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[00:00:09] Good morning, everyone, and welcome to our board meeting of April 16th, 2024, and we are going to begin our board meeting as we always do, with a moment of silence to be followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, and before those are able to will rise to do that, let me ask my colleagues if they have anyone this morning they would like to keep in their thoughts and prayers, and I'm going to mention a few and then recognize anyone else who would like to speak. First, I think all of us recently learned in the Washington Post that Giuseppe Czecki passed away. And for those that didn't know who Giuseppe Czecki was, he was a major

[00:00:49] entrepreneur, immigrant, developer who became known as the Washington, D.C. area king of condos. But he lived to be 93 years old. He was born in Milan, Italy on June 9, 1930.

[00:01:05] And his father was that city's chief engineer, so we know where he got his roots. Notably, he was involved in major significant projects across the region. Leisure World, Community in Lansdowne, Conversion of the Apartments of Park Fairfax, Leisure World in Silver Spring, Maryland.

[00:01:27] the Carlisle Towers in the city of Alexandria, and, of course, here very close to us. He was the builder of the Rotunda in Tyson's and Montebello in the Mount Vernon District along the Richmond Highway Corridor. And so if we could keep the Checke family in our thoughts and prayers as we move about throughout the day, that would be appreciated.

[00:01:50] Secondly, and this is a really sad, tragic loss for our community, Zachariah and William Bryce, three and six years old, tragically died in a house fire in Clifton last Wednesday.

[00:02:08] The boys and their eight-year-old brother, Logan, were in the care of their grandparents when the fire broke out. Logan ran outside and called 911, and his grandparents tried to get his brothers but couldn't. The young boys succumbed to their injuries on Sunday, and I think this is not only a tragedy for our entire community to have these young people die in a tragic fire, but fires in Fairfax County are rare. Fatalities in fires in Fairfax County are extraordinarily rare.

[00:02:43] But this is yet, you know, another reminder to all of us to do what we can to check our smoke detectors, to have our youngest people in our family as well know the routes to exit the home in case of an emergency and to be mindful of the dangers of house fires.

[00:03:03] And so let us keep the entire Bryce family in our thoughts and prayers, reflect on this tragedy of these two young boys and pray for the strength of their family and also for our fire and rescue personnel. I had a chance to talk to several of them and as you can imagine responding to a call like this has an effect on them as well and their mental health as they're reeling with the outcome of this fire. So if we could keep our men and women our Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department in our thoughts and prayers as well that would be appreciated

[00:03:41] and then finally literally today is the 17th anniversary of the shooting that occurred at Virginia Tech and we know that there were a lot of families directly affected by that who live in Fairfax County and every year when this anniversary comes up is difficult for them to reflect back on that day. It's hard to believe it was 17 years ago. Feels a lot of times like it was just a few years ago. But if we could keep the families affected by the Virginia Tech shooting, as well as our Virginia Tech community and our thoughts and prayers today on this 17th anniversary,

[00:04:20] that would be appreciated. And with that, let me recognize any of my other colleagues who would like to share anything. Supervisor Herity. I just, I want to thank you for mentioning all three of those. Giuseppe Cechi is, you know, truly one of our titans here in Fairfax for all he did. He's also a story that's emblematic of the American dream. He's a guy who left Italy, coming to the United States, knowing very little English, if very little of any English, and he took himself a long way, and Fairfax wouldn't be what it is today without

[00:04:57] all of his contributions and achievements, including over 85 industry accolades and the Business Awards Hall of Fame in 2019. And again, the entire Clifton community is mourning the loss of Zachariah and William Bryce. Truly a tragic death. And I appreciate you also recognizing our firefighters, because dealing with that was not a pleasant experience for them either. But And I ask that we keep in our thoughts and prayers James and Raina Rice and their oldest son, Logan, and the entire Clifton community.

[00:05:34] So, thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Herity. Others who would like to be recognized? Seeing and hearing none. If all who are able could please rise for a moment of silence to be followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Let's face the flag.

[00:06:15] I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands. One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. And this morning, we have a busy but exciting agenda.

[00:06:42] We are going to start our day with five presentations. And when I call the presentation, I'll announce the proclamation and invite our speaker, designated speaker, and anyone else who's with our speaker that would like to come forward to come down to the podium in front of me. We will read the proclamation, of course, vote and have our speakers' remarks.

[00:07:02] And following that, for each of the presentations, we will pose for a picture from the dais. And our first one today is we have a resolution to recognize the Fairfax County Public Schools recipients of the 2024 First Amendment Press Freedom Award.

[00:07:19] And this was requested by myself, Supervisor Smith, Beerman, and Herity. And we have three speakers, I understand, today. First from McLean, Tanner Kaur, Editor-in-Chief of the Highlander. To be followed by, from Chantilly, Luke Barlow, Executive Director of the Nightly News Broadcast.

[00:07:40] And finally, from West Springfield, Lucy Sadvandi, Editor-in-Chief of the Olympian. And if you all could come on down, please come on down to the podium. And at this time, I am going to recognize Supervisor Smith for a resolution.

[00:07:56] Thank you. Whereas the First Amendment Press Freedom Award recognizes private and public high schools that actively support, teach, and protect First Amendment rights and responsibilities of students and teachers, with an emphasis on student-run media where students make all final decisions on content, whereas three Fairfax County high schools, Chantilly High School, McLean High School, and West Springfield High School, were among just 28 schools nationally to receive the 2024 First Amendment Press Freedom Award.

[00:08:29] And whereas this is the 10th consecutive year of recognition for Chantilly High School, the 7th for McLean High School, and the 2nd for West Springfield High School, and whereas in addition to the excellent work done by the student journalists at each of these schools, the award selection committee also noted that they were impressed by the significant support of school leadership for student journalism, and whereas the 28 winning schools were honored as part of the Spring Journalism Education National Scholastic Press Association National High School Journalism Convention earlier this month, now therefore, be it resolved that the Fairfax

[00:09:08] County Board of Supervisors, on behalf of all residents of Fairfax County, does hereby congratulate Chantilly High School, McLean High School, and West Springfield High School student journalists and advisors for their commitment to free and responsible scholastic journalism.

[00:09:24] And I'm happy to second that motion along with Supervisor Herity. Discussion on the motion, Supervisor Smith. It is really, really great to be doing this. Journalism is so important to our future that we need to ensure that younger generations come up and understand how important that is. And I really want to congratulate our schools for understanding that students are capable and able to make these decisions so congratulations for all your hard work and we like doing this every year no pressure though thank you supervisor smith further discussion let me uh also congratulate uh each of you and i'm surprised supervisor smith didn't brag about

[00:10:04] chantilly's 10th consecutive year uh which is pretty amazing but really amazing uh for seven at mclean and and certainly second for west springfield and and that's remarkable uh run for all mclean will get to ten don't worry i figured jimmy would pipe in i love all the schools but but in all seriousness i think you know one of the things that can be lost in today's professional journalism is tenants of what happens

with our school journalism which is a focus on accuracy, impartiality, and transparency. And, you know, journalism has changed a lot in our

[00:10:41] lifetimes and not all for the better. We are seeing a lack of local coverage. We're seeing, you know, obvious bias a lot of times in our local media. And we wonder sometimes why people in our community are confused about, you know, what's going on. And this, to be able to win this the way you have and to give us hope for the future, that there's still good integrity in journalism and accuracy, transparency in the reporting is absolutely key. I just hope all of you stick with it because the world could use a lot of good journalists in the future who

[00:11:19] have good training and have done an amazing job and we're proud of each and every one of you and I know a lot of the people who contribute to the journalism in each of your schools that are that are here or not here uh today as well for the work that they've done we're proud of proud of all of you uh with that um i think we're ready for a vote uh all those in favor of the motion please say aye aye any opposed any abstentions that motion carries and welcome the floor is yours hello guys my name is tanner core i'm the editor-in-chief for mclean's news magazine the

[00:11:55] highlander and to start i want to on behalf of every member of our extended media program which includes print journalism, yearbook, literary magazine, and broadcast journalism, I'd like to extend a message of gratitude to our administration, which is so crucial in allowing us to consistently push further as journalists and allowing us to uphold our reputation as the trusted voice of McLean and in the McLean community.

[00:12:19] I would also like to thank our advisors, Ms. Benedict, for the news magazine and broadcast journalism, and for Ms. Percival for the yearbook. They both do an amazing job, and without them, we'd be wholly unable to do the work that we do at the rate, at the consistency with which we do it.

[00:12:36] And I'm very grateful to once again see you guys, Fairfax County, honor the ever-important programs of student journalism. And my only regret is that there's only three schools here today. I wish that we could see more schools in the Fairfax County community appear consistently at these events. In a world where earnest journalism is often under attack from the highest levels of power, It's really crucial to continue building those strong tenets of journalistic diligence from the ground up, and that starts with our students.

[00:13:08] So, once again, I can speak on behalf of the entirety of our staff and the entirety of McLean High School when I say this recognition is greatly appreciated, and we hope that other schools will continue to prioritize student media of all types. Great. Thank you, guys. Thank you. Thank you very much. It's working.

[00:13:34] Hello. I'm Luke Barlow, and I'm co-executive producer of The Nightly News, which is Chantilly's broadcast show, and I am obviously speaking on behalf of the entire Chantilly Journalism Department. This far this year, we've been able to cover student protests for Gaza, bathroom vandalism, and issues regarding student privacy.

[00:13:57] And none of this would be possible without our ability to freely exercise our freedom of press at Chantilly High School. I and we are very fortunate to attend a school where we are not limited by censorship or prior review, And that allows us to share really important stories with our community.

[00:14:16] I'd like to thank the administrators of Chantilly High School for allowing us to report on the stories we want to without worry of censorship or prior review or any sort of negative, I don't want to say backlash, But thank you as well to Mrs. Brown, our broadcast and news magazine advisor, and Mr. Nguyen, our yearbook advisor, for their influence and care that they put into these programs.

[00:14:47] Thank you. Hi, my name is Lucy Sadvandy, and I'm the editor-in-chief of The Olympian, the West Springfield yearbook. My first experience in high school journalism was during my freshman year when we created a yearbook entirely online, a feat that none of us thought we were capable of.

[00:15:07] In that year, I was able to tell stories of the Black Lives Matter protests in D.C., the presidential election in 2020, and other current events affecting our student body without fear of censorship. I am so thankful to be part of a program that encourages student voices and encourages us to find stories worth telling and that represent our student body and reflect their feelings.

[00:15:31] I'm so appreciative of our advisors, Ms. Melissa Morgan and Ms. Leone, who encourage us to tell our stories, and our administration for backing us in whatever we want to tell. I'm also appreciative of all of you for respecting our student voices and for encouraging free press.

[00:15:52] Thank you. Very well done. Thank you all for being here this morning and for what you do. And as you said, thank your entire teams, staff, fellow students who make all this possible.

[00:16:09] And if any of them are here with you today, they're welcome to come down for our photo. And if you all could come forward and face the audience, and if those who are here today to support you can come on down.

[00:16:55] And for those wondering about the bear, the bear is the journalism bear.

[00:18:37] And the journalism bear is from which high school again? McLean High School Journalism Bear. Raise him up. There you go. The journalism bear is with us this morning. We're in good hands. All right. Next up, we have a resolution to recognize the McLean High School Quiz Bowl team for their victory in the Virginia High School League State Championship Scholastic Bowl.

[00:19:00] and this was requested by myself and supervisor beerman and our speaker today is andrew evans co-captain of the mclean high school highlanders quiz bowl team uh if you could come on down uh and anyone else who's here with you is welcome to join you now but will be required to join you at photo time so um and while they're making their way down uh let me recognize supervisor beerman it's a good morning for the highlanders um whereas in february the mclean high school scholastic bowl team bested thomas jefferson high school for science and technology breaking a

[00:19:36] winning streak by their rivals to take home the 2024 virginia high school league scholastic bowl championship and whereas this victory marks mclean high school's second scholastic bowl championship in school history having previously won the title in 2020 and whereas the highlanders victory was hard fought with their early 40 point lead dwindling as their competitors crept up the leaderboard, setting up a neck-and-neck battle between McLean and their rivals in the third and final round. And whereas the championship team includes senior co-captains Andrew Evans, Clara Marks, and Carter Pisaki, along with senior Andrew Norway, juniors Fern Fang, Ryan McKenzie,

[00:20:14] and Angelica Tazumas, sophomores Edward Burrows, Sam Cohen, and Eddie Lynn, and freshman Raghav Karuba, led by coach Jeff Brachetti and assistant coach Lindsay Benedict. And whereas

the McLean High School Scholastic Bowl Team's championship victory is a testament to their preparation, dedication, work ethic, and extensive trivia knowledge.

[00:20:36] Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, on behalf of all Fairfax County residents, does hereby congratulate the McLean High High School Highlanders Scholastic Bowl Team for their outstanding effort and their state championship victory. I'm happy to second that, along with Supervisor Palczyk.

[00:20:55] Discussion on the motion, Supervisor Bierman. Congratulations, guys. It's wonderful to see a group that really put your brains to work, that went out there and won a championship. Your trivia knowledge will come in handy for decades, I promise you, at parties, at bars, at trivia nights. But beyond that, I will say that I really appreciate that you all have taken that time to exercise in some ways the most important muscle in your body, your brain.

[00:21:25] So good on you, well done, and congratulations. Thank you, Supervisor Beerman. Any other? Supervisor Palchik. Thank you. I just want to, first of all, congratulate everyone here from McLean High School. I think it shows not only is McLean focused on excellent academics, but the culture and the high school.

[00:21:45] I know Dr. O'Reilly is usually here with us today, but represented by your staff and the administration that really create a place where students feel welcome where they feel encouraged and included in all activities and so I just am grateful to see all of you here two of your teams we're used to seeing McLean here and really know that the focus on the students and helping you all succeed and become lifelong learners I think is the big big thing that McLean does so well so congratulations to you to your families to your coaches and to the whole McLean community. And thank you from a distance, Dr. Riley, for all you do. Thank you, Supervisor

[00:22:23] Paucek. And I'll add my congratulations. Impressive. I too want to thank the administration, McLean High School, but also the families, as you mentioned, the parents. You know, it takes a lot to support our kids these days, especially in afterschool activities and making sure that our kids are broadening their horizons and getting engaged and involved in activities like this at school, create lifetime people engaged and involved in their communities. And so thank you to the parents for the commitment they've made to this and impressive feat for all of you. I know this

[00:23:01] takes a ton of work. It's not as simple as it might sound as us sitting here, but it's taken many, many hours and a lot of work, and I salute you for that. So congratulations. With that, all those in favor of the motion, please say aye. Aye.

[00:23:16] Any opposed? Any abstentions? And that motion carries. Welcome. The floor is yours. Thank you. I'd like to begin by thanking our parents, all of ours, for raising us to be knowledge seekers, thanking our teachers for helping to teach us some of that knowledge, and thanking our coaches for helping us implement that knowledge in order to perform in competition.

[00:23:44] This was the culmination of months, even years of hard work for all of us, from late night geography games to reading questions in breaks between classes to just meeting up sometimes on the weekend and talking about history or current events or science.

