

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations
Membership Meeting of January 15, 2009
MINUTES

The January 15 membership meeting of FCFCA was held at the Packard Center at 7:30 p.m. (Attendance list is attached to file copy.) President Jeff Parnes greeted those present. Scott Schlegel presented the Treasurers Report, which was received and filed, with the understanding that he would resolve a clerical question. Jeff Parnes introduced the evening's speaker, Deputy Superintendent of Richard Moniusko of Fairfax County Public Schools, who was accompanied by Susan Quinn, FCPS Assistant Superintendent for Financial Services.

Program

Deputy Superintendent Moniusko stated that the next budget year (FY 2010) will be "really tough." He went over the presentation that Superintendent Jack Dale had provided to the School Board.

The system includes about 200 schools and is the twelfth largest school system in the United States, with a projected enrollment of 174,365 students in 2010. The proposed operating budget for 2010 is \$2.2 billion, a 0.5 percent reduction from the FY 2009 budget. Achievement levels remain high, with 93 percent of graduates going on to postsecondary education. The SAT average is among the highest in the region. The presentation listed several other national honors, especially for Fairfax County high schools, and also noted expanded participation in AP and IB programs.

FCPS is facing a perfect storm, he said. Enrollment in FCPS was flat for 2005 through 2007, but since then, it has been increasing, and the increase has been accelerating. There are 5546 new general education students projected for next year. People can't sell their homes, so they are not moving out, while others are still moving in to the county; also, parents are transferring children from private to public schools. There are proportionally larger increases in the categories of those eligible for reduced-price lunches, and those students whose first language is not English, both of which require a larger per-student outlay.

At the same time, state funding has been reduced by 7 percent in the governor's budget and may be reduced further in the General Assembly, while the potential transfer from the county has been affected by the reduction of home property values, retail sales tax revenues, and returns on county investments. In addition, several county programs related to the schools may be reduced or cut by the county, and may need to be funded by FCPS. These include clinic room aides, who handle and dispense student medications; school resource officers; and afterschool middle-school programs.

The presentation included two budgets, the Superintendent's budget and the grim budget. The Superintendent's budget assumes enough of an increase in the transfer amount from the county to cover the increased number of students and make up for reduced state aid. Even so, it includes a \$157.5 million reduction from what minimally would be needed to maintain present programs and services. It includes no new programs and it cuts programs and services. There are no salary increases, no step increases, no cost of living increases. There is a net loss of 248.1 positions. The presentation states that the school system could recover from these reductions within a decade.

The grim budget includes a \$214.3 million reduction and is based on a county transfer that is the same dollar amount as in FY 2009. The presentation states that the grim budget fails to meet community expectations, puts the mission at risk, and severely reduces programs and services,

leading to non-attainment of state standards. It also states that the system would require decades to recover.

The rest of the presentation included a detailed breakdown of the Superintendent's budget, including a breakdown of positions eliminated, unfunded state and federal mandates, cost per pupil compared to other jurisdictions, and additional details. It also included a detailed list of the additional reductions that would occur under the grim budget.

Deputy Superintendent Moniusko then answered questions on whether the proposed federal stimulus might affect the budget, whether classes which are larger will physically fit into existing classrooms designed for fewer students, and the consolidation of the school administration buildings.

Business Meeting —

- a. The December membership minutes were amended to correct the number of votes (but not the outcome) regarding one section of the Federation legislative program and approved unanimously as amended. Esther Ferington will send these and other recently approved minutes to the Federation webmaster.
- b. Kosmos Tatalias noted that some dates in the calendar, as listed in the evening's agenda, were incorrect and needed to be adjusted.
- c. Jeff Parnes reported that he had presented the Federation's legislative program to the northern Virginia delegation to the General Assembly in public testimony.
- d. Jeff Parnes reminded the group of the Federation-sponsored debate on January 27 among the candidates for the Chair of the Board of Supervisors, a position being filled by special election on February 3. [Note: The debate was subsequently canceled due to inclement weather.]
- e. Jeff Parnes noted that Rob Jackson, of the McLean Citizens Association, had forwarded an MCA position on overweight trucks paying increased fees. The membership took note of the position but agreed to defer consideration to next year.
- f. Don Hinman, Chair of the Association Services Committee, which has been recently revived, asked the membership about the proper work of the committee now that its initial project, an informational pamphlet, is complete. The discussion that followed included the task of answering individual questions that come to the Federation on association-related matters, among other functions.
- g. Jeff Parnes noted that the Budget Committee is at work and is planning to restructure the Federation budget resolution this year to put topics together thematically, rather than listing all the whereases on all topics, followed by all the corresponding positions in the same sequence.
- h. Charles Dane, Chair of the Education Committee, noted that he would be presenting the committee's testimony to the School Board on January 27. He also noted that changes in the grading policy are being ironed out by FCSB.

i. Flint Webb, Chair of the Environment Committee, noted that Ana Prados, the new Federation representative to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Commission (MWAQC), attended her first TAC meeting in her new role, accompanied by Flint, to complete the handoff. He also noted that several stream management plans are going through the usual process and can be tracked on the county website. He also discussed other environmental issues of interest.

j. Charles Dane, as First Vice President (Membership), noted that there are now 41 active members, with 12 other associations that have not yet renewed; this includes 4 new ones as well as 5 that paid late last year when joining then. Those which have not renewed have received at least two notifications, and many have received three.

k. In reports from the District Council representatives, Art Wells of Braddock District noted plans for intersection improvements for Braddock and Ox Road (Route 123). He reported that a recent session on identity theft had gone well and suggested it as a topic for the Federation next year. The annual Braddock workshops, this year on HOAs, neighborhood traffic and parking, are scheduled for February 12. He also noted that the district's Supervisor, Sharon Bulova, is standing for election as Chair on February 3, and if successful, a new special election will be required to elect a new Braddock Supervisor. Flint Webb of Providence District noted that the holiday meeting was well attended, and a candidate debate was scheduled for January 21. Jeff Parnes noted that the next Sully meeting would be January 28 and that the APR review continues.

l. John Jennison reported on plans for the Citizen of the Year (COY) banquet at the Marriott and solicited additional nominations. He has written 87 personal letters to elected officeholders to solicit their nominations, but encouraged everyone to submit their nominations.

Next Membership Meeting: February 19, 2009.

Next Board Meeting: March 5, 2009 [NOTE: No February Board Meeting], on county budget

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm