

FAIRFAX COUNTY  
**F E D E R A T I O N**  
of Citizens Associations Established 1940

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations  
Membership Meeting of May 15, 2008  
MINUTES

The meeting of FCFCA was held at the Packard Center at 7:30 p.m. (Attendance list is attached to file copy.) President Jeff Parnes introduced Senators Richard Saslaw and Chap Peterson and Delegate Tom Rust as part of the evening's program, "Report from Richmond," on this year's General Assembly session. Senator Ken Cuccinelli later joined the meeting in progress and was introduced at that time.

Program

Senator Richard Saslaw began by reviewing the General Assembly's actions on mental health issues following the Virginia Tech tragedy of 2007. The assembly took action to ensure that people who are committed on an outpatient basis or institutionalized will be recorded in the database of those not permitted to buy firearms. It also changed the rules regarding the handoff of records related to mental health from high schools to colleges, upon request by colleges. In other action in the session, a number of immigration-related bills were submitted, but most did not pass.

Senator Saslaw noted that a week before the end of the session, the transportation funding package agreed to last year was abruptly impacted by a Virginia Supreme Court decision that the North Virginia Transportation Authority and the parallel Hampton Roads authority could not constitutionally impose fees or taxes. Delegates Tom Rust and John Cosgrove organized a conference of legislators in the affected regions to discuss next steps, and there are many more phone calls and meetings to come. Complicating the situation, projections for revenue are down and the overall budget situation is tough. He thinks that the two houses can get something done on transportation, but does not believe there can be regional plans without a statewide plan as well. Road maintenance, which comes first in the VDOT budget, is eating up funds that could have been spent for construction; ultimately, a statewide solution is needed. Several local projects (Braddock Road between Kings Park and Wakefield Chapel Road, Route 50 near Arlington, etc.) cannot be undertaken until July 1 at the earliest because there is no money left.

Delegate Tom Rust spoke next. He noted that the mental health issue, in the wake of Virginia Tech, was a bipartisan effort that made many improvements in the system. This also helped address some of the issues with the police shooting at the Sully police station. He also noted the General Assembly had acted on higher education and public infrastructure revenue bonds as part of a package of other capital facilities, creating something like a six-year rolling plan that will allow better planning. He also mentioned that payday lending was hotly debated this session and a compromise bill resulted. He also discussed the limited action on immigration issues.

In other topics, Delegate Rust mentioned the federal letter rejecting funding for rail to Dulles, which has now been reversed and issues related to overcrowding and sprawl in western Fairfax and Loudoun Counties. He also was responsible for the final bill that completed the deal bringing the headquarters of Volkswagen of America to Fairfax County. He further described the recent transportation conference of some 30 legislators from Hampton Roads and northern Virginia, which was bipartisan and included both Senators and Delegates. The conference agreed there is a need for regional components for northern Virginia and Hampton Roads side by side with a statewide component, rather than seeking only regional solutions.

Senator Chap Peterson also discussed the transportation funding distribution formula for road maintenance, which does not favor northern Virginia; the formula for construction is more favorable. He also noted the progress with mental health provisions and with the bond bill for higher education. He

noted he had worked for and helped pass a bill on tree preservation which allows localities to pass ordinances on this topic, in coordination with Delegate David Bulova and Senator Patsy Ticer. He also put forward a Student Bill of Rights related to student loan reform. He introduced a renewable energy bill, which did not pass, but the fact the topic was debated was a step forward. The major unfinished business is reaching a compromise on transportation funding.

Senator Ken Cuccinelli went into more detail on the mental health reforms. He said that changes this year represent greater strides forward than any in the last 25 to 30 years. Still, the mental-health system remains seriously in need of further change and he sees this as a multiyear project. Involuntary commitments are normally the last step for families. One sixth of local jail inmates are mentally ill, and jails are becoming the de facto mental health facility of last resort. These inmates are good candidates for rehabilitation if the system can be fixed. He also clarified that the laws just passed will allow colleges and universities in Virginia to request and receive mental health records for specific students from both public and private high schools in Virginia, and further, that high schools in Virginia can also respond to specific requests for records from colleges and universities outside of Virginia. These are waivers by the state that are permitted under HIPAA. High schools cannot, however, volunteer this information to institutions of higher learning, as colleges told the legislature this could overwhelm them.