[00:24:04] This was a commitment that we all made to study, to learn, and to be able to effectively utilize our knowledge to further our team and to hopefully get to the mountaintop of where we ended up back in

february by winning that state championship and though the state championship plaque is admittedly quite nice the knowledge that we gain is its own its own reward quiz bowl is unique in that it incentivizes learning for learning's sake because while yes you can study

[00:24:38] you can read wikipedia articles or whatever about whatever you think might come up overall it's those small bits of knowledge that's those small trivia points that come up that in in scenarios which you wouldn't think they would it's a music album you might have listened to that shows up inexplicably in the final round against Thomas Jefferson that helps propel you to victory that's my own experience there it's such a variety of subjects that are covered within

[00:25:16] quiz bowl history science mathematics language literature music quiz bowl rewards that variety and it rewards those who can use their creativity ingenuity and passion to bring their team to the top by knowing as much as possible and understanding as much as possible um it's been a challenge of course tj has been almost an unstoppable force for the greater part of the past

[00:25:47] five centuries of quiz ball so it's been this year yeah it wasn't easy we did work very hard over the past months the past years our my teammates right now past teammates um even students at other schools um it was very much a challenge for us to be able to go head to head with a school specifically dedicated to the most the brightest minds fairfax county has to offer But I'm proud to say that as a team, we were able to step up to that challenge

[00:26:26] and gain the victory that we've worked for for so long. Thank you. Thank you. Very well said, Andrew. I think we can tell why you won. So well done.

[00:26:43] Well done, team. I think with that, we're ready for a photo. And if you all could come forward and Supervisor Beerman will join me.

[00:28:07] And next up, we have a true celebrity in our midst.

[00:28:33] We have a resolution to recognize Annandale High School Orchestra Director Annie Ray, recipient of the 2024 Grammy Music Educator Award. And this was requested by myself, Supervisors Jimenez, and Walkinshaw.

[00:28:51] And, of course, we have with us the celebrity herself and Grammy Award winner, Annie Ray. Welcome. And I am going to turn the gavel to Supervisor Palchuk for a moment so that I can read the following resolution.

[00:29:12] Whereas Annandale High School Orchestra Director and Performing Arts Department Chair Annie Ray's vision, leadership, passion, and talent are evident in her work, including the development of programs to bring music education to students with disabilities and parents and caregivers of music students.

[00:29:31] And whereas the Crescendo Orchestra, which Annie Ray conceived of and developed at the height of the COVID pandemic, brings the joy of orchestra and high school students with severe developmental intellectual disabilities.

[00:29:47] And whereas Annie Ray also founded the FCPS Parent Orchestra in 2018, a program in which parents and caregivers of students in orchestra or strings learn to play, which has grown to more than 100 participants and is now so popular that there is a wait list to join.

[00:30:07] And whereas Annie Ray has shared her work at colleges and conferences and through her popular TED Talk and was named 2023 FCPS Outstanding Secondary Teacher of the Year. And whereas Annie Ray is also a member of the professional development team for String Rise, a nonprofit focused on building high-level beginning strings programs rooted in equity and was a 2023 Wolf Trap Educator grantee.

[00:30:36] And whereas in February, Annie Ray was recognized for her outstanding accomplishments with the 2024 Grammy Music Educator Award, now therefore be it resolved that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, on behalf of all Fairfax County residents, does hereby commend Annie Ray for her inspiring accomplishments, which have changed the lives of students and parents in our community.

[00:31:01] I will second that. And multiply seconded, I think, Supervisor Jimenez and Bierman, I heard. Any other further discussion? Yes, thank you very much. First of all, congratulations. I, you know, this is one of these moments, we get these every once in a while, where somebody does something so absolutely amazing That is a reminder not just of the quality of our public school system here, but the quality of the people who make our public school system what it is.

[00:31:36] And what was so inspiring about this is not the natural things, the national attention, Annie hanging out with Taylor Swift, some of those things. We're nice. We're nice, for sure. But what was really great about this is that we got national, international attention, not only FCPS, but for doing what Annie is doing here, which is taking care of involving the most vulnerable in our community and giving them access to things that otherwise would be too difficult to achieve.

[00:32:14] And music in so many ways is therapeutic for all of us, but particularly for people with special needs can be not just the arts and the involvement in music, but literally can be therapy improving lives as well.

[00:32:29] And to do what you've done and to get the kind of international recognition makes all of us proud and tells the story of how great our school system is, but more importantly, how great our people are to not only take up this challenge, but to say all of our kids deserve to have access to the types of activities that enrich their lives.

[00:32:57] and you have done that and changed lives in tremendous ways and I hope are serving as a model for other people to replicate what you've done because the need is out there and you've proven a way to do it and to do it with great, great success.

[00:33:15] So thank you, thank you, thank you. Thank you so much. Mr. Chairman, Supervisor Jimenez. First, I'd like to say and just echo, wow, Mason District and all Fairfax are so proud of you. One of the things is I have two young daughters and they just follow you along on the internet.

[00:33:31] They love the pictures that you're in. Everything that you do is amazing and it's inspiring and it's needed and it's absolutely a model of Fairfax County schools and what we strive to be and the kind of teachers that we bring here to Fairfax County. So thank you for all you do.

[00:33:48] Very well deserved. We can't wait to see what you're going to do next and love to follow you along. So thank you so much and congratulations. Thank you. Thank you. Supervisor Walkinshaw. Thank you, Madam Chair, and congratulations. Thank you for everything you have done. I was particularly impressed by your work with the FCPS Parent Orchestra, really letting parents and caregivers participate and learn music as well alongside their children.

[00:34:15] I think that is really amazing and so important. And I know you will probably say this, but I'll say it first. You know, Annie is an example of just one of the many incredible teachers we have at anandale high school supervisor jimenez and i have the great honor of representing uh kids there and uh it is just an amazing dynamic uh school where so many people are doing amazing incredible things so thank you for everything you have done and all of your colleagues in anandale high school wonderful um to that i i just want to add not not all heroes wear capes and you absolutely are a

[00:34:54] hero and as was mentioned so much of the work you've done for me what really resonates is that inclusive and multi-generational work as I see my two-year-old and my dad struggling with dementia being able to share the love of music and to learn and sing together and dance together as a family we know that with so many things that may be a struggle music is absolutely something that inspires and stays with us our whole lives. So I too am so grateful. I hope we get to keep you forever. You've become quite popular, but you absolutely are the epitome of not just the great

[00:35:33] teachers, but also Annandale having incredible administrators in a school environment that supports everyone beyond the school walls. So thank you for what all you've done and a huge congratulations from us to you. So to that, seeing no more comments, I think we're ready for a vote.

[00:35:52] All those in favor, please say aye. Aye. Any opposed? Any objections? All right. That passes unanimously. Thank you, Supervisor. Back over to the chairman. Thank you, Supervisor Pouchek. And with that, welcome. The floor is yours. Oh my gosh, you took my introduction over here.

[00:36:11] I was also really lucky. I got to be named the 2023 Fairfax County Secondary Teacher of the year last year. It was a huge honor to be recognized by my peers. And yeah, of course, I'm the teacher that got to hug Taylor Swift. Pretty cool, right? I'm honored to be recognized here today representing our community and the students of Annandale, Crescendo, and Parent Orchestras. I'm honored to teach at a school where students come from 66 different countries. They speak 59 different languages, and our programs are made up of a vibrant mix of backgrounds, perspectives, and strengths. In a world where that diversity can sometimes lead to conflict, the love of making

[00:36:49] music has been our foundation for understanding community and progress. To tell you a little bit about our other programs, our parent orchestra was established in 2018 and we actually have over 200 caregivers who learn how to play their child's instrument for the very first time. We have over 15 orchestra directors who donate their time every year to teach these parents how performing arts classes are so much more than the notes and rhythms on the page and engage in experiential professional development where we get to watch each other teach.

[00:37:22] Crescendo Orchestra is one of the most humbling joys of my career. It was developed in 2020 with the special education team and occupational therapists at Annandale and is made up of students with significant and severe disabilities who now get an orchestra elective block just like every other student and they teach me every day more than I will ever teach them.

[00:37:42] together, united by music and love, our common song has been one that recognizes the dignity and potential of each and every person in our school. You know, music is so humbling because to learn how to be great at it, you first have to be very bad at it. And you have to do so very loudly where everyone can hear. We are asking students to be incredibly brave and in a time where they're very much inward, own their learning process outward and be bold. When students struggle with a math problem, they can

do so privately. When students struggle with a new music skill, they quickly have to get comfortable with being outward to learn how to make process

[00:38:21] and progress. Something I've been contemplating lately is that I'm lucky that I'm in a classroom where I have the magic of students' attentions for 80 minutes without devices. It is paper and ink. If they are playing, they are not on their phones. I get 80 minutes of just them. I get them celebrating trying and failing and laughing and just celebrating a process and not being afraid to be seen trying. They soon discover that participating in art is very much different than consuming art. Every year I buy penance that I hang up on the wall when our students have made a decision on where they're going to do when they graduate. From college to military to gap years or

[00:39:00] trade schools, I find something to hang up. Brown, Johns Hopkins, Princeton. Our MIT student actually wrote her college entrance essay about orchestra. In times where students struggle to stand out in the college acceptance game, admissions officers at over 70 percent of major universities have stated that high school credit in the arts makes significant impacts on their consideration for admissions. Because how rare is it to see a student commit and see things through nowadays?

[00:39:28] As a society, we must reconfigure our current practices on what success is defined as, and music education is the sanctuary where this work is already happening. Some of the best teaching in this county is happening in the performing arts classes. Our classrooms are where students can learn perseverance and how to sit with the discomfort of not being good at something right away, something we as a culture are not willing to expose ourselves to. As Meryl Streep told me at the Grammys, a music educator changed her life and is why she is where she is today. Our classrooms are where the in-betweens come to life and are celebrated. If we just slow

[00:40:04] down and be willing to be a part of the music. Thank you so much for having me. In a word, Annie, Amazing. You are amazing. Thank you again for coming today and receiving our recognition and praise is so well-deserved. And so at this time, Supervisor Jimenez, Supervisor Walkinshaw could join me for a photo. If anyone else is here with you, they're welcome to join you as well. If Taylor

[00:40:36] Swift is in the lobby, she can come on in if she wants. Meryl Streep from this angle said she will

[00:41:51] be doing autographs in the lobby on the way out if anyone is interested. That was inspiring. Thank you again. Next, we have a proclamation to recognize April 2024 as Autism Awareness Month in Fairfax County. And this was requested by Supervisor Herity. We have with us Kenneth Crum, who I saw is here, Chief Operating Officer of Service Source. And while Ken is coming down, let me recognize supervisor harry yes mr chairman i have a proclamation to move whereas april is

[00:42:27] national autism acceptance month promoting acceptance for individuals on the autism spectrum and whereas 1 in 36 children in the united states and more than 5.4 million american adults are on the autism spectrum including over 155 000 virginians who are part of an incredibly diverse community with vastly different abilities limitations and preferences and whereas young adults on the autism spectrum demonstrate the lowest unemployment the lowest employment rates among people with disabilities despite the fact that these individuals have amazing strengths and

[00:43:02] skills which often go untapped without proper supports and whereas modifying hiring practices taking advantage of tax credits and partnering with non-profits have proven to be effective ways

for employers to support persons with autism in the workforce, and vocational rehabilitative services help 59% of the individuals on the autism spectrum access gainful employment.

[00:43:28] And whereas Fairfax County is fortunate to have organizations like Service Stores, Phillips Programs, and others dedicated to promoting qualified gainful employment and services for those on the autism spectrum playing a critical role in closing a gap in needed services. Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on behalf of all residents of Fairfax County does hereby proclaim April 2024 as Autism Acceptance Month in Fairfax County and urges all residents to exercise respect and compassion for our relatives,

[00:44:06] friends, co-workers, and fellow Americans, and the unique challenges they face as individuals on the autism spectrum. So moved. I'm happy to second that motion along with a lot of the board. Discussion on the motion, Supervisor Herity. Yes, very, very briefly, I want to thank you, Ken, for being here and to thank you for all the work Service Source does as a great partner in our in our community. Um, you, the work you do to give our, our fellow, uh, Fairfax County residents on the autism spectrum, uh, you know, that, that self-esteem that goes with the dignity of work

[00:44:44] is just, is just incredible. Um, you know, what, what work can do for people is, is, is incredible. Um, your service sources continue to advocate for our residents on the autism spectrum, making our county more inclusive our residents who are on the spectrum have a wide variety of aptitudes that make our economy more innovative and official uh inefficient i'm glad we can again be here to recognize autism awareness month and i want to thank you again ken for all you and service source do to raise the awareness about the challenges of our residents on the spectrum

[00:45:20] as well as the many ways more importantly the many ways they can contribute to our community into our economy. So thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Herity, Supervisor Palcic. Just briefly, it's so nice to see you again and your team. It was wonderful to visit you recently and the work that you do. And I think the new name is so fitting, the Autism Acceptance Month and Service Source. And so many of our county partners have been doing that for so many years. It's not just being aware, but it's ensuring that everyone in our community and anywhere along the spectrum have the ability to be accepted and to be integral parts of our community and to be able to give

[00:45:59] back. So thank you for all your years of work and your staff and your team and the great work that you've done here and beyond Fairfax County. And we're so excited that you're here to accept the award today. Thank you, Supervisor Paucek, Supervisor Lusk. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just say very quickly, before I became a member of this Board of Supervisors, I worked at the economic development authority one of my assignments was the industrial revenue bond program so in the irb program i got to come out and work with service source on many different financings and to see the work that you were able to accomplish with the individuals and to see

[00:46:38] their engagement in the work and the opportunities and the ability to have dignity i just really appreciated seeing that firsthand and acknowledging that you've made a significant difference in the lives of so many residents. So I want to say thank you for all that you've done at ServiceSource, and I just want to acknowledge this proclamation for being able to lift up those who have autism as well. So thank you very much. Thank you, Supervisor Lusk, and let me also thank you, Ken for being here today and for the work of ServiceSource and the whole network of nonprofits

[00:47:15] that we have serving our community. And I really want to salute the staff at ServiceSource and of those other providers because I think folks don't necessarily understand unless they're engaged day to day how difficult yet rewarding the work of the staff can be and literally changing lives.

[00:47:34] And, you know, as we sit here in Fairfax County today, we know that we have tens of thousands of vacant jobs in our economy, desperately needed to be filled by people. And so this is a, you know, obviously it's Autism Awareness Month in Fairfax County, but I'm hoping it's Autism Action Month in so many different ways.

[00:47:55] and a resounding call to our employers to consider hiring people with disabilities and to recognize that they have the same skill sets that everybody else has if inspired and supported the right way. And that's the work that Service Source and so many others do every single day.

[00:48:15] And we just had in our last presentation how we can support people with disabilities at the very young ages and high school and NFCPS, but also we're reminded the importance of the entire network of support, family, nonprofits, all the services that contribute to improving the lives of people who inspire us every day.

[00:48:41] And as Annie said before, when she was here, she learns more from her students than they may learn from her. And I think that should resonate with all of us, is that we all have contributions to make and we can all learn from each other, regardless of where we are in our lives.

[00:48:58] And so, Ken, thank you. Thank you to Service Source. And let's make this not just an Autism Awareness Month, but an Autism Take Action Month in our community. And so, with that, I think we're ready to vote. All those in favor of the motion, please say aye.

[00:49:16] Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? That motion carries, and Ken, welcome. The floor is yours. All right. Well, thank you, Chairman, and thank you, Supervisor Herity and the full board. You know, such great remarks in recognizing this month as Autism Acceptance Month.

[00:49:33] And, you know, it's hard to follow Annie and the connects to Taylor Swift, but, you know, my name is Ken Crum again, and I am the Chief Operating Officer for Service Source. We're a local nonprofit here in Fairfax County that has been providing supports to individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities for over 50 years.

[00:49:52] And during the course of those years, we forged a strong relationship with the Board of Supervisors that helps us provide the support people with autism need to explore their social and vocational interests and strengths, gain independence, and actively participate in our community.

[00:50:09] As you know, people who are more engaged citizens not only lead richer lives, but Chairman, as you mentioned, they also enrich the lives of those around us. We're grateful to the Board of Supervisors for your steadfast support of our mission over the years. There's a great need for services that provide support for people with autism.

