The February Membership meeting of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations was called to order on February 22, 2018, by President Tim Thompson at 7:30 p.m. at the West Springfield Government Center, Springfield.

**Brief on the FY 2019 Advertised Budget**

On February 20 the county executive released the FY 2019 Advertised Budget. Tonight CFO Joe Mondoro and FCPS’s Brooke Gusafson briefed highlights of the county and schools budgets for 15 minutes each. Then the floor opened for a 45-minute question and answer session. County Executive Bryan Hill attended and participated in the Q&A. At the conclusion of the presentation, the Federation awarded each of them a Federation coffee cup.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the January membership meeting were approved.

**Post Budget Release Press Conference**

Following the county’s release of the advertised budget on February 20, several civic organizations held a joint press conference at which they commented on the budget. Second Vice President Bill Barfield spoke for the Federation and delivered this message:

“The Federation applauds Fairfax County putting forward for citizen comment its 2019/2020 budget. This budget should strive to continue Fairfax County’s Triple-A bond rating by all three rating agencies, continue to maintain our relatively safe and secure communities, and continue to recognize Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) as a most important reason for businesses to relocate to Fairfax from around the USA and the world.

The Federation recommends the Board of Supervisors to NOT set the advertised tax rate too low. A somewhat higher initial rate, from which the final rate can be lower, will allow the BOS flexibility to accommodate citizen suggestions and to adjust for changes in the balance of public services and tax burden.”

Budget Chair David Edelman, who is also a principal in Invest in Fairfax, also spoke at the press conference.

**Federation Position on Setting the Advertised Tax Rate to Allow Flexibility:**

The Federation would like to communicate in writing to the Board of Supervisors the Federation’s position that, because the actual tax rate can be lowered but not raised above the advertised tax rate, the advertised tax rate should be published higher than the expected rate so that the board has flexibility in responding to citizens’ concerns. No resolution had been presented to the board earlier or to the membership tonight. A motion was made, seconded, and passed by voice vote that the corresponding
secretary will send a letter to the Board of Supervisors reiterating this position as expressed in the Federation’s March 2017 budget resolution.

Citizen of Year Selection and Banquet Committees:
Chairman Jeff Parnes reported that the Selection Committee met on February 10 and made the following awards.

- Citizen of the Year: Gary Ambrose
- Citation of Merit: Barbara Lippa, Lyle "Chet" McLaren, & Richard Raines
- Special Gratitude Award: Earl L. Flanagan

The Citizen of the Year Banquet will be held April 15 at the Waterford in Springfield. Mark your calendars!

Transportation Committee: Jeff Parnes reported:
- The Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations has requested the Transportation Advisory Committee to support placing utilities underground along the Richmond Highway. Because the issue was raised by a district council and because the area concerned is also in Lee District, this may be an issue for a Federation position.
- The Sierra Club is asking the Fairfax Federation to co-sign a letter to the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority that supports funding for key projects that expand transportation choices for a regionally balanced set of investments that benefit all the jurisdictions. This will be a board action for March.

Adjournment: 9:15 p.m.

Next Meetings:

March 22, 2018 | 7:30 p.m. | West Springfield Government Center. The main purpose of the meeting is to approve a resolution on the county budget.

March 29, 2018 | 7:30 p.m. | Mason Governmental Center. The program will address the handling and effects of plastic in various disposal channels.

Minutes prepared by Ed Wyse, Secretary Pro-Tem