The legislators answered questions on a bill, which did not pass, to do away with the existing proffer system by developers, on the governor's climate change commission, on allocation of transportation funds, on BRAC's impact on transportation and infrastructure, on HOT lanes (including construction impacts, effects on energy use, and variable tolls), on equal county-city-town taxing authority, on Virginia's 2-year time window on HIPAA waivers (which must then be renewed, unlike in some other states), and on the status of the township referendum for Reston.

#### Business Meeting —

- a. The minutes for the April 17 membership meeting were unanimously approved.
- b. Treasurer Scott Schlegel presented the Treasurer's Report, which was received. The meeting unanimously approved a motion to reimburse the purchase of an updated version of Quicken, the current one having expired. It was also noted that the website renewal will be paid next month.
- c. Art Wells reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee that the current officers have agreed to stand again for election. The committee has proposed a slate, therefore, of Jeffrey Parnes, President; Charles Dane, First Vice President; Esther Ferington, Second Vice President; Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary, currently vacant. This list of nominees was published in the Federation newsletter, the Bulletin. Following Art Wells's report, nominations were requested from the floor. Hearing none, the proposed slate was approved by acclamation.
- d. Art Wells reported that BRAC-related construction has begun in Bethesda and footings have been poured at Fort Belvoir for the new hospital.
- e. Carol Hawn, editor of the Bulletin, noted that materials for the next issue need to be submitted within a few days after Memorial Day.
- f. Charles Dane, chair of the Education Committee, reported on recent testimony on the school budget. He also reported that the committee had received an informative presentation and held a lively discussion on steps being taken by Fairfax County Public Schools to close the minority academic achievement gap.
- g. Flint Webb, chair of the Environment Committee, summarized the report published with the meeting agenda regarding the process of ordinance removal at the Engineering Proving Grounds in advance of final road construction. He also explained that the criteria defining a Code Red versus

Code Orange air quality day have changed, so there are expected to be more Code Red days this summer. In other news, he reported that the EPA has determined that the Washington area has attained the 1-hour ozone standard, an important milestone.

h. Jim Colby, chair of the Land Use Committee, provided an update on the continuing issue of zoning ordinance amendments (ZOAs). A waiver for a Dranesville application is pending and may set a precedent; the McLean Citizens Association is following the matter closely. Jim Colby sent a letter retransmitting the Federation's December 2006 resolution urging "clear and consistent standards."

i. Charles Dane, who as First Vice President is Chair of the Membership Committee, reported there are now 48 paid members, with two more expected; five of the total of 50 will also be credited for next year. This meets the goals for membership for this year. He will meet with Esther Ferington to discuss goals for next year's membership increase.

j. Bob Jordan of the McLean Citizens Association noted that he and the MCA greatly appreciated Charles Dane's recent presentation to the MCA about the Federation and advantages of membership.

k. President Jeff Parnes noted that next month's meeting will be an outdoor picnic at the Hidden Oaks park pavilion near the Packard Center (enter as usual and follow the first road to the left; follow the signs and park in the lot near the pavilion). He noted that the Board would discuss arrangements for food at the picnic at its meeting May 22.

l. Art Wells reported for the Braddock District Council on the recent dedication ceremony for the memorial to Mary Read, who died in the Virginia Tech tragedy. The memorial is on park land near the corner of Wakefield Chapel Road and Braddock Road. The ceremony included performances by the Annandale Band. He also reported the council is coordinating efforts by local associations to raise money for beautification efforts on sections of Braddock Road. VDOT has announced the median will only be mowed by state crews three times this year, but the mowing by Sheriff-supervised inmates will continue this year. July 8 will be the annual Braddock picnic, and the next Braddock-GMU Forum will be July 9.

m. Jim Davis reported for the Mount Vernon Council on several topics, including the Corps of Engineers proposed plan for a berm and stone flood wall at Belle Haven and an unusual public hearing before the Planning Commission over the Leatherland property, in which there were a number of abstentions and the Planning Commissioner for the affected area voted against the proposal. The proposal was recommended for approval and will now go to the Board of Supervisors for consideration.

n. Jeff Parnes reported for the Sully District Council that the next meeting would feature eight state legislators for a report from Richmond.

Next Membership Meeting: June 19, with a special start time of 7:00 p.m., outdoor picnic. Gerry Connolly, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, will speak on the State of the County.

Next Board Meeting: May 22.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.