[00:50:28] As Supervisor Herity mentioned, one in every 36 children in the U.S. has been identified with a diagnosis of autism. We have 125,000 of our neighbors here in Fairfax County today who are identified as autistic. Service Source provides specialized services and employment supports for over 300 people living with autism here in Northern Virginia.

[00:50:51] Our services include a diverse set of supports for people of all ages, assessing their unique interests, abilities to help everyone from older adults to younger children transitioning from the supports of Fairfax County Public Schools to new opportunities in the community. We take the time to focus on the development of soft skills and encourage increased social interaction with the people they interface with every day.

[00:51:15] We don't anticipate the need for autism services to decrease any time soon. Almost 25 years ago, a study in 2000 reported that the number of children identified with autism was 1 in 110. That number is now 1 in 36. The growth doesn't necessarily mean the number of people with autism is increasing, but that the medical community is improving its ability to diagnose autism.

[00:51:39] The need for services and support has never been higher. To that end, we were pleased to see the governor recommend and the General Assembly approve over $300 million for an additional 3,400 Medicaid home and community-based developmental disability waiver slots starting this fiscal year in 2025.

[00:51:58] This is clearly a step in the right direction. But we must also recognize that the funding allocated per person for Medicaid services isn't adequate to meet the needs of an individual, especially here in Fairfax County, where the cost of providing care is significantly higher than in the rest of Virginia.

[00:52:17] I once heard longtime Supervisor John Faust recognize the disconnect between the Medicaid waiver funding and the true cost of providing these critical services here in Fairfax County, stating what's good enough for the rest of the Commonwealth is not always good enough for Fairfax County.

[00:52:33] For years, the Board of Supervisors has stepped in to provide the necessary resources to bridge the gap between state funding and what is needed to provide the robust, high-quality services Fairfax County residents need and deserve. Your continued support makes a tangible positive difference in the lives of people with autism and other developmental disabilities and their families.

[00:52:56] They are so fortunate to live in a community where their government is engaged, aware, and responsive to the needs of its citizens. So on behalf of the people we serve, I thank you for this proclamation and recognizing April's Autism Awareness Month. We look forward to continued partnership with the Board of Supervisors to build and celebrate inclusive communities in Fairfax County where each person's unique talents, abilities, and contributions are recognized and valued.

[00:53:23] So thank you. Thank you very much. So well said, Ken. And thank you for all that you do every day and your team. It is appreciated and recognized. With that, I think we're ready for a photo. And if you could come on forward, myself and Supervisor Herity will join you.

[00:53:39] everyone who's here with you please come on down all right uh next up we uh have a proclamation to

[00:56:17] designate april 2024 is community development month in fairfax county and i am going to turn the gavel over to supervisor smith so that i can read the proclamation we have with us today tom fleetwood who of course is our director of fairfax county department of housing and community Development. And let me read the proclamation. Whereas the Community Development Block Grant CDBG program was established in 1974 to provide state and local governments with resources to develop viable urban communities by providing decent affordable housing and a sustainable

[00:56:56] living environment and expanding economic opportunities principally for persons of low and moderate income. And whereas 2024 has been designated for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the CDBG program. And whereas since the program's inception, Fairfax County has received over $298 million from CDBG and $78 million from the Home Investment Partnerships Program, supporting the development of affordable housing, benefiting low to moderate income individuals and households, including older adults, people with disabilities, those experiencing

[00:57:35] homelessness and children. And whereas people of color are disproportionately negatively impacted by the lack of available affordable housing in Fairfax County, and whereas the CDBG program is critical to advancing equitable neighborhoods that improve the physical, economic, and social conditions for all Fairfax County communities, and whereas the CDBG and Home Investment Partnerships programs foster a strong network among local governments residents businesses and non-profit organizations working to meet the needs of the entire county now therefore be it resolved that

[00:58:14] the fairfax county board of supervisors on behalf of all fairfax county residents does hereby proclaim april 2024 is community development month in fairfax county and urges all residents to recognize the importance and achievements of these programs in improving the quality of life in fairfax county and throughout the united states i will second that along with supervisor powcheck and beerman any discussion uh very briefly uh madam chairman thank you um thank you tom for being here today uh the 50th anniversary is is a big deal you know the numbers in this

[00:58:51] proclamation speak for themselves uh in terms of the the actual financial support we've gotten from our federal partners. But we know thanks to Tom and his team that we're able to stretch those dollars into so much more in terms of value in Fairfax County. And the CDBG program is a piece a lot of times of the financial puzzle that's put together to make affordable housing in particular in our community work. And we know this is beyond affordable housing, but specifically when you look at the affordable housing production that we've had, especially in the last couple years,

[00:59:27] without our federal support, without the CDBG program, we wouldn't be able to do nearly what we're able to do. And I think, and Supervisor Stork may want to weigh in on this as well, I think it's fitting that we're celebrating 50 years of CDBG at the same time there are finally people living on a prime piece of property on the Richmond Highway corridor that was secured by this county many decades ago by using CDBG money and today houses hundreds of families and

[01:00:02] affordable high quality affordable housing in an important economic corridor in the county and it's a great example of federal investment paired with non-profit county community support where we're making a real difference. And so I've always thought of CDBG, not as a federal government program, but as a great enabler of good things in our community. And so 50 years later, we've had a lot of success stories. We hope there's 50 more years of success coming forward and really want

[01:00:38] to salute you, Tom, and your team for taking advantage of every single funding opportunity we have and certainly every funding opportunity available through CDBG to improve our community. So congratulations and thank you for being here today to receive this. Supervisor Stork.

[01:00:55] I wanted to add to the chairman's voice on that because it is how we get that initial dollars to help us do and leverage so much more and the specific location that the chairman is referring to was purchased with that money to address a severe problem we had in a mobile home park that was failing and creating all kinds of issues for the residents as well as the community those dollars which just may be

a little too long and definitely too long to all me create and repurpose and get the housing development done and we've done we've done there today but but only that was

[01:01:34] combined with county money and with obviously federal loans and federal you know credit tax credits etc so it is it is one of the many tools that I I appreciate Tom you and your staff have to get us to where we are and where we have to go And we know that we are still inadequately going which is to adjust the housing crisis that we have today That's not getting better. We know it's getting harder We know that a key part of our challenge with economic development is to fill those the jobs the 50-plus thousand job vacancies that we have but we also know that if we don't find a way to

[01:02:11] increase our housing stock uh we're going to have we're going to continue to be hard pressed to fill those and keep dust and brightest wanting to stay and live and frankly raise a family and and age here so i'm all in um how do we how do we leverage that how do we do a better job of that it's always what we're trying to i think aspire to do and i appreciate the work your your team has done to get us there thank you seeing no further discussion all those in favor of the motion say aye aye anyone opposed that motion passes thank you thank you vice chair smith with that mr fleetwood welcome the floor is yours thank you very much mr chairman members of the board

[01:02:51] we are so very appreciative of this recommendation of this recognition of the 50th anniversary of cdbg and for all of your support over these past decades for the use of cdbg in our community And I can say that CDBG and the history of CDBG is really entwined with the history of modern Fairfax County in so many ways.

[01:03:14] If you look across the entire county, you can point to innumerable locations where CDBG has made an incredible difference in our community. Going back to the early days of our community improvement program in neighborhoods like Lincoln-Lewis-Vannoy or in Gum Springs, the curb and gutter improvements in the James Lee and Tenor Hill communities in Providence, for example, it has been an incredibly effective and flexible tool.

[01:03:49] And we've used it, as has been noted, to develop a wide variety of housing communities from North Hill to Little River Glen, and it's played a role in so many more. And we are so very appreciative of your support. I'll also note that CDBG has been a critical linchpin in terms of our partnership with our nonprofits.

[01:04:13] The county has partnered with more than 20 nonprofit organizations to acquire more than 300 scattered site properties across Fairfax County in all nine magisterial districts. Individuals experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness, individuals diagnosed with serious mental illness, individuals with intellectual disabilities, seniors, veterans, and other low and moderate income households.

[01:04:42] These are the people that we are helping with CDBG and with its companion program, HOME. These programs have facilitated the preservation of the county's affordable housing stock with the rehabilitation of the county's and the FCRHA's properties.

[01:04:58] And CDBG has enabled low-income families to become homeowners through down payment and closing cost assistance as well. CDBG has also played an important role in other more modern, more recent county facility projects, including very importantly the High Blue Valley Community Center, which supported the renovation of that facility and preparing it to be reopened to serve the community.

[01:05:25] Throughout the month of April, HCD has been highlighting the work of our nonprofit partners who receive CDBG funding to provide supports and targeted services that improve the lives of our residents, cultivate empowerment, and self-sufficiency.

[01:05:41] CDBG has contributed critical federal dollars to our local consolidated community funding pool program to expand its reach to even more nonprofits and households. These success stories are showcased on HCD's website and demonstrate how federal dollars are used, but also how our residents can get involved and inform the future needs of our community.

[01:06:03] Again, on behalf of the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority and the tens of thousands of people in Fairfax who have benefited from CDBG, none of whom are Taylor Swift to my knowledge, we are so very grateful for your support.

[01:06:25] And I want to also express my gratitude to the incredible staff at the Department of Housing and Community Development who are such thoughtful stewards of these resources as well. So thank you very much indeed. Thank you very much, Tom. Well said. And I think one other group we want to thank is our congressional delegation.

[01:06:45] We've been blessed for many, many years with a delegation that strongly supports CDBG money and fights for it in the federal budget. And so we want to acknowledge their support as well. And so thank you very much, Tom. And with that, I think we're ready for a photo.

[01:07:03] And if Supervisor Palczyk, our health and housing chair, wants to join us.

[01:09:43] Next up, we have board matters. And the clerk has compiled these digitally and has sent them around. We'll go alphabetically by district, following myself and Vice Chair Gross. I'm sorry, Vice Chair Smith. jeez vice chair smith vice chair smith hopefully uh vice chair gross is watching and so followed by myself and vice chair smith and it literally says that here so old habits are hard hard to correct and i have a whole stack of board matters here a lot of them

[01:10:20] so board members who can summarize their board matters will be rewarded and i have a couple uh first uh you can see my first board and i'm going to hand the gavel to supervise uh to vice chair smith uh first um you can see without objection i move the proclamation requests listed in this document i'm not going to read them all you can see there's a lot of them uh coming up on the schedule and i move approval second so or as approved as ordered without

[01:10:54] objection without objection okay my next board matter is support of the maryland department of transportation's grant application for multimodal transportation enhancements on the american legion bridge i-270 multimodal improvements and i am offering this jointly with supervisor bierman the board of supervisors has long included potomac river crossings among the transportation project priorities and its federal recommended strategies and principles the need to across the Potomac River creates major transportation challenges in the national capital region. The American Legion Bridge, as a direct connection between the region's most populous

[01:11:34] counties, is one of the most heavily used. It is also the most congested, with traffic volumes expected to increase. The choke point created by this bridge requires long-term solutions to help those traveling between Maryland and Virginia and anyone who's been on the Beltway at any time, anywhere near Tyson's Corner, knows exactly what this board matter is all about. So I'm not going to read a lot of

details other than to mention that the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration has informed the county of their intent to seek funding through this effort for the American Legion Bridge and the I-270 multimodal improvements.

[01:12:14] As we know, this project will replace the 60-year-old American Legion Bridge, which will enhance safety and mobility, and certainly bring environmental improvements to the parked vehicles on I-495 that we see on a daily basis. We know this is an emergency situation. We applaud Maryland for getting this going again, and we want to send the attached letter to Secretary Buttigieg, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation, indicating Fairfax County's support of the Maryland Department of Transportation application for

[01:12:50] multimodal project discretionary grant funding and I move the Board of Supervisors approve the attached letter to be sent second by Supervisor Beerman any discussion seeing none all those in favor the motion say aye aye anyone opposed any abstentions that motion passes thank you thank you very much my My next item is a letter to the General Assembly in support of WMATA funding.

[01:13:18] And this is offered with Supervisor Walkinshaw, Chair of our Legislative Committee, Supervisor Biermann, Chair of our Transportation Committee. On March 9, 2024, the General Assembly passed the FY 2024-26 biennium budget. In addition to funding other critical programs across the Commonwealth, the budget did include $149.5 million from the state general fund to help address the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's shortfall in FY 2025 and FY 2026. This funding, which is expected to be matched by the local funding partners, including Fairfax County, is essential to putting WMATA

[01:13:58] on sound financial footing and retaining its consistent operations, which are vital to our economy. On April 8th, Governor Glenn Youngkin announced his recommended amendments to the budget. In addition to other adverse recommendations, the governor proposed reducing the amount of additional funds provided for WMATA by $113.8 million, specifying that the localities could use previously allocated state assistance during Governor Northam's administration to address the shortfall. The money the administration references in their amendment for FY25 was given to the

[01:14:35] region by the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, NVTC, by the Northam administration, and FY 2022, specifically due to updated revenue projections with additional funding provided for various transit programs across the Commonwealth. These funds were used by the county and other localities to address the immediate metro payments as we emerged from the pandemic, letting us save other funds in our trust funds at NVTC to prepare for future and ongoing needs for metro and connector service. Even with those additional funds, the county's transit trust fund

[01:15:13] held at NVTC is expected to be largely depleted by the end of FY 2025 upon us. As such, the additional funding provided by the General Assembly is absolutely vital to addressing the funding needs both of WMATA and of the Fairfax connector. And I should add before I make my motion that similar letters to the attached letter have already been sent on behalf of just about every jurisdiction in Northern Virginia including NVTC and last Thursday night we approved a similar letter to NVTA and there will be a letter going out today in addition from the mayors and chairs

[01:15:53] of Northern Virginia. Therefore I move the Board of Supervisors approve the attached letter to Fairfax County delegation to the General Assembly asking them to oppose the budget amendment offered by the governor and retain the funding for WMATA that they desperately need to be included in the FY

2024 to 2026 biennium budget. Second. It's been seconded by Supervisors Walkinshaw, Bierman, Palchek, and Elfer. Any discussion? Thank you, Madam Chairman. Just very briefly, this is something our entire region is in lockstep on as we work to solve Metro's problems

[01:16:29] and to try to save us from the draconian service cuts that have been on the table. And I think this is also a call to the business community. As we know, WMATA is absolutely essential to our regional economy. It is essential to Virginia's economy, bringing in over $1 billion a year into the general fund.

[01:16:51] We know that transit is one of the few places when it comes to funding formulas in Richmond that Northern Virginia actually benefits from. And so to line out this one thing that specifically benefits Northern Virginia and by default benefits the state is a serious mistake.

[01:17:09] And I would just add to that, it's also a serious misunderstanding of the way that this funding works. As this board matter says, it's gone. It's gone by likely September, according to our own staff. So the ability to continue to support Metro is very limited as we move forward.

[01:17:28] And then lastly, we are as a board dealing with a very difficult budget, very difficult budget. If this money doesn't come from the state, where will it come from? From the real estate taxpayers of Fairfax County. That's where it will come from.

[01:17:45] And so this is absolutely critical not only to our economy, to the business community, but to every single taxpayer in Fairfax County. And I would remind them, this is their money. This is money paid on income taxes in Northern Virginia sent to Richmond that needs to come back to support the Northern Virginia economy.

[01:18:04] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Supervisor Alcorn. Yeah, thank you. I want to thank the chairman for bringing this forward. This is one of those issues that sometimes is a little complicated to explain to our members of the General Assembly, but the letter does it well. I think the motion does it well.

[01:18:23] I mean, basically, we have a trust fund that is supported by a number of different revenue sources, and then the money goes to several different things. And in effect, and the chairman mentioned this, the money's going to run out. So we're really looking at a game of brinksmanship here on transit funding, not just Metro, but also Fairfax Connector, as this points out.

