federation express its appreciation to the son of former Federation president Yves Maroni for providing the past Federation records. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

o. Jeff Parnes reported on the Greater Washington 2050 task force. He has attended the first meeting and will go to the next one on March 28. The task force will meet over about eighteen months. It consists largely of professionals and relatively few citizens, making the Federation an important voice for citizens. The Washington Regional Equity Network, or WREN, hoped to coordinate the voice of nonprofit organizations within the task force, but only the Federation has participated in working with them on this so far. He recommended that the Federation may wish to consider joining WREN, which is a no-cost membership, and will circulate information on the organization to the Board.

p. Jeff Parnes also noted that the Issues Fairfax 2008 forum will be held April 9 at the Capitol One Complex in McLean.

q. Jeff Parnes reported on a recent presentation regarding county residential real estate assessments. This year, most initial assessments included a much larger allocation of value to the land and correspondingly less value to the house than in the past. New assessments are being sent out. These will reflect the same total value for each residential property, but generally reduce the amount attributed to the land and increase the amount attributed to the house. He also noted that homes should be insured for their replacement value, not the assessed value.

r. Art Wells reported from Braddock District that Susan Datta and Gerald Connolly spoke on the proposed FY 2009 Fairfax County budget at the most recent meeting. The April meeting will be a report from members of the General Assembly. The next Braddock-GMU work group meeting will be April 12. The next major construction project at GMU will be a conference center and hotel.

s. Jim Davis reported from the Mount Vernon Council that the council has approved its County budget resolution. It also approved a resolution requesting that the Board of Supervisors ask the County Executive what millage rate is needed to meet increasing human service needs in the county.

t. Sally Ormsby reported that the most recent Providence District Council meeting was a Richmond wrap-up, with speakers Senator Chap Petersen and Delegates David Bulova and Steve Shannon.

u. Jeff Parnes reported the latest Sully District Council meeting was a presentation on the proposed county budget. He also noted the council contributed to the Georgette Kohler Memorial Fund.

v. Donald Hinman of Lee District noted that his community has just completed the lengthy process that releases the developer's bond. His association is working with Land Development Services to produce a brochure for HOAs on this topic, and he asked for input from the Federation. He will forward the draft text to Jim Colby, Chair of the Land Use Committee. It was also suggested this would be a good topic for an article in the Federation Bulletin.

w. John Jennison, as the Federation representative to the Tysons Corner Land Use Task Force, reported the group is expected to finish in May with recommendations to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. The process includes many workshops and opportunities for citizens to pitch in, he reported. He noted the task force is down to two possible recommendations for the evolution of Tysons Corner over the next 25 to 30 years. Both depend upon the arrival of Metrorail in the next 30 years and would not be implemented without it. More information is available at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/tysonscorner/> .

Consideration of Budget Resolution

President Jeff Parnes then asked Sally Ormsby to chair a discussion of the proposed Federation resolution on the proposed FY 2009 Fairfax County budget. A motion to approve the resolution was made and seconded.

The resolution as drafted offered members a choice of a two or three cents increase in the residential property tax rate until such time as the total of countywide property assessments is the same as the 2007 level, with a two-thirds/one-third allocation between the FCPS and county budgets. A motion in favor of the three cent increase was moved and seconded. A friendly amendment was offered, but not seconded, to allocate one of these cents for light rail. The motion to increase the rate by three cents was passed 15 to 5.

A motion was moved, seconded, and passed 18 to 0 to state that there are no detailed comments on transportation funding because the General Assembly is still resolving this issue, although as a general principle the Federation believes funding should be levied at the regional or statewide, rather than local, level.

An amendment was moved, seconded, and passed 20 to 0, to recommend that the county find funding for a sufficient number of optical scanning voting machines in time for the November 2008 election.

An amendment was moved, seconded, and passed 20 to 0, to delete the recommendation that individual Supervisors establish citizen budget advisory committees, while retaining the recommendation that such a committee be established on a countywide basis.

An amendment was moved, seconded, and passed 14 to 8 to delete a recommendation that the county study Health Savings Accounts and defined-contribution retirement plans for its employees.

The resolution, as amended, was unanimously approved. President Jeff Parnes thanked Sally Ormsby for her work in preparing and reviewing the package for the membership.

Next Membership Meeting: April 17 – "Report from the Reps." Presentations by Federation Representatives Lou D'Alessandro (Citizens Action Advisory Board), Vic Mukai (Information Technology Policy Advisory Committee), and Jan Auerbach, Judy Harbeck, and Walt Carlson (School Board Transportation Task Force)

Next Board Meeting: April 24, 2008. Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.