
Committee Resolutions

BUDGET & FINANCE

BF-2009-01: MVCCA Recommendations on the Fairfax County FY 2010 Budget, As Advertised

- 1. WHEREAS**, the Fairfax County Executive has presented the FY 2010 Advertised Budget Plan for Fairfax County, which complies with the Board of Supervisors (BOS) budget guidance; and,
- 2. WHEREAS**, the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations (MVCCA) congratulates the Board of Supervisors and the County Executive on the level of outreach to the citizens of the county by holding community budget meetings and further for the transparency of the process of developing the FY 2010 Advertised Budget through the published lines of business review, however the proposed assessment tax rate may be inadequate to fund basic county services; and,
- 3. WHEREAS**, the worldwide economic downturn has created unprecedented reductions in revenue in both the Commonwealth of Virginia and Fairfax county which has required careful consideration of county services and the elimination of many county personnel and programs; and,
- 4. WHEREAS** the Fairfax County Advertised Budget Plan presented to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors (BOS) on February 23, 2009 proposes to address the significant reduction in revenue sources for FY 2010 by, among other proposals, increasing the property assessment tax rate to \$1.04 and by reducing, reengineering, reorganizing, redesigning and eliminating various County lines of business (LOB); and,
- 5. WHEREAS**, the MVCCA fully supports the proposed stormwater tax district and the 1.5 cent funding thereof; and,
- 6. WHEREAS**, the MVCCA is in agreement that the programs and personnel retained by the FY 2010 Advertised Budget are essential and should be maintained. The MVCCA further believes that the following additional programs and positions are also essential and \$61,226,331 in additional revenue is necessary to fund these additional programs and positions identified below; and,
- 7. WHEREAS**, access to libraries for both adults and children is an essential service particularly in view of the fact that library use has increased during the present economic downturn and therefore the MVCCA supports adding \$5.133 million back to the budget to fund the libraries; and,
- 8. WHEREAS**, Fairfax County has taken steps to preserve trees and increase tree cover, the MVCCA wants to protect this progress and avoid destruction of tree understory growth by recommending funding in the amount of \$126,959 be restored to the Fairfax County Police Department for deer management and no reduction in Urban Forestry Management; and

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9. WHEREAS, the FY 2010 advertised budget includes a group of proposed reductions that appears to have particularly severe and long-lasting impact on the health and human services network, and the MVCCA recommends full restoration of these critical services, and estimates that damage to these essential services may be mitigated through taxpayer support for further revenue enhancement totaling \$11,730,872; and,

10. WHEREAS, in FY2010 and the foreseeable near future, Fairfax County will continue to face the challenge of increasing public needs as well as mandates for many public services, coupled with continuing risk of falling revenues, and whereas County leadership and investments in the health and human services network now build upon and seek to improve the efficiency of prevention and interventional strategies that offer our best hope of effective response to emergent community crises; and,

11. WHEREAS, one of the funding sources in the proposed increases is 001-90-Revenue (Revenue Enhancement: Revise false alarm security alarm violation fee scale) which will not only provide additional revenue but increase the fees to better deter false alarm occurrences which engender waste of police patrol time and resources; and,

12. WHEREAS, the LOB Reduction Number 001-90-344 Eliminate Police Liaison Commanders (PLC) Program (at \$532,855) will eliminate five positions which are now staffed twenty four hours a day, seven days a week to ensure continuity of command within the Police Department eliminating the capacity to quickly coordinate police personnel, resources, and specialty units throughout the County with the result that these could be severely delayed, especially during critical events, adversely impacting the Department's collaborative relationships with multiple agencies; and,

13. WHEREAS, the LOB Reduction Number 001-90-350 Eliminate Motor Carrier Program (at \$316,948) will eliminate the Program by abolishing four Police officer positions at the Traffic Division of the Operations Support Bureau which will seriously impact highway safety as the County would have to rely solely on the Virginia State Police's limited resources to perform necessary truck inspections and removals on the interstate highways but who do not perform those functions at all on other highways such as Rtes. #1, #7, #29, #50, and #123; and it should be noted that three of the County officers are Federally certified and have the authority to stop any vehicle to ascertain its condition; and,

14. WHEREAS, the LOB Reduction Number 001-90-352 Eliminate Shopping Center Officers at Tyson's, Fair Oaks, and Springfield (at \$464,346) will decrease visible police presence and likely lead to an increased number of crimes committed in these areas as the current officers have developed expertise in handling the unique and complex types of crimes that occur in the malls such as check and credit card fraud, forgery, and serial shoplifting which will be

lost, the shopping center units also serve as a point of coordination for the proactive seasonal anti-theft teams that are effective each year at apprehending career criminals and recovering stolen property, and police response times will rise sharply as patrol officers will be called in from their normal duties to handle the large volume of calls in the shopping centers, all of this will adversely impact public safety within these malls with the result that customer usage and sales within these malls will suffer significantly; and,