[01:18:47] But we are going to be looking, as the Commonwealth is going to be looking, at longer-term possible solutions. Frankly, taking this money out does not make that process any easier because it would lend to create more of a crisis, which is not necessary.

[01:19:08] And so I would hope that this money will get restored and we can have the conversations we need to have to make sure transit is funded appropriately. So thank you. - Thank you, Supervisor Harrity, and then Walkinshaw. - Yeah, I'm gonna be reluctantly supporting this, and I'll tell you why the reluctantly, and I don't pretend to speak for the administration or the business community, although I know they have both been calling for this, is we as a region need to have Metro figure out how they're gonna get their costs under control.

[01:19:39] Absolutely, and that has not happened yet. It happened several years ago when they agreed to 3% increases, and they failed to abide by that. They got all kinds of federal aid to make up for the holes caused by the pandemic, but we absolutely need to have a discussion as a board and as a region on what Metro is going to do to get their costs under control.

[01:20:04] So I'll support this, but I am doing it a little reluctantly. I understand the pressure that this is going to put on transit funds in Northern Virginia. That is the reason I'm supporting it, but we've got to get the long-term answer figured out because, you know, punt it down the road with a couple more years of ridiculous funding increases is not necessarily the best answer but madam chair I just want to clarify something because I think virtually every member of this board is involved in Metro discussions because there's not a single meeting of NVTC of NVTA of COG that occurs where discussions of Metro have not occurred

[01:20:44] and to the general manager's credit this year's budget has been significantly revised under multiple different scenarios of cost efficiencies and savings that have been found by Metro as well documented, not just by Metro, but in the media. And so everybody is working on this problem. Everybody who wants to engage, everyone who will put in the time and effort to be involved in this process is working hard on this every single solitary day, including Supervisor Alcorn in his work on the Metro Board.

[01:21:17] So I just want to make that abundantly clear to those who are watching and to also thank all of those people who are spending endless hours, including our county executive and county staff, working on this challenge. Thank you. Supervisor Walkinshaw. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[01:21:33] With respect to the WMATA cost issue, and this is an issue that kind of comes up every few years whenever we realized that the lack of dedicated funding for Metro has created an issue. And I sat through, in 2016 and 2017, probably a dozen meetings with then-United States Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood when Phase 2 of Metro, of the Silver Line, was kind of on the ropes.

[01:22:03] And to his enormous credit, he was personally directly engaged. And he produced a report in 2017 that identified the challenges with Metro. And he found that there could be about $40 million per year of savings.

[01:22:19] So some savings, $40 million a year. But he said Metro needed $500 million a year in dedicated funding to be on firm financial ground. So this idea that there are hundreds of millions of dollars or billions of dollars of cost savings to be found at Metro is a fantasy.

[01:22:39] the cost structure at Metro. Every time it's been studied, it is similar to every other large transit system in the country. So I would invite Supervisor Herdy and others to review the work that MBTC has done because we have been doing a lot of work this year, identifying some potential savings. They tend to be in the ones or tens of millions of dollars, perhaps, of savings. The amount needed in dedicated funding to prevent us from having to go back to property taxpayers every single year is in the hundreds of millions of dollars. That's just math. And if the governor

[01:23:18] wants to commission another study, great, fine. We'll be in the exact same place talking about it again a year from now. Appreciate the letter and the chairman's motion. One thing I will note in the governor's amendments to the budget. He retains funding for toll relief in Hampton Roads.

[01:23:41] He retains dedicated funding for I-81 improvements. So the message to Hampton Roads from the governor's mansion is we got your back. The message to Western Virginia from the governor's mansion is we got your back. The message to Northern Virginia from the governor's mansion is you're your own and i don't think that's the message the governor wants to send i hope in the negotiations with the general assembly uh he will recognize that even in the absence of his hoped for arena

[01:24:17] in alexandria metro is still vital to the commonwealth's continued economic success and prosperity maybe this letter along with the others will tip the balance for him thank you mr chairman thank you seeing no further discussion all those in favor of the motion say aye aye anyone opposed any abstentions that motion passes thank you vice chair smith uh and lastly uh for information i have included for everyone an invitation should have been circulated uh to you for our spring social uh we had a new year's reception uh that was scheduled and unfortunately i came down with

[01:24:54] a case of covid so it's my fault that it had to be canceled but it has been rescheduled and we are transforming it into a spring social where we'll have less variables hopefully with weather and illness and and other cancellation concerns but it'll be on tuesday may 14th which is a committee day immediately following our committees that day tuesday may 14th 2024 to 5 to 7 p.m and we of course will be circulating this widely in the community everyone is welcome to attend the chairman's spring social and in addition as we have done in the past we will have musical

[01:25:33] performances this year by the lake braddock secondary school flute choir and we will also be accepting animal shelter donations this has been highly successful in the past and you'll see a list of those donations that we're looking for as well as a qr code for anyone who would like to to make a cash donation to the animal shelter to support the work that our animal shelter friends do on a daily basis, and so come one, come all.

[01:26:02] And that is the end of my board matters. Next up, we have Vice Chair Smith. - Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have one board matter. Korean Central Presbyterian Church filed a special exception amendment, SEA 2005-SU-007-03, to expand the grade level its private school from the existing kindergarten through sixth grade to serve students from kindergarten through eighth grade the total enrollment of school children is proposed to remain at the approved maximum of 100 children no physical changes are proposed to the site the planning commission hearing is scheduled for june 12 2024 and this case should move forward

[01:26:42] as soon as possible to allow the changes to take place before the new year school year starts in september 2024 i move that the board of supervisors direct staff to expedite the scheduling of the board of supervisors public hearing for sea 2005-su-007-03 this motion should not be construed as a favorable recommendation by the board of supervisors on the proposed application and does not relieve the applicant from compliance with the provisions of all applicable ordinances regulations or adopted standards in any way. And the chair will second that motion. Any discussion

[01:27:17] on the motion? Seeing and hearing none. All those in favor, please say aye. Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? That motion carries. Thank you. Thank you, Vice Chair Smith. Next is Supervisor Walkinshaw. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have two written board matters and two announcements.

[01:27:36] The first is a joint board matter with you, Mr. Chairman, and Supervisor Jimenez, a proclamation request to recognize April 26th as Arbor Day, and I will go through this quickly. We did some work to dig up the history, so I do want to share the history here, because this was, I did not know this, but Arbor Day was initially celebrated in the territory of Nebraska.

[01:27:58] It was Mr. Sterling Morton, who was the secretary of the Nebraska Territory, advocated for a tree planting holiday to address issues caused by lack of trees on the Great Plains. Supervisor Stork would like to hear this being a Midwesterner. Limited shade, minimal building material, and few windbreaks for erosion control.

[01:28:17] And this was amazing to me. On April 10, 1872, they declared the first Arbor Day. No television, no Twitter, no Facebook, no OPA to promote it. Somehow they managed to plant one million trees across the country in 1872.

[01:28:34] So we can probably do better than that this year. Supervisor Jimenez and I will be at Annandale Terrace Elementary School for our official Arbor Day event on April 26th along with staff from Urban Forest Management, the Tree Commission, and the Virginia Department of Forestry.

[01:28:52] I also just want to note that once again, Fairfax County has been named a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation. So congratulations to our incredible staff and tree advocates across the county for helping us achieve that designation for the 41st consecutive year.

[01:29:12] With that, Mr. Chairman, I ask without objection that we recognize Friday, April 26th as Arbor Day in Fairfax County and that a proclamation be signed by the chairman, Supervisor Jimenez, and myself to be presented to the faculty and students at Annandale Terrace Elementary School during the celebration on April 26, 2024.

[01:29:29] And without objection, that is so ordered, Supervisor Walkinshaw. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My final board matter is a long list of state athletic achievements. It's a joint board matter with you, Supervisor Jimenez, Supervisor Herity, and Supervisor Palchuk, students from Robinson, Fairfax, Lake Braddock, West Springfield, and Woodson High School.

[01:29:53] Mr. Chairman, I ask without objection that the Office of Public Affairs prepare proclamations to be presented inside or outside the boardroom at a later date to recognize these athletes along with their coaches and families for their achievements. And without objection, it is so ordered.

[01:30:08] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just two announcements, you know, Supervisor Stork has done a great job of encouraging and enlisting all of us in our offices to help us achieve our CCAP goals, which really require action in the community from residents and businesses.

[01:30:28] And one of the things I just wanted to share and encourage my colleagues to consider is inviting OEEC to present to your land use committee or your district council or any kind of other convening group that you might have in your district. We had them at the Braddock District Council on March 26th. It was one of the most popular presentations we've had, much more popular than when I'm there. They had almost 30 people there, and Director Morrill went through our CCAP goals, but more importantly, talk through things that homeowners, property owners, community organizations can do to help us meet our goals.

[01:31:08] I got to tell you, there is a lot of interest in our HOAs and civic associations about participating in things like Charge Up Fairfax, Solarize Nova, all kinds of things like that. So please, OEC will be thrilled to come and give this presentation to any organizations in your respective districts.

[01:31:27] Finally, Mr. Chairman, I just want to share we will be hosting the third annual Braddock Bark Festival at Lake Akatink Park on Sunday, May 19th, at the upper parking lot off of Hemming Avenue. We're going to have adoption opportunities, local pet nonprofit and business booths, a doggy pool party, food vendors, and more.

[01:31:51] Please share this information and hope to see you there, Mr. Chairman. I'd love to have you, as always, and the rest of the community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Supervisor Walkinshaw. I

might even bring my dog if he can behave. Next up, we have Supervisor Bierman.

[01:32:08] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Two board matters. I will try to abbreviate them, though I'm usually better at just reading them out. The first is for the McLean Community Center election candidates. Mr. Chairman, on March 28th, my office received notice that there were 15 drainsville small district 1a tax uh residents 10 adults and five youth who have successfully petitioned to become candidates and have their names placed on the ballots for the mclean community center governing board elections uh the mclean community center is an awesome place

[01:32:43] uh does great things in our community whether it's ballet classes cooking classes uh the alden theater um my favorite was once i was looking at what uh was on their um their roster of of activities trying to find out if there was anything really interesting and i saw knife skills for teenagers of course it was a cooking class about your knife skills in the uh uh in in in the kitchen you're not a teenager no so you can't enroll i i couldn't enroll which was too bad. But anyway, absentee voting began on Wednesday, March 27th and continues through

[01:33:21] Monday, May 13th. In-person voting will be at McLean Day. Pursuant to the requirements of the MOU, the results of the election will be reported to the Board of Supervisors as its first meeting following the election. If the Board of Supervisors determines that it's in the public interest to do so, the Board will appoint four adult candidates, one youth candidate from the McLean High School boundary area and one from the Langley high school boundary area who received the highest votes. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I ask without objection that the record reflect receipt by the Board of Supervisors of the attached list of candidates for the MCC governing board election. And without objection, that is

[01:33:59] accepted. Supervisor Beerman. Fantastic. My next board matter is support for the town of Herndon safe streets and roads for all grant application for development of the town of Herndon safety action plan. I see we're sending a lot of transportation related letters today which is a good thing. The town of Herndon has its own similar to the Fairfax County's initiative titled safe streets for all program which was unanimously endorsed by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on May 10, 2022.

[01:34:34] The Town of Herndon is seeking to develop a comprehensive safety action plan. To support this planning effort, the Town of Herndon requests a letter of support from the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to accompany an application for funding from the United States Department of Transportation, Safe Streets, and Roads for All, SS4A discretionary grant program.

[01:34:55] The Town's proposed plan will guide the staff's efforts to improve safety for pedestrians, bicycles and motorists who use the transportation network. The town of Herndon is seeking $400,000 in SS4A funding that will match with $100,000 in local dollars for a total of $500,000. It will also include Americans with Disability Act transition plan and supplemental planning for corridors of focus within the town of Herndon. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I move that the board's supervisors approve the attached letter of support for the town of Herndon's safe streets and roads for all application for development of the Town of Herndon Safety Action Plan.

[01:35:33] I'm happy to second that motion. Is there a discussion on the motion? Any discussion on the motion? Seeing and hearing none, all those in favor, please say aye. Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? That motion carries. Supervisor Beerman. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. That's all I have for today, and thank you for supporting these board matters.

[01:35:50] Thank you, Supervisor Beerman. Supervisor Lusk. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll go quickly. Four board matters and one announcement. First, Mr. Chairman, the Board of Supervisors, at its meeting on March 9, 2021, the Board held a virtual public hearing and adopted a resolution authorizing the transfer of property at the Franconia Governmental Center to the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

[01:36:13] To resolve any concerns about the validity of that virtual public hearing, the Board scheduled a second public hearing or rehearing on December 5, 2023, And at that meeting, we deferred the public hearing until January 23rd, 2024.

[01:36:28] At the public hearing on January 23rd, 2024, I moved to defer the decision on transferring the property to the Fairfax County Development and Housing Authority to allow time for more community conversations before a transfer decision was made. As such, three community conversations were scheduled.

[01:36:47] The first of these community conversations took place this past Saturday, April 13, 2024, at John R. Lewis High School. The session was very well attended by members of the community, input from well over 100 residents on potential alternatives, improvements, and amenities needed within the community with or without housing were heard and collected by Fairfax County staff.

[01:37:11] office has been also collecting comments via phone calls and emails and it's very likely that many of you on this board have also received correspondence the next community conversation will follow the same format to give members of the community who were unable to attend the meeting on this past saturday an opportunity to provide input this second session will be held on monday april 22nd from 6 pm to 8 pm and then we will have a third session which will be held on monday may 6 2024 from 6 pm to 8 pm will feature a report out and feedback received a report of the feedback received

[01:37:50] and outline possible options for moving forward it's important to continue to inform the community of these upcoming opportunities to share their perspectives i would like to also take a moment to extend my sincere appreciation to the staff and the many county agencies who have worked over the past few months to make these community conversations possible and available to the community.

[01:38:11] Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I move without objection that the Board of Supervisors direct the Office of Public Affairs to advertise and promote the Franconia Governmental Center site community conversations and in addition to post information about the meetings on the public meetings calendar. So moved. Without objection, it is so ordered.

[01:38:29] Supervisor Lusk. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Second is a Heidel Valley Community Center spring fling event. So, Mr. Chairman, on our Region 1 neighboring and community services team joined with our partners at the Wish Center to cooperatively plan and present a spring fling celebration at the Heidel Valley Community Center on Saturday, April 27th from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

[01:38:54] We would especially like to emphasize that a central element of the day will be planning a colorful mural encompassing the entire fence of the community garden at the wish volunteer painters from community nonprofits teens from the community center nearby neighbors will help us enliven and put up this new mural.

[01:39:14] The event will feature activities for all ages, there'll be food, there'll be a DJ, dance, and other opportunities for the teens and police to have a basketball game, and then we'll have community vendors

also participating on that day.

[01:39:30] We anticipate a fun-filled day that celebrates the neighborhood's diversity and invite all of you to join us. So, Mr. Chairman, I move without objection that the Office of Public Affairs again assist us in publicizing the Franconia-Hyba Valley Community Center spring flame event.

[01:39:46] And without objection, that is so ordered. Supervisor Lusky. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now I'll make a quick announcement. At the Board of Supervisors meeting on May 23, 2023, I made a motion to direct the county executive to assign staff from the Department of Economic Initiatives to prepare a board item in support of the reconstitution of the Grub Steak Breakfast program in partnership with George Mason University.

[01:40:12] Thanks to the Board of Supervisors, a board matter was passed unanimously, and I appreciate, Mr. Chairman, the board, members on this board, for committing $450,000 in fundings over a three-year period to reignite this program, which is now called the Accelerate Breakfast Series.

[01:40:30] I'm pleased to announce that this past Friday, April 11th, 2024, I attended this event with a number of board members from this dais for the very first event of the Accelerate Breakfast Program series, which had over 120 attendees, five companies presented to a panel of venture capital and angel investors.

