

# ***CLERK'S BOARD SUMMARY***

## **REPORT OF ACTIONS OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**MONDAY**

**March 18, 2002**

### **47. OCCOQUAN WATERSHED YEAR** (Tape 5)

(BACs) Chairman Hanley stated that this year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Board's decision to downzone approximately 41,000 of the 63,000 acres (about 63 percent) of the land comprising the Occoquan Basin portion of Fairfax County. The action occurred on July 26, 1982. She noted that there was also an upzoning of a portion of the land within the basin. The purpose of the downzoning was the recognized need to protect the viability of the Occoquan River and its watershed that now supplies more than a million residents with their water. The County's Baseline 2000 Stream Protection Strategy Study found the County's healthiest streams in the Occoquan Watershed and as of March 14, 2002, the Occoquan Reservoir was 88 percent full, despite record low rainfall. She noted how the nation has become more aware of the need for protection and preservation of water supplies.

In recognition of the foresight of the Board, Chairman Hanley moved that the Board:

- Designate 2002 as "*Occoquan Watershed Year*" in celebration of the downzoning decision.
- Approve a proclamation recognizing the decision to be framed and posted in the Atrium of the Government Center.
- Approve a presentation before the Board of Supervisors honoring those who were instrumental in realizing the vision.
- Approve a presentation of certificates recognizing those groups that have been and continue to be stewards of the watershed.
- Approve a display at the Fairfax Fair in June, with County agency participation, that documents the decision and its benefits to the watershed.
- Approve the establishment of the New Millennium Occoquan Watershed Task Force to examine the impacts of increasing population, stormwater management, and other challenges in the watershed and to present its findings and recommendations to the Board. The task force should include representatives from appropriate County agencies, the Park Authority, Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District, Northern Virginia Regional Commission, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, the Occoquan Watershed Coalition, Audubon Naturalist organization, Health Department, and stakeholder representatives.

- Approve the designation of the Office of Public Affairs to assist in coordination of events associated with the fair and other events that might be held during the rest of the year celebrating the event in the Occoquan Watershed.
- Approve a web page on the County's website dedicated to educating the public about the decision.
- Approve the coordination with the schools in that part of the County to provide educational materials on the Occoquan Watershed.

Supervisor Connolly and Supervisor McConnell jointly seconded the motion.

Supervisor Connolly asked unanimous consent that the Board direct staff to prepare a fact sheet as part of this effort. He said that the downzoning action should be put in context for citizens to understand the impact as to what was averted and a comparison with neighboring jurisdictions and their efforts. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Following discussion, the question was called on the motion, which carried by a vote of nine, Supervisor Mendelsohn not yet having arrived.