15. WHEREAS, the LOB Reduction Number 001-91-355 Close the Satellite Intake Centers at the Mount Vernon District Station and the Mason District Station (\$599,800) will result in the elimination of six Deputy Sheriff II positions at the satellite prisoner intake centers run by the Sheriff's Office, and will require Police officers to transport prisoners to the Adult Detention Center rather than to their District Stations with the result that each transit will require an approximate three hour round trip during which these officers will be away from his/her District duties and where multiple same time period transits will significantly reduce Police presence and capabilities in the District(s) affected; and,

16. WHEREAS, the LOB Reduction Number 001-85-2009 Eliminate Magistrate Supplement (\$321,551) will eliminate the pay supplement provided to approximately 23 full time and two part time Magistrates to address their low pay which is below the entry level of Police officers, Deputy Sheriffs, and Intake and Probation Officers who make bond recommendations to those Magistrates, is anticipated to make it more difficult to attract and recruit Magistrates, and, it should also be noted that in accordance with revisions to the Virginia Code last year once the supplement is reduced or discontinued it may not be raised or reinstated (also there will be new processes and requirements established for hiring Magistrates who will have significantly higher salaries and neither need or be authorized to receive pay supplements); and,

17. WHEREAS, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) has taken extraordinary measures to reduce its FY2010 funding requirements including eliminating all staff compensation increases, increasing class size, reducing central administration by 10% (15% including FY2009 midyear reductions) and reducing school funding by 5%, for total cuts in excess of \$150 million and reduction in per capita spending of nearly \$1000; and,

18. WHEREAS, notwithstanding such serious cuts and service reductions, in order to cover the cost of projected enrollment growth (at least 5000 in FY2010, in addition to unanticipated growth of more than 4000 experienced in FY2008 and FY2009), costs associated with the opening of two new schools, and severe reductions in support from the Commonwealth of Virginia, the School Board Advertised Budget for FY2010 (School Budget) requests an increase in transfer from Fairfax County of 3.5% or approximately \$60 million (Requested Transfer); and,

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19. WHEREAS, the flat (zero increase) transfer suggested in the County Advertised Budget (Flat Transfer) would, in view of the significant cuts already made, require further actions (additional large class size increases and reduction/elimination of important services) which would be inconsistent with preserving quality education and the value of FCPS to the community, and would diminish FCPS' critical role in continued growth and renewed prosperity of Fairfax County and its taxpayers; and,

20. WHEREAS, schools in the area represented by the MVCCA are among those most at risk and most heavily affected by the growth in population of students who require additional services and staffing considerations, have benefited from increased resources as demonstrated by significant progress in achieving mandated benchmarks, and will require continued additional targeted resources if progress is to continue; and,

21. WHEREAS, FCPS and the taxpayers of Fairfax County continue to be adversely affected by under-funded mandates of the United States government and the Commonwealth of Virginia, as well as by the failure of the Commonwealth to fairly distribute that funding which is provided, and, while some additional federal funds may be made available through stimulus programs and/or improved funding of federal mandates, the timing, amounts, nature and conditions of such funding is sufficiently unclear at this time to be considered in funding of FCPS' extremely lean operational budget requests; and,

A. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the MVCCA urges the Board of Supervisors to look at all available sources of revenue for providing the additional funding necessary to fund these essential programs. In addition to the Real Property Tax Assessment, other forms of revenue that should be considered by the Board of Supervisors should include using a portion of the one penny set aside for affordable housing, consideration of a referendum on a meals tax, reinstatement of the car sticker tax and increases in the BPOL tax rates; and,

B. FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED the Transfer to FCPS suggested in the FY2010 Advertised Budget is inadequate to preserve the value of this critical, priority service and should be increased by a minimum of \$42 million to keep pace with enrollment growth and without consideration of any increased federal education or stimulus funding which may or may not become available during FY2010; and,

C. FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the MVCCA, in consideration of the above, urges the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in adopting the Budget for FY 2010 to approve the proposed false alarm security alarm fee scale increase and to provide funds of at least \$2.236 million for the above five proposed LOB Reductions that if implemented will significantly adversely affect public safety and security within Fairfax County; and,

D. FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations recommends the Board of Supervisors act this year to adjust the Advertised Budget Plan to restore proposed reductions in funding in the amount of at least \$11.73 million to avoid severe and long-term damage to the health and human services network; and,

E. FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that funding be restored for operation of Libraries within the county in the amount of \$5.133 million; and,

F. FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations, in consideration of all of the above, urges the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in adopting a Budget for FY 2010 to include tax rates and revenue enhancements that take full advantage of the available revenue sources authorized by the Virginia General Assembly and will provide County revenue sufficient to avert unacceptable loss of essential public services including environmental quality, libraries, public safety, schools and the health and human services network.