[01:40:50] Very interesting technologies, and I'll just note one because it was in the Franconia District. We had the Service Robotics and Technologies Lab, SRT Labs, presenting as well. And I'll just inform the board that the next event will be scheduled with the Accelerate Breakfast on July 19, 2024, for those who might be interested in attending.

[01:41:10] Thank you, Supervisor Lusk. And we want to thank MITRE and George Mason University, of course, for making this happen. And also, I know Supervisor Alcorn, myself, Supervisor Smith, Supervisor Beerman were able to attend.

[01:41:27] Supervisor Stork were able to attend as well. And so I know we're all looking forward to the next one. And, of course, our DEI staff, who does amazing work to make these things happen every day. Supervisor Lusk. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. So the next board matter, this one's a little bit trickier and tougher for me, regarding Commissioner Lagana.

[01:41:48] So, Dan Lagana has served as the Planning Commissioner for the Franconia District since January of 2020. He currently serves as Chair of the Parks Committee, in addition to the many hours that he's provided and worked on behalf of the Franconia District residents.

[01:42:04] He's supported the development community, county staff, his colleagues on the Planning Commission residing over and working with many public hearings. Commissioner Lagana has also given of his time to serve on the Manufactured Housing Task Force. He was instrumental in working with the community and county staff to ensure an inclusive, multilingual engagement process.

[01:42:28] Because of his engagement and commitments, the residents of the county's seven manufactured home communities were heard and were active participants in developing the recommendations that were presented to the Board of Supervisors in 2023.

[01:42:44] Most recently, Commissioner Lugano was a catalyst in achieving final resolution of many of the concerns that were connected with the top golf redevelopment proposal. Commissioner Lugano will be

leaving the Planning Commission at the end of April 2024 to spend more time with his family.

[01:43:03] Before joining the Planning Commissioner, Commissioner Lugano worked for the Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation. He has represented the citizens of the Frank County District in Fairfax County with grace and distinction.

[01:43:15] Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I would ask without objecting that the Board of Supervisors direct the Office of Public Affairs to schedule a presentation to prepare a certificate to recognize Planning Commissioner Daniel G. Laguna within the boardroom, if possible, during July 2024 for as many contributions while serving on the Fairfax County Planning Commission, in addition for his contributions and commitment to the Franconia community and Fairfax County as a whole.

[01:43:43] So moved, Mr. Chairman. I'm happy to accept that without objection. It is so ordered. Before I recognize Supervisor Jimenez, let me just make sure, Mr. Castrilli, do you have this on your radar? Okay. Supervisor Jimenez. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[01:44:00] I just want to say as a former colleague of Mr. Vagana, it was such a pleasure spending time and working with him on the Planning Commission. He always was extremely well prepared. He's an absolute delight to work with. He really focuses on the community. He knows the community.

[01:44:16] uh he was a fantastic planning commissioner i just want to wish him well in his future endeavors thank you thank you supervisor yemenes and i i will save my comments for when he comes before us hopefully in july but i think we're all surprised to see this but also completely understand the need to spend more time with family and thank him for many many years of contributions not just on the planning commission but in a lot of different places in the community so we'll look forward to having him come before the board. Supervisor Lusk. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. My last motion, and you'll understand why I'm making this motion as a result of the previous motion.

[01:44:54] Mr. Chairman, the next regularly scheduled opportunity for board members to make appointments to boards, authorities, and commissions, BACs, is Tuesday, May 21st, 2024. As you've heard from my earlier board matter, the Franconia District will have a vacancy on the planning commission effective for april 30th 2024 as such i would like to call the board's attention to the attached resume of christopher w landgraft the proposed franconia district appointee to the planning commissioner to the planning commissioner mr landgraft has a depth of experience in long-range planning environmental management and project management of federal facilities having worked

[01:45:31] at Fort Belvoir and currently in the base at Occoquan. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I move that the Board of Supervisors appoint Christopher W. Landgraft as the Franconia District Planning Commissioner to fill the unexpired term of Daniel G. Lugana with an effective date of May 1, 2024.

[01:45:52] I'm happy to second that motion. Is there discussion on the motion? I will just say I think a lot of us know Chris from a lot of years, both at Fort Belvoir and at the Regional Commission, and didn't know all these years of his residency in Franconia, so this is good to see.

[01:46:12] So well done, Supervisor Lusk. Any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion, please say aye. Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? That motion carries. Supervisor Lusk. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. that concludes my board matters. Thank you, Supervisor Lusk. Next up is Supervisor Alcorn.

[01:46:30] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have three board matters in one announcement. I'll read the first board matter and summarize the other two. The first one is a joint board matter with yourself and also Supervisor Lusk, chair of our public safety committee, relates to the proposed transfer of school crossing responsibilities. Currently, there are 170 school crossing locations across the county resulting in a total of 340 daily crossings both morning and afternoon the fairfax county police department has 72 crossing guard positions of which 53 are currently filled each crossing is 30 minutes in duration which allows several school crossing guards the ability to

[01:47:09] cover two or three crossings per day when school when crossing guards are not available police officers are pulled away from patrol responsibilities to handle the crossing due to the number of crossings that are required to be covered each day, dozens of police officers are called upon daily to cover school crossings. During the time deployed at school crossings, FCPD officers are not available to respond to calls for service or emergencies. Each year, FCPD conducts an annual review of all school crossing locations to ensure all crossing locations continue to meet the criteria for a crossing guard. On occasion, some school crossings are eliminated and others are

[01:47:48] added, all in coordination with Fairfax County Public Schools. During the 2023 review, FCPD eliminated a few crossings based on their existing criteria and identified several crossings that FCPD has historically covered outside of the area FCPD normally patrols. These crossings were located in Fort Belvoir, there was one, and in the towns of Herndon, where there was one, and Vienna, nine. Fort Belvoir and the town of Herndon agreed to handle the crossings in their jurisdictions in the fall of 2023. FCPD has subsequently met with the Vienna Police Department

[01:48:23] to discuss these crossings and collaborate on coverage solutions that include transitioning coverage responsibilities to the Vienna Police Department as other jurisdictions had embraced. The Vienna mayor and several town council members have expressed concerns with this proposed change, as have numerous parents and other residents in Vienna, some of whom showed up at my budget town whole. No changes to coverage have been made nor will any be made until, at a minimum, FCPD can update and discuss with the Board of Supervisors, the School Crossing Guard program, the proposed

[01:48:58] changes, national best practices for handling school crossings, and recommendations to consider. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and FCPD prioritize our school students and their safety. There's nothing more important than the safety of our school children. Fairfax County is reviewing how we have historically ensured their safety as they travel to and from school each day and how the school crossing program can be most effective and sustainable going forward so mr chairman my motion is i move that fcpd not move forward with proposed changes in the crossing guard program in vienna

[01:49:36] and that fcpd update the board on the crossing guard program and the current proposed changes and provide options or alternatives for discussion at a future 2024 Safety and Security Committee meeting. And I'm happy to second that motion along with Supervisor Luss, Supervisor Herity.

[01:49:55] I would just say with one, consider one minor amendment. Please. And therefore, Mr. Chairman, I move SCPD not move forward with the proposed changes at this time. Yes. In the crossing guard program in Vienna, because we do want to have a discussion, the board matter acknowledges about you know where we go in the future and we don't want to suggest that there might not be any changes we just don't want any changes now especially as we close out this school year and given the volume and the

timeliness of when this conversation began and the lack of involvement in the board and with the Vienna Town Council it only makes sense

[01:50:31] to suspend that finish the school year out and then have as your board matter acknowledges a conversation with the board at a public safety and security committee or appropriate committee so that we can weigh in on you know what this might look like long term and I think with that change just makes it clear to the community that we're we're open to doing something different but the way this came about and the abruptness of it is not appropriate and we need to have a thorough conversation about where we go from here yeah that's a friendly amendment okay thank you uh discussion a lot of discussion let me start with uh supervisor alcorn

[01:51:09] yeah thank you uh i think the the motion and the board matter make uh mostly explain most of the issues but i i do want to just underscore that um you know i we've heard from or i've heard from a number of parents who are concerned that these these crossings will not be covered and that is not happening um this was a proposal that's being elevated to the board of supervisors for discussion

[01:51:33] So I do want to just reassure everybody this is still in the discussion phase and we are going to be discussing alternatives and at that point we'll get back to the community on an approach.

[01:51:49] But thank you Mr. Chairman for that amendment and I do look forward to having additional discussion. We may have some folks in our budget public hearing around this, but I think with this board matter, it makes it clear the direction we're going. Thank you, Supervisor Alcorn.

[01:52:06] Supervisor Herity. Yeah, and I might have another friendly amendment or two for you, because I think this isn't just the Vienna problem. It is a public safety issue because we are pulling, and probably an unacceptable, I hate using that word, but an unacceptable number of officers into crossings.

[01:52:23] And really, I think what we need to really do is take a larger look at the whole thing, a look at recruiting and retaining I hear a lot from guards because I've got a couple of friends that are guards that you know they typically want three to four crossings to to make it worthwhile for them to be a guard and to be employed so and how those get assigned and how those get changed is causing some retention issues I think on the recruiting side you know we've evidently stopped training guards at the higher level that allow them to to actually cross which gives them no path upwards I think we have an

[01:53:01] opportunity to address something I know all of us get calls for and that is calls for people that can cross churches in private schools I think this is an opportunity if we train up to that crossing guard level where they can control traffic there might be a way so it really is more to look at the recruiting and retention and the overall aspect i know the police i've spoken to the police they've got some ideas as to where this could be there are a lot of options out there but i think recruiting and retention needs to be a piece of it yeah and i i would say that that will be part of the

[01:53:40] conversation that comes back to committee i know mr arnold has already been working on this and i would add that there's other things to keep in mind as well like you know state code provisions legal issues there's there's a lot of different standards here for crossing guards it is has historically been a hard position to fill I mean this is not this is not the first time we've done this as the board matter has acknowledged this is in the past we've had to look at this we've we've dropped crossing guards from some of the crossings in Fairfax County so this is not just a Vienna issue this is this is a countywide issue and we've had to make changes within the

[01:54:17] county to try to accommodate this challenge so i suspect when it comes back uh this will not be a vienna specific conversation uh to the extent we might have a cooperative agreement with the vienna police department might make it unique but in terms of the challenge the overarching challenge that's that has to be a part of the conversation supervisor lusk thank you very much mr chairman i just want to be clear in saying that you're right uh tom arnold and i've already been talking about this issue this is going to be one of the topics we were going to bring to the public safety security committee so if we can continue that effort we will be happy to do that i think

[01:54:55] the points that supervisor harry has made are the same ones that we talked about tom and i in terms of figuring out how else to prepare others versus the police men and women from having to do this responsibility we've got to figure another path so i think clearly the recommendations are going going to come back are going to have to help us in thinking through strategies for being able to recruit and bring in others into these positions. So I would anticipate that that will be a very critical part of that report back. But I appreciate the board matter and acknowledge that it is

[01:55:31] something that we have been thinking about at the Public Safety and Security Committee. Thank you. Supervisor Smith. Just I would like to understand the timing. So the review was done in 2023. It It says the jurisdictions, some of them agreed in 2023.

[01:55:49] Does that mean those were implemented? And do we have a goal of trying to look at this before the next school year begins? Those were implemented. And in my conversations, and I'm sure this is consistent with Supervisor Alcorn, we have to have this conversation in advance of next school year.

[01:56:09] And we have to have at least some immediate issues and answers to the Vienna question before the school year starts. Whether we will have answers to all of the larger issues that we've raised here by the start of next school year is probably would be difficult to do, but we want to have the conversation as soon as we can with a goal at least of settling this immediate Vienna issue before school starts and recognizing the larger issue is one that we're going to have to continue to work on.

[01:56:38] Parts of it may be implementable before the start of next school year. Other elements of it might take a little bit longer to be able to accomplish. Supervisor Paucik. First of all, I just want to thank Supervisor Alcorn for his work on this, and you, Mr. Chairman, and Tom Arnold.

[01:56:57] I do want to, number one, on the Vienna issue, I met with the captains yesterday, and they assured us that they will be covering all crossings until a decision is made. So I appreciate the work on that. I think as we look at the wider program and fully support, that's been an issue.

[01:57:15] I asked them yesterday, it was on the school board. There was a question of how do you add more crossings and how are they approved and how does that work? So I think the one thing is FCPD, and if it's in Tom Arnold's hands, I feel confident. Also making sure that we're absolutely looking at the sustainability of models and working with the right people in the schools as well to understand sometimes there are challenges and reasons not to have a crossing board card which they understand versus other options like transportation so this is a huge issue so I appreciate that we're taking a bite out of the Vienna piece because it's urgent but the bigger

[01:57:55] one I mean when I walked to school in elementary school there was a lovely lady who was a crossing guard I know things have changed so I think it is high time that we look at it beyond just the

police department how to look at the best models and make them sustainable because that is a huge issue. So thank you. Okay. With that we have a motion. I have seconded the motion as amended.

[01:58:19] Any further discussion on the motion? Seeing and hearing none. All those in favor of the motion please say aye. Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? That motion carries. Supervisor Alcorn. All right. Thank you. My next board matter relates to the Tyson's Forest Community Task Force report in your board matter package there is a set of slides so I'm not going to go through all of those clearly but just as a reminder back in July 23 and this is also a board matter I'm doing with Supervisor Palchik back in 2023 I announced the creation of a community-led task force

[01:58:55] to develop recommendations to preserve and enhance a beautiful 65-acre urban forest that follows a stream valley from the dullest toll road to gosnell road in the vienna area also known as tyson's forest it runs along the hunter mill portion of tyson's so this is an area it has multiple ownership it's not just the fairfax county park authority even though they are the majority owner of the property but also includes commercial properties some residents and others so the

[01:59:27] recommendations are, have been distributed coming from the task force. I would point to one of the recommendations in the slide 7D. It's sort of the second half of that recommendation. Just to flag that for folks, this actually came up very late in the process, but it's the understanding that there are a lot of easements that run across open space like this, green open space, and

[01:59:56] For any group that's looking to do a stewardship plan or to really look out for an area, it's really important to understand who has easements and maybe even proactively reach out to them about their plans. Because certainly when you have easement rights, that means you could take down trees or you could do what you need to do as the easement owner.

[02:00:19] So anyway, this was an unusual process. Usually task forces are not looking at preserving natural areas like this and enhancing them, but it was a really wonderful, very positive community-led effort.

[02:00:39] I want to thank Supervisor Paulczyk and her staff for supporting this and the Park Authority for all the work they did, and you can see the other recommendations. So I'll just skip to the motion, which is a without objection, I guess, Madam Vice-Chairman.

[02:00:58] Without objection, I ask that the Board of Supervisors accept the task force report and direct the Office of Public Affairs to prepare a proclamation for the task force to be presented outside of a board meeting at an appropriate time later this year. Heard the motion. I'm happy to second that motion. Is there any further discussion on the motion? Supervisor Palchuk.

[02:01:17] I just want to thank Supervisor Alcorn for leading this. The report is easy to read, has really good recommendations. I especially like number six, the Green Champions, to lead us for generations to come. I think that's a great idea. And just the way that this was done by all those involved and the partners, I think it was a really good model of how to look at some of these issues moving forward.

[02:01:40] So thank you to you and to all who were part of this. Thank you, Supervisor Pouchik. Supervisor Walkinshaw. Yeah, just chime in. I read the report when Supervisor Alcorn sent it around, and really incredible work. And I agree with Supervisor Palchuk.

[02:01:56] You know, as we look at our tree canopy goal of getting to 60 percent, part of our CCAP goals, this kind of effort is really key. And I do think this can be a model. So maybe we'll look at a slightly streamlined version of this that we can apply to other forests around the county, especially in developed urbanizing areas where, you know, that's really where the rubber is going to meet the road or the trees are going to meet the road for us in terms of meeting our goals.

[02:02:25] So I really appreciate Supervisor Alcorn and Palchuk and everyone who has worked on this. I think it really is impressive work. Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Walkinshaw. Excellent report. Thank you, Supervisor Alcorn. If there's no further discussion, all those in favor, please say aye.

[02:02:43] Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? That motion carries. Supervisor Alcorn. All right, thank you. Last board matter is an announcement, really, but it's written as a board matter. The fourth annual tour to Hunter Mill is coming up on Cinco de Mayo.

[02:02:59] Yes, absolutely. Sunday, May 5th. So for those of you that might be interested, I would invite you. There's a short route and a long route, 16 miles and 27 miles. We're going to be exploring some newly opened trails in the Hunter Mill District, including the shared use path along Route 7, which will be open by then.

[02:03:22] And we're also going to make a stop by the Meadowlark Botanical Gardens. And if this won't get you there, I don't know what will, but you get socks. So if you register and come by, they won't be yellow like this first year of socks.

[02:03:38] They'll be green this year. So anybody who registers and participates will get those socks. So therefore, Mr. Chairman, I ask without objection that the Office of Public Affairs provide promotional support to the 2024 Tour de Hunter Mill as appropriate.

[02:03:55] And without objection, it is so ordered, Supervisor Alcorn. Thank you. And finally, an announcement, Bazin's on Church is a restaurant in the town of Vienna, and it is closing. Sad to report that the last date for the restaurant will be April 27th, which is also the date of the Taste of Vienna.

[02:04:19] So I know many of you have eaten there or are familiar with it. owners julie and patrick basin they've sold the restaurant to new owners uh and they plan on traveling spending time with family and embracing new adventures uh according to their message to customers so you know it's a highly touted uh really uh wonderfully uh well what a great asset for the community we're sad to see it go uh and i wish the basins well into the future there is a new restaurant that's coming in there and i've just learned it's going to be called evelyn rose and they are going to be participating in the Taste of Vienna also on April 27th.

[02:04:57] And so you can try out the new restaurant that's going in. But anyway, those are the happenings in Hunter Mill on the restaurant scene. So thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We welcome the new restaurant and thankfully we don't have to vote on the closure of the institution.

[02:05:15] So thank you for making us aware of that. Next up, we have Supervisor Jimenez. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I won't go into that much detail, but I do have two board announcements and one quick announcement, two board matters.

[02:05:32] The first is a joint board matter with you, Mr. Chairman. Proclamation request recognizing May 17th as the 65th annual anniversary of the Northern Virginia Alumni Chapter of the Delta Sigma

Theta Sorority. Mr. Chairman, on May 17th, the ladies of the Northern Virginia Alumni Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority will recognize their 65th anniversary.

[02:05:56] Delta Sigma Theta was incorporated at the Howard University in 1913. The 251st Alumni Chapter was founded in 1959 and was initially called the Alexandria Alumni Chapter, but members changed its name in 1977 to the more inclusive Northern Virginia Alumni Chapter, or NOVAC.

[02:06:19] Since then, NOVAC serves as a beacon and trailblazer for Fairfax and Arlington counties, as well as the cities of Alexandria's Falls Church in Fairfax. NOVAC's history includes decades of building alliances and forging partnerships with area public schools, nonprofits, businesses, and churches to provide quality community.

[02:06:42] The chapter awarded nearly a half million dollars in scholarships and regularly participates in regional public service opportunities. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I ask without objection that the Office of Public Affairs prepare a proclamation recognizing the 65th anniversary of the Northern Virginia Alumni Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta sorority to be presented outside of the boardroom.

[02:07:07] And without objection, that is so ordered. Supervisor Jimenez. Mr. Chairman, my last board matter for today, I have a resolution request to recognize Flory Jagoda for her impact on the region's musical heritage. Mr. Chairman, Flory Jagoda was a long-time and beloved member of the Mason District with an incredible life story.

[02:07:30] Born in Bosnia during World War II, Mrs. Jagoda lived 97 years, the majority of which were spent with her family in Alexandria and Lake Barcroft. The Mason District community will likely remember Flory for her musical talents. Mrs. Jogoda was an accomplished singer and performer who was the proud recipient of many awards, including the U.S. Immigrant Achievement Award, as well as recognitions from the National Endowment for the Arts and Virginia's Foundation for the Humanities.

[02:08:02] In addition to her musical talents, Mrs. Jogoda was a gifted and compelling storyteller. Her songs are filled with recollections of her countless harrowing experiences, such as when she narrowly avoided capture while fleeing the Nazi through Yugoslavia as a teenage girl.

[02:08:19] Ms. Jagoda is best known for her composition and interpretation of Sephardic songs, Ladino songs, and Bosnian folk ballads. This work is considered crucial in the revival of the Sephardic-style music. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I ask without objection that the Office of Public Affairs prepare a resolution recognizing the tremendous impacts of Ms. Jagoda's work on the musical heritage in Fairfax County.

[02:08:47] This resolution will be presented outside the boardroom. And without objection, that is so ordered. Supervisor Jimenez. And Mr. Chairman, my quick announcement. I am really excited about this one. May 4th, we have Colmore Community Day coming up. I'm hoping to see so many folks from the community as well as anyone obviously is welcome to come from throughout Fairfax and the DMV area.

[02:09:11] We will be joining the Park Authority for Colmore Day at the Woodrow Wilson Library in Falls Church, where we will be celebrating the richness of culture and community in the Mason District and really showing off, Mr. Chairman, why we really are the cultural hub of Fairfax County. I welcome you all to join us for a few hours of fun activities.

[02:09:30] It is free admission. We are excited about having face painting, petting of animals, live music, and a celebration of culture. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much. Always a great event with a huge turnout. So definitely something to be expected every year.

[02:09:48] So well said. With that, next up is Supervisor Stork. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My first item is a Military Spouse Appreciation Week, and it's jointly with yourself, Supervisor Herity, as well as Supervisor Lusk.

[02:10:06] The freedoms that we as Americans enjoy can only be made possible by the efforts of more than 2 million men and women who serve our nation as active duty service members of the armed forces. In Fairfax County, Fort Belvoir is home to approximately 4,420 active duty service members and 2,246 military spouses.

[02:10:26] Proudly, Fairfax County is also home to approximately 80,000 military veterans and their spouses. Military Spouse Appreciation Day is set aside for us to pause and recognize military spouses who have made the greatest impact on service members lives through their support and commitment to service the average military spouse moves 8 to 12 times in the span of a 20-year military career which often results in starting over in new location dealing with the struggles of meeting new people and feeling a sense of community where they live military spouse appreciation day is recognized nationally on may 10th this year also on may 8th we are co-hosting our fourth

[02:11:03] veteran and military spouses career fair with the fairfax county economic development authority the national army museum as well as virtually on may 9th therefore mr chairman in honor of our supportive and heroic military spouses including those residing here in fairfax county we move without objection the board recognized may 6 through 10 2024 as military spouse appreciation week we also move without objection that a proclamation be signed by the sponsor of this board matter to be presented to the army community services at the veteran and military spouse career fair. The board also directs the Office of Public Affairs to advertise and promote the 2024 Hire

[02:11:41] Vets Now Networking and Hiring Fairs. And without objection, that is so ordered. Thank you, Supervisor Storff. And this is a flyer that will be coming out that people can see, and hopefully they'll have a chance to take a look at it as well. The next item is also a joint board matter.

[02:12:01] This is a joint board matter with, again, yourself, Supervisors, Walkinshaw, Smith, Herity, Palachick, Alcorn, Lusk, Bierman, and Jimenez. Drinking Water Week, observed annually during the first week of May, serves as a crucial reminder of the indispensable role safe drinking water plays in our lives. As residents of Fairfax County, it's easy to take for granted the clean water that flows from our taps. Yet behind this convenience, Fairfax Water has a complex system of treatment plants, pipelines, and regulations set in place to ensure the safety and quality of

[02:12:36] our drinking water. During Drinking Water Week is sponsored by the American Water Works Association and encourages us to reflect on the importance of water safety and to appreciate the dedicated efforts of water professionals who work tirelessly to maintain our water supply infrastructure. While Fairfax Water provides 2 million residents with water of exceptional quality at a reasonable price, many areas across our country and the world still struggle daily to find clean drinking water. Drinking Water Week raises awareness about the potential risk posed by polluted drinking water and the need for vigilance and monitoring water quality. By staying informed

[02:13:14] and engaged, we can all contribute to preserving the health and well-being of our community. As we commemorate Drinking Water Week, let us take a moment to recognize the significance of this precious resource and commit to safeguarding it for future generations. Whether it's through simple actions like conserving water or advocating for stronger environmental protections, each of us has a role to play in ensuring that clean, safe drinking water remains accessible to all.

[02:13:38] Therefore, Mr. Chairman, in honor of the great work by Fairfax Water to keep our tap water clean and drinkable for everyone in Fairfax County, we move without objection that the board recognize and declare May 5th through 11th, 2024, as drinking water. And without objection, that is so ordered, Supervisor Stork.

[02:13:57] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My third item is something very special and in some cases smelly, and I apologize for some of that because it is noticeable. Mount Vernon District Office and the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services are hosting a garden tour, an open house to celebrate our native gardens and biosquales on Saturday, May 4th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Mount Vernon Governmental Center.

[02:14:25] We invite all to come, stroll through our beautiful native perennial gardens, Explore native plant gardening and maintenance approaches, learn about natural landscaping grant opportunities, and connect with local native plant organizations. When I first took office, I noticed the barren, unattractive, and uninviting lawn that surrounded the governmental center.

[02:14:45] And it truly was. And reached out and worked with our local flora and fauna advocates to change it. In 2018, Kathy Ledeck, our former chair of the Fairfax County Tree Commission, led the conversion of the ground's minimal gardens to native plants and added new gardens to attract wildlife and beautify the center for the public.

[02:15:05] This work was supported by Earth Thangha, Audubon at Home, the Boy Scouts, Fairfax Master Naturalists, the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District, and others in the community. Due to the extensive amount of impervious surface on site and the need for improved stormwater management, the Stormwater Planning Division expanded these gardens with additional native perennials, shrubs, and trees in 2022.

[02:15:27] In addition to the ornamental gardens at the building's entrances, the stormwater planning department also retrofitted several bioretention facilities around the governmental center to increase stormwater retention. This includes enhanced wetland detention ponds planted with native plants.

[02:15:44] The garden highlights the aesthetic, habitat, and functional value of natural landscaping. Team MBD in particular, and we do, enjoys looking out our windows at perennial specifically chosen for year-round blooming that also provide inviting public spaces for residents to enjoy.

[02:16:02] Right now, the golden ragwort is in full bloom, attracting native bees and butterflies with birds flitting around and nesting in our bird boxes. Creating native gardens to support our native birds and insects is an important environmental initiative as we continue to see loss of habitat leading to decline of these fundamental species in our ecosystem. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I ask with unanimous consent that the Board of Supervisors direct the Office of Public Affairs to promote the Mount Vernon Governmental Center Native Garden and tour an open house through its various communication channels. And I did bring this

[02:16:35] gorgeous flower arrangement, but I also know, as I'm noticing myself, that it does emit a little bit of uh things that can irritate our but it is it is truly gorgeous yes so i apologize for subjecting my seatmate and others to this but but it is a gorgeous view out my window i am i just can't tell you how beautiful it is you could see a few pictures of that and and the insects and birds and i mean all the stuff that you get to watch during the day so again thank you colleagues really uh nice supervisor stork and for folks who haven't seen it it's worth going by and seeing as something that can be accomplished elsewhere.

[02:17:15] And it's one of the many things, as you mentioned, you know, Kathy Ledeck kind of led the charge to get this done. And without her marching forward, as we know, it wouldn't happen. But, you know, this is something that, you know, hopefully we can replicate at other county facilities because it's a good model.

[02:17:32] And marching forward, maybe, is a great way to describe Kathy Ledeck. That's right. Anybody who knows her. And I have my final item that I have just one mentioned is during 2020, 2022, 2023, county SPA process last year, we received a site-specific plan amendment nomination, CPN 22-MV-008, for a consolidation of properties at the intersection of Ox Road and Hose Road.

[02:17:57] At that time, the nominator requested an increase in recommended residential density on site from 0.2 to 0.5 dwelling units per acre to five to eight dwelling units per acre, yielding up to 70 townhomes. Needless to say, the community was not supportive, and this then has gone round and round.

[02:18:14] And then, Mr. Chairman, I'll just read, Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I move that the Board of Supervisors direct staff initiate a comprehensive plan amendment to consider detached residential use on tax map partials 106-4, double circle 1, 17, 18, 19, then part of 27 and 27a with specific considerations for tree preservation and buffering from ox road watershed and noise impacts multimodal connectivity and open spaces and parks this item would be a tier two review item to be reviewed in coordination with a concurrent development application this

[02:18:51] motion should not be construed as a favorable recommendation on future applications by the board and does not relieve any applicant from compliance with the provisions of any applicable ordinances, regulations, or adaptive standards. This action in no way prejudices the substantial substantive review of future applications. And so moved. Second. Been moved and seconded. Before I do discussion, let me just verify one thing. Supervisor Stork, you said 17, 18, 19, and part of 27 and 27A. I think it's part of 19. The way I'm reading the commas, I just want to make sure

[02:19:26] We have that right. So is it part of 19 and all of 27? Yes, sir. Okay I just want to verify that for the record. Okay, and I just to mention I do have it'll coming next week I'll be taking an item off of the tier plan as well And and Tracy's chunk is here if anybody wants to ask her further about it But I just I know there's a balance in the universe and we need to make sure the balance is here I didn't bring it here because I think would have added to confusion of what i was trying to do here but you will see it as a board matter at our next board

[02:20:00] meeting okay supervisor stork uh supervisor smith um i i appreciate those comments from supervisor stork because you know that i would like to ask tracy strunk about workload and how we're managing that as i have done when any of these have come forward thank you certainly tracy strunk uh director of the department of planning and development um yeah we have a work program that we approved with the SSPA process a few years ago now I believe and while it is not an exact science we do try

and preserve staff resources for some of the items that are on our tier one so we appreciate working with the Supervisor

[02:20:38] Stork's office to look when we are looking at adding as we have done with many of you when we're looking at adding an item on there to make sure that we're we're not holding resources for work that isn't going to be coming for a while and then that might free up some from space some space for other other things but our goal for all of you of course is to is to hold hold questions when we can into the next cycle but we'll certainly if there's one that we need to look at we'll work with you then and we appreciate that thank you okay thank you Ms. Strunk any other questions yes Supervisor Alcorn just very

[02:21:12] quickly I want to compliment BPD and Tracy and her team because we're in a similar situation in Hunter Mill where you know we do have some SSPA nominators that are not in tier one we're not very happy about it but the reality is you can't do all these things all at one time just the bandwidth is just not there so thanks everybody for their patience and understanding and thank you DPD okay the motion has been moved and seconded all those in favor please say aye aye any opposed any abstentions that motion carries

[02:21:48] supervisor stork and just wanted to really add on to supervisor less comment and really his my thanks to him in the initial board matter that got us to what I think was an amazing event the accelerate investor breakfast I think was incredibly successful I know that the county executive the deputy county executive a particular Rebecca moderate her staff were essential part of that but also George Mason. I mean, it was just, I thought, exactly what we were hoping to achieve in our first one, and I think we can only grow from that. But again, it was well done and well

[02:22:23] said, and I'm excited for the next one. So thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Stork. Supervisor Palczyk. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since I'm near the end, I'm going to keep us on our toes and start with my verbal board matters. First of all, just want to point out that we love celebrating Earth month here in Fairfax County especially in Providence District first of all thanks this year to the incredible work of NADA at the Kingsley Commons computer Learning Center and the support of NCS we had just a fabulous except for the wind everything else was fabulous Earth Day event at Kingsley Commons on

[02:23:00] Saturday so many partners but they included La Comunidad landmowers rear field garden center the libraries the parks um oec the potomac farm market seva truck really there were so many um and huge turnout from the community and a lot of excitement um and next year we'll have the same mine is the wind um mr chairman i'll put you in charge of that one um and then uh we are so excited for the next event i know the county has their official one on the 20th but we've got one with supervisor alcorn and we can send the flyer if it hasn't

[02:23:38] been received yet earth day and tyson's 173rd birthday um monday april 22nd uh the official date of tyson's has been declared april 22nd 1851 um so we are excited to have a partnership uh between our two offices uh covering tyson's starting with events at 10 a.m um at the uh doing a nature walk with with our wonderful park authority uh ecologists we already have lots of people signed up it's great for all ages we've done it with the senior center before

[02:24:16] highly recommend that 9 30 to 10 30 followed by the tyson's forest cleanup so i know mr alcorn That will be in his part of Tyson's. And 1.30 to 3.30, this is in partnership with Celebrate Fairfax, a beautification of the park at Tyson's.

[02:24:32] So I know some of you may have to be at work or school, but if you're able to run out and join us, I'll be there for the early part, then getting ready for Passover. So I'm very excited for this event and the great partnerships that keep growing our support in the community for Earth Month.

[02:24:49] And then one other quick one, the Tyson's Community Alliance is doing their second annual Pedal with Pedals on May 11th from 8 to 11 a.m. Additional information, definitely bike contests and very, very short distances for kids and adults of all ages leaving from the mall and more information at the Tyson's Community Alliance website.

[02:25:13] So those are the two fun ones. now for the serious ones. The first joint board matter with Chairman McKay. These were a little bit last minute being finalized, so they're just with Chairman McKay, but I know others may be interested and want to join in unofficially on these. The first one is requested to designate June 2024 as Fatherhood Awareness Month. Members of the board, this year Father's Day falls on Sunday, June 16th. Although celebrated annually, this holiday is often a missed opportunity to emphasize and underscore the chance to highlight the significant role of biological fathers,

[02:25:49] stepfathers, adoptive fathers, or father figures in nurturing the well-being and success of our children. A father's influence continues to be important throughout a child's lifetime, and we're very excited to join with public and private sectors to raise public awareness and celebrate the supportive roles of fathers and father figures for all of our children.

[02:26:12] There are many programs, such as Healthy Families Fairfax and the Head Start Policy Council, Department of Family Services, Father Engagement and Family Engagement Program, and in collaboration with our wonderful Neighborhood Community Services and County Human Services Agency.

[02:26:28] So thanking all of them for their work on this and leading it. I move, I think without objection, that the Board of Supervisors designate June 2024 as Fatherhood Awareness Month in Fairfax County and ask that the Office of Public Affairs prepare a proclamation to be presented outside the boardroom at an event on June 22, 2024.

[02:26:50] There will be more details soon and hope that you can all join us for that event. Thank you, Supervisor Pouchek, without objection, that is so ordered. And I do want to comment on Sunday. I had an opportunity to speak at the Bernie Bates Foundation Awards at George Mason University, which is a partnership with Omega Sci-Fi Fraternity.

[02:27:13] And there were a lot of fathers there for obvious reasons, supporting and awarding a lot of folks in our community recognition for the work that they do in our community. And it was just great to see that number of fathers and the community work that's being done.

[02:27:32] If you haven't seen it, you can go to the Bernie Bates Foundation website and see all of the award winners this year these were specific award winners in Fairfax County alone who have contributed in the nonprofit world to programs for people throughout our community but a lot of specific emphasis on youth and mentorship and so I just wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to also raise awareness of that group and the great work that they're doing throughout Fairfax County especially relative to Fatherhood Awareness Month Supervisor Palachuk and I love that and I don't think he's a

[02:28:10] father yet but I saw that Anthony from Supervisor Heritage office was awarded for all his wonderful work so congrats I know our staff do so much in public service through our offices but also so

many are involved in the community and inspire members of our community so very exciting to see that and then finally another joint board matter with chairman mckay taking the baton from supervisor gross on holocaust remembrance day members of the board the united states holocaust memorial council designates days of remembrance each year to recall and reflect on the horrible crimes committed during

[02:28:48] the holocaust and to ensure that the memory and legacy of lives lost will not be forgotten we have a responsibility to remember and recognize this dark chapter of world history so that we do not repeat the tragic mistakes of the past. Therefore, I ask without objection that the Board of Supervisors proclaim Monday, May 6, 2024 as Holocaust Remembrance Day in Fairfax County and that the Office of Public Affairs prepare a proclamation to be presented at an event outside the boardroom in collaboration with the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington.

[02:29:25] And I want to add that we do have a proclamation for you here as well to read on that day as it will be outside of the boardroom. And we will share that. There is more information, but there will be a virtual event in honor of room hochoa commemoration this year.

[02:29:42] And without objection, it is so ordered and often with the many people we think about this time of year, think of Michelle Margosis who led the charge to get this board to recognize Holocaust Memorial Day Remembrance Day as a Holocaust survivor who lived in Green Spring for a long time but really was a legacy individual in our community that we lost a few years ago but this was brought to the board's attention to do this annually largely due to his efforts and we just think about him

[02:30:17] today but but most importantly on Monday May 6 so thank you Supervisor Palchuk I think this year as we know many of our friends and family who are survivors there are less and less of them and so we are working to try to have the presentation actually be to a group of survivors and I know many we had a close family friend who was in the resistance and when she passed, wrote a wonderful letter that was published in a local paper and so we will let you know definitely as we have more of those details but we're trying to make that social

[02:30:57] for the survivors who are still with us here today. That is great. Thank you, Supervisor Palczyk. Supervisor Herity. Yes, Mr. Chairman, I've got two written board matters and two unwritten board matters, so I'm going to try to follow your guidance and shorten the first one because I think the first one's advertising drug take-back day and fentanyl awareness day in Fairfax County I know we're all familiar with with fentanyl and its dangers and the deaths it's causing all over America and in our community and that they're putting it everything and only a little bit will kill so I'm going to skip the the facts and figures and go to the work of the

[02:31:33] Fairfax County opioid and substance use task force and the Fairfax County Falls Church Community Service Board is instrumental in providing resources and training to combat this crisis in our community initiatives like drug take back day and National Fentanyl Awareness Day are designed to bring together individuals parents teachers corporations community groups government entities to make our community safer by raising awareness and offering offering an opportunity for community members to properly discard excess medications on April 27th from 10:00 to 2:00 the Fairfax County Police Department

[02:32:08] in conjunction with DEA, the CSB, and our public school system will give residents another opportunity to prevent pill abuse and theft by ruining their homes with potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs. I'm going to skip to the motion now.

[02:32:26] Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I ask without objection, we direct the Office of Public Affairs to continue to work with FCPD to advertise this upcoming National Drug Take-Back Day, including locations and hours. In my second motion, I noticed that you had included Fentanyl Awareness Day in your proclamation list.

[02:32:47] I'd love to be added to that. That's May 7th as Fentanyl Awareness Day to encourage residents to educate themselves and their loved ones on the dangers of fentanyl. I was going to ask the proclamation to be presented outside the boardroom to aphrodita and sean foster for their work with fairfax county schools raising awareness on the dangers of fentanyl after the death of their uh their centerville high school son yeah and uh supervisor harry i know we worked with ellen um volo on our county staff on it so we'll coordinate both we we may be able to just do both of them but we'll coordinate with your office on that

[02:33:27] all right sounds good so okay without objection the uh first the first part of that and the the acknowledgement that we'll work together on the second one without objection that is so ordered. Supervisor Harrity. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The next one is National Child Care Provider Day, National Provider Appreciation Day, known as National Child Care Provider Day, started in 1996 by a group of volunteers in New Jersey, and I'm going to just drop down to Fairfax County Department of Public Services. Office of Children offers nearly 2,000 high-quality early childhood and school-age development and learning care programs serving thousands of

[02:34:06] children and supporting parents from birth through elementary school. Beyond that, organizations like infant-toddler family daycare support over 60 family child care providers and impact more than 200 children annually. Infant-toddler daycare and similar organizations focus on assisting and training in-home providers, making day-to-day organizations more manageable.

[02:34:33] And having these child care providers is just so important to our residents to be able to basically work. And affordable child care, as we all know, is a challenge. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I ask without objection that the board designate May 10th, 2024, as National Child Care Provider Day, to recognize the service of our many dedicated child care providers, staff prepare a proclamation recognizing National Child Care Provider Day to be presented to Lisa O'Brien executive director of the infant toddler daycare

[02:35:08] program outside of the boardroom in May and without objection that is so ordered Supervisor Paljig no thank you for bringing this Supervisor Herity I just was hoping we could include as a friendly amendment that it include neighborhood and community services and their sack program as well as you know other many providers um sure that will might change how we were gonna present it but we'll we'll figure that out thank you for doing this thank you okay and I know the boards aware we talked about this last time for all of us just to

[02:35:46] make sure and the ones that are out of the boardroom that we make sure that county staff is aware to add it to the public meetings calendar and that we circulate the information to our colleagues about where and when the presentations will occur in case anyone else wants to attend and I know that's obviously for all of us and just want to make sure we reiterate that because it's important that you don't want to end up with a public meeting in the category of no good deed goes unpunished you end up at a public meeting notice predicament and so we want to avoid that supervisor heritage yeah and I did try to get that in the boardroom but we were booked otherwise that would have been

[02:36:22] easier the next one you know it's it's very rare you get to see something up close and personal but on March 27th our office received the heartbreaking news that a shooting had taken place less than a block from our office at the West Springfield Kinder Care facility fortunately the two victims in that were non-life-threatening and they are recovering but it was a rare opportunity to see the great work of our police department what they do it day in and day out up close and personal as our conference room was used as the reunification center and one of my staff was called in to help with

[02:36:59] translation from the patrol officers to the detectives to the command staff to the fugitive app fugitive apprehension unit to victim services it was abundantly clear what an outstanding department we have I'd I'd also like to recognize the great work of the kinder care staff during that whole whole crisis and emergency fortunately most of the children did not even know what had transpired in victim services had the kids so entertained in the conference room that they didn't want to leave when they're they're very upset parents arrived but seeing the outstanding performance displayed by all the

[02:37:36] personnel in this emergency up close and personal was a unique experience but the reality is that's what they do day in and day out but I just wanted to share it was it was truly amazing and a credit to our department last one a little more light-hearted just want to announce the six year of free concerts in the park series at Birk Lake Park.

[02:37:58] We're going to partner with parks and local businesses to offer nine free concerts at Birk Lake Park at 7 p.m. every Wednesday night from June 26th through August 21st. Got an incredible lineup of bands, including regulars like the Road Ducks, Skip Castro, Randy Thompson Band, and others, as well as more recent additions of fan favorites like Magic Trio and Riptide.

[02:38:22] So looking forward to, looking way forward to the summer. I guess we still got two months. Yeah, that's right. And that's it, Mr. Chairman. And I know OPA, Park Authority, my office always coordinates to all the summer concert series that are offered throughout the county and every one of our districts, including movies.

[02:38:41] And so we'll make sure that OPA continues to publicize those opportunities in the community. Thank you, Supervisor Herity. With that, we are going to move on to county executives' items. and we have administrative items number 1 through 12 Supervisor Smith do we have a motion yes I move approval approval of admin items 1 through 12 I'm happy to second that along with Supervisor Palchuk before we vote let me ask if board members would like to pull any of those admin items either

[02:39:12] for questions or to vote on separately I do have a question on admin 12 is it 12 11 11 it's admin 11 and let me see here yes admin 11 and admin 11 is authorization advertised public hearing to consider an ordinance amending article 9 of chapter 82 of the Fairfax County Code relating to right-of-way afforded to pedestrians

[02:39:48] and my question is I know that this is new and that we will be posting signage to make sure that folks are aware that this is new. And I guess my question is, is an enforcement one that the cost estimates in here are $95,000, which would allow for 680 signs, I guess is what I'm hearing, what I'm reading from this.

[02:40:18] And I'm just wondering, the absence of a sign does not demonstrate the absence of an enforcement opportunity. In other words, we have picked some intersections here, but not all

intersections. But we know these rights afforded to pedestrians exist at intersections that will not be marked and not be signed.

[02:40:38] And so my question is, are we still able to enforce those that are not marked and not signed? Good morning, members of the board. My name is Greg Steverson. I'm the acting director of the Fairfax County Department of Transportation. So the changing out, what it really is, is the changing out of the signs that allow for additional fines for folks that do not, right now, do not yield to pedestrians.

[02:41:06] But those signs will then become stopped for pedestrians. And so it's more about the additional fine. The police will be able to, regardless of that sign, will still be able to enforce a situation of not stopping for pedestrians. It's just that additional fine would not be able to be levied unless those signs are present.

[02:41:26] So only the intersections where the signs are present will the higher fine be able to be levied. And remind us again how the methodology we use to determine the intersections that would get the reposted signs. So it's basically locations that are non-traffic controlled.

[02:41:45] And so because the legislation basically says stop for pedestrians in basically what amounts to either unmarked crosswalks or un-traffic controlled crossings, that's where we'd be changing them.

[02:42:01] At locations that are signalized, the law still says yielding to pedestrians. So that's the difference in which ones we change out and which ones we leave. Okay. But we are not covering every intersection. So we still have a targeted number. And so how will the board in the future, what criteria will be used to potentially add intersections as we move forward, especially, you know, intersections where we might have a history or recent incidents that have occurred?

[02:42:29] How will we manage that moving forward? Will that be intersection by intersection? Will the staff come forward with recommended additional intersections periodically? Will the police looking at data make recommendations for additional intersections?

[02:42:46] And do each one of those then moving forward have to be approved by this board? Each of the additional fine signs have to be approved by the board. There's actually going to be another board item that's going to come later on that's going to ask for authorization and it'll tell you the locations of the 680 locations.

[02:43:04] And so in the future, if there are locations, yes, all of the above, whether it's something that you bring to us, whether it's something we notice, whether it's something the police notice, it's going to be that process, and we'll bring them to the board if we want to put up those signs with the additional fines. Okay. I do think this is authorization to advertise a public hearing, so we're going to have a public hearing, opportunities for more questions for the public to weigh in, but I do think that in advance of that, we should be thinking about how we get this information out to the public. What this means is going to be complicated for people to understand this and I'm sure complicated for our police to do enforcement this is a good

[02:43:43] thing it's an additional tool in our toolbox to help prevent pedestrian fatalities and raise awareness about pedestrian laws but at the same time it's going to be a hard one to communicate so we might want to be thinking about you know working with mr. Castrilli's office and public affairs on should this item be approved how we spread the word and communicate this to the public because it's it's a little more nuanced than probably we would have done it if we were doing it alone but this is of course

something that we're allowed to do now under new state law supervisor walkinshaw thank you mr chairman i was going to save this for the public hearing but i do

[02:44:21] just want to thank our legislative staff on this board members who are paying very close attention over the last four years will recall that this is one of those issues that we where we thought we had this authority probably in 2020, perhaps 2021, and there was actually a discrepancy between what the General Assembly felt they had done and what VDOT felt the General Assembly had done.

[02:44:45] We had many, many meetings with now retired Delegate Kay Corey and others since to try to get this issue resolved, as the chairman pointed out. It is one of those things that is more complicated than it sounds when you start to actually dig into it. But excited to see us moving forward here. Thank you, Supervisor Walkinshaw. Any other questions on Admin 12? Supervisor Palachuk. Thank you, Mr. Sorry, I'm about to sneeze from the beautiful flowers. The another question that I hope gets addressed in the confusion piece of it is understanding how this may or may not impact or what is currently allowable of I know people see

[02:45:25] in other jurisdictions and in some private properties the tall yellows state laws stop for pedestrians or yield for pedestrian signs I think that's a big one we get asked about especially in activity centers so whether it's today or as we prepare for the public hearing I think it would be really important to know what other authorities are now exist to us and to maybe private citizens and retail owners sure and from that perspective the yellow signs as you call them that have right now in some areas yield to pedestrians still the sort of the same structure unsignalized or

[02:46:02] uncontrolled crosswalks if there's a sign there those are vdot signs however but vdot can change those out or we can you know obviously pay to have those changed out to stop for pedestrians but what we're sort of referring to in this item and in the future item is really about the signs they're kind of white signs sort of on the side of the road that say you know yield to pedestrians fine $100 to $500 so it's those signs that we're really focused on here but that doesn't preclude the ability to make the changes to those other signs as well just to be super clear regardless of whether or not the sign is present if

[02:46:42] the law says stop for pedestrians you have to stop for pedestrians really what we're focusing on here is that additional fine if we want to levy that additional fine in a certain location. And clearly, because it's so confusing, we definitely need a public information campaign. I also, because he was very humble about this, really want to thank Supervisor Walkinshaw. I know he had to hold a lot of meetings and bring in agencies, and wrangle maybe is too hard, but has shown patience and the ability to help move this forward, which I know is no easy feat, so thank you on that. Next up is vehicle exhaust systems for Supervisor Walkinshaw.

[02:47:22] All right, other questions on Admin 12? Yes, Supervisor Alcorn. Yeah, just quickly, and if I could ask, and I know this will be the case, but I definitely would want to hear from our police department in terms of their enforcement strategy relating to these signs, you know, not just on violations, but including how this could change their enforcement discretion after somebody's been struck in a crosswalk.

[02:47:51] Because certainly my office has received questions about those situations as well. So thank you. Look forward to that public hearing. Good point. Okay. Any other discussion on admin 12? And there were no other items that folks had questions on. Therefore, it's been moved and seconded approval of admin items 1 through 12.

[02:48:10] All those in favor, please say aye. Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? And that motion carries. And that brings us to action items. And we have three. Action item number one is approval of a parking adjustment for Fair Hills on the Boulevard 8621 Route 29 in the Providence District.

[02:48:31] Supervisor Palchuk. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do want to move approval and just give a little bit of, tiny bit of background. This is part of a larger sort of redevelopment project that will both allow the opportunity to reinvest and revitalize a property in Merrifield that has long languished.

[02:48:53] It's been a long time of work with DPD and our department and the applicant to figure out how to both minimize any impact on resource protection, to remove existing impact on the resource protection area and to work collaboratively in this, you know, bus transit and growing vibrant community to be able to help support and enhance the placemaking and the successful restaurant and other operations here.

[02:49:27] So you will see more on this one. This is one tiny step, reducing some of the parking requirement, working with VDOT that has already approved additional parking on what was sort of an access road so that this can continue to be a project.

[02:49:43] And I know a long time, both Mike and Devin in my office, DPD, FCDOT, VDOT, so many others who've been part of this, want to thank them, even the chairman's office, for their work on this project, and you'll see more. But this is one key component to moving that forward.

[02:50:01] Did you make a motion? Yes, I move the county executive's recommendation. And I'm happy to second that. Any further discussion on action item number one? Seeing and hearing none. All those in favor, please say aye. Aye.

[02:50:17] Any opposed? Any abstentions? That motion carries. Action item number two is authorization for the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority to one, issue tax-exempt multifamily housing revenue bonds or notes in an amount not to exceed $13,350,000 to finance the 74-unit Phase I, four portion of the proposed residences at the Government Center II development, and two, to issue tax-exempt multifamily housing revenue bonds or notes in an amount not to exceed $14,500,000 to finance the 69-unit Phase II, four portion of the

[02:50:57] proposed residences at the government center to development in the Braddock District. Supervisor Walkinshaw. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just here to answer what we're approving here is purely for the RHA to be a conduit provider for this money. The responsibility for payment of these funds is solely on the project itself and the developer, not on Fairfax County, not on the Housing Authority, and their non-recourse to the Housing Authority. Also note, I think I said this on the last action related to

[02:51:33] this project, the per unit cost to Fairfax County for the 279 units plus the child care plus all the environmental and pedestrian improvements to our own complex is $91,000, $91,000 per unit.

[02:51:50] With that, Mr. Chairman, I move the county executive's recommendation on action item number two. I'm happy to second that along with our housing chair, Supervisor Palachuk. Discussion on the motion? Any discussion on the motion? Seeing and hearing none, all those in favor of action two, please say aye. Aye. Any opposed? Parity, nay. Any abstentions? And that motion carries nine to one. Action item number three is resolution to support the abandonment, additions, discontinuance, and transfer of various roads associated with the Ox Road, Route 123, Realignment in the Springfield District, Supervisor Herity.

[02:52:29] Yes, Mr. Chairman, move approval of the county executive's recommendation. You've heard the motion. It's been seconded by Supervisor Smith. Any discussion on the motion? Discussion on the motion? Seeing and hearing none. All those in favor of the motion, please say aye.

[02:52:45] Aye. Anyone opposed? Any abstentions? That motion carries. And before I turn to Supervisor Smith for a motion for closed session, let me just verify that no one has any public hearing deferrals to announce, correct?

[02:53:01] Didn't hear any? Okay. Let me ask Ms. Tear how long we need for closed session. I think we have a long one. Mr. Chairman, I estimate approximately two hours. Two hours. So that puts us at 1 o'clock.

[02:53:18] Yes, so almost no time here. So should this motion be approved, grab lunch quickly, and we are going to meet back into closed session at exactly 1 o'clock. It is important we do that today because, as you can see, there are a number of public hearings before we begin budget public hearings.

[02:53:38] It could be a late night. So let's all be really respectful here of the schedule and make sure that you are in closed session meeting room no later than 1 o'clock. Supervisor Smith. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[02:53:55] I move that the Board of Supervisors recess and go into closed session for discussion and consideration of matters enumerated in Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 and listed in the attached agenda for this meeting. And in addition, as permitted by Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711A3, potential acquisition of real property in the Hunter Mill District for a public purpose, where open discussion would adversely affect bargaining position or negotiating strategy.

[02:54:24] As permitted by Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711A7 and 8, legal analysis regarding the following, Shang v. Board of Supervisors Circuit Court Case Number CL-2023-8569, Miller v. Board of Supervisors Fairfax County Circuit Court Case Number CL-2021-6071, and HB 816 and SB 244 from the 2024 General Assembly Session.

[02:54:57] As permitted by Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711A19, discussion of plans to protect public safety, including sensitive information relating to police department surveillance techniques and personnel and technology deployments. As permitted by Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711A1, appointments to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

[02:55:19] You've heard the motion. I'm happy to second that, along with Supervisor Palchuk. Any discussion on the motion? Any discussion on the motion? Seeing and hearing none, all those in favor of the motion, please say aye. Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? We are going to quickly shuffle, grab lunch, and reconvene at 1 o'clock for closed session.

[03:15:36] Kathy?

[03:17:50] I'm just ready to something I've heard there. The board has just completed closed session. I'll call this part of the meeting to order and recognize Supervisor Smith for a motion.

[03:18:06] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the Board of Supervisors certify that to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements by virtue of Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711, and only such public business matters as were

identified in the motion by which closed session was convened, were heard, discussed, or considered by the Board of Supervisors during the closed session.

[03:18:30] Second. We've heard the motion. The chair seconds that along with Supervisor Palchuk. Any discussion on the motion? Discussion on the motion? Seeing and hearing none. All those in favor of the motion, please say aye. Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? That motion carries. Motions coming out of closed session. Let me first recognize Supervisor Alcorn.

[03:18:50] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the Board of Supervisors deny the settlement demand of Allie Elsher according to the terms and conditions outlined by the county attorney in closed session. You've heard the motion. It's been seconded by Supervisor Herity. Any discussion on the motion? Seeing and hearing none. All those in favor of the motion, please say aye.

[03:19:09] Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? That motion carries. Other motions coming out of closed session? Supervisor Smith. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Board is aware, Fairfax County Board of Zoning Appeals members serve a term of five years. Two terms are expiring on February 20, 2024, and June 13, 2024.

[03:19:31] as part of the board's ongoing efforts to open all of the county's board's authorities and commissions up to the public and foster diverse representation on these bacs in accordance with the board's one fairfax policy these openings have been widely advertised so that other county residents can have an equitable opportunity to serve on the bza with all of this in mind i will now make my motion i move that the board of supervisors concur in the appointment of claire Marie McDade to the Fairfax County Board of Zoning Appeals to fill the seat that became vacant on February 20, 2024. I further move that the Board of Supervisors concur in the appointment of

[03:20:08] Attorney Tristan Osavio to the Board of Zoning Appeals effective June 13, 2024. You've heard the motion. It's been seconded by Supervisor Palczyk. Any discussion on the motion? Let me just disclose one thing that what we are doing here is recommending these individuals to the circuit court but that ultimately members of the bza are appointed by the court system not not directly by this board so i just want to make sure folks understand why we're concurring in the appointment as opposed to moving the appointment any further discussion supervisor harry i'm going to be voting against the motion i feel like we're losing a lot of inexperienced voice on the board with

[03:20:47] that recommendation so i will not be supporting the motion okay any other discussion on the motion Seeing and hearing none, all those in favor of the motion, please say aye. Aye. Any opposed? Parity, nay. Any abstentions? Abstain. And that motion carries 8 to 1 to 1.

[03:21:03] Are there any other motions coming out of closed session? Seeing and hearing none, we will now move on to public hearings. Just as a reminder, individuals wishing to provide testimony have a number of options. They can testify here in person or they can provide testimony by telephone or by YouTube video.

[03:21:23] At the designated point in the public hearing, I'll call for any speakers from the speaker's list, and they will either come forward or their video will be shown, or they will be connected by telephone. There will then be an opportunity for anyone else present who would like to speak to the application to come down to the podium or to call in at 703-324-1020.

[03:21:45] Speakers testifying via video must have signed up and submitted their video no later than 9 a.m. on the day prior to the public hearing. For all testimony, you're given three minutes to speak as an individual. If you're a spokesperson for a group, you are given five minutes. With that being said, our first public hearing this afternoon is a public hearing on an increase to the administrative fee related to the removal and abatement of illegal signs from $10 to $50 per sign.

[03:22:16] At this time, we would recognize county staff for a staff presentation. Good afternoon, Chairman, Board of Supervisors. She said, I'm here to request the board authorize an increase of the administrative fee related to the legal signs program from $10 to $50.

[03:22:35] On March 11, 2013, the board entered into an agreement with the Commissioner of Highways to act as the commissioner's agent to remove signs from the limits of the highways within Fairfax County and collect penalties and costs provided for in the Virginia Code.

[03:22:55] The program monitors 99 major county highways. Legal signs are documented for enforcement purposes and then removed the next day. sign owners can pick up their removed signs within five calendar days from the I-66 transfer station. Currently, the program charges $100 civil penalty for each sign violation along with a $10 administrative cost. The collections of penalties and costs help to cover invoicing, program oversight, and preparation of non-compliant cases for litigation. On June 27, 2023, the board permitted

[03:23:31] the county to authorize contractors to act as the commissioner's agent in fulfilling the purpose of this agreement. As part of the FY 2023 third quarter and carryover review, funding of approximately $440,000 was approved for payment for the signed removal contractor. To date, the Department of Code Compliance has invoiced signed violators approximately $309,000 and have collected $252,000 in invoice fines with a collection rate of 82%. This collection rate also includes payments received from enforcement efforts by the Office of the County Attorney, which has been taking on

[03:24:07] legal actions against sign violators. The $10 administrative fee adopted in 2017 has never been increased. The request for this increase is to recover a portion of the costs associated with carrying out the program, such as vehicle usage, fuel, invoice and payment processing, and contract administration. The Virginia Code does not define administrative costs or set an exact amount what can be charged for such costs. The activities and associated costs stated above are necessary for the removal and abatement of these illegal signs. Therefore, DCC requests or Department of Code

[03:24:44] Compliance requests the board authorize an increase from $10 to $50 per sign. Staff estimates the imposition of the cost recovery fee increase from $10 to $50 per sign will generate approximately $12,000 in revenue annually. Recognition of this revenue along with the associated $100 per civil penalty will be included in part of the FY 2025 budget. Thank you. Thank you very much. Are there any questions of staff any questions of staff seeing and hearing none this is a public hearing

[03:25:21] and I have no speakers who have signed up in advance to testify on this matter is there anyone present in the auditorium that would like to testify on this matter anyone present who would like to speak this is a public hearing seeing and hearing no one let me ask the clerk if anyone has called in no one has called in closing comments and a recommendation from county staff you just gave us the recommendation but did you have any further closing comments no sir okay thank you very much last call questions for board members seeing and hearing none um i will now close the public hearing i'm going to hand the gavel to supervisor uh smith so that i can make the

[03:25:58] following motion i move that the board authorize the department of code compliance effective july 1 2024 to increase the administrative fee for each sign illegally placed within the limits of highway as advertised. I'll second that. Any discussion? All those in favor of the motion, please say aye. Aye. Aye. Anyone opposed? That motion passes unanimously. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you. Supervisor Smith. Next, we have a public hearing to consider amendments to the Code of the County of Fairfax, Virginia, Chapter 4, Taxation and Finance, Article 11,

[03:26:35] Cigarette Tax, Increasing the Cigarette Tax Rate. And as soon as staff is ready, we would welcome a staff presentation. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, members of the board.

[03:26:53] My name is Greg Brook with the Department of Tax Administration. The board agenda item you have in front of you today is a public hearing to consider amendments to Chapter 4, Article 11 of the Fairfax County Code that would increase the excise tax rate from 1.5 cents to 2 cents for each cigarette sold, stored, or received. The Virginia Code authorizes localities to levy a cigarette tax at a maximum rate of 2 cents per cigarette sold. Fairfax County Code Section 4113 sets the county's rate at 1.5 cents per cigarette sold. Based on the current quantity of packs being sold in Fairfax County, it's estimated

[03:27:29] that increasing the rate by 1.5 cent to the maximum allowed would generate roughly 1.3 million in additional revenue. The last time this rate changed was in 2005. The enforcement and collection of the cigarette tax in Fairfax County is administered by the Northern Virginia Cigarette Tax Board, which is made up of member jurisdictions throughout Northern Virginia.

[03:27:50] For perspective, we included a list of rates for those member jurisdictions. Thank you. Thank you very much. Any questions of staff? Any questions of staff? Not seeing or hearing any. This is a public hearing. I have no one who has signed up in advance to testify on this matter. Is there anyone here present who would like to speak on this subject? This is a public hearing. Anyone present who would like to testify seeing and hearing no one let me ask if anyone has called in no callers any closing comments or further recommendations from staff it is recommended that the board adopt the proposed

[03:28:29] amendments of chapter 4 article 11 of the fairfax county code that would increase the excise tax rate from one and one half cents to two cents for each cigarette sold stored or received with an effective date of july 1st 2024 thank you thank you very much questions from board members seeing and hearing none i will close the public hearing and again pass the gavel to supervisor smith so that i can make the following motion i move that the board adopt the proposed ordinance to amend chapter 4 article 11 of the fairfax county code with an effective date of july 1 2024 as advertised

[03:29:03] i'll second that motion is there any discussion of the supervisor walkinshaw um thank thank you madam chair just just real quick i um you know this is uh an implementation of the taxing authority that we gained in 2020 and uh the board the board package notes the uh levels for other jurisdictions in northern virginia i also just want to note you know the the per pack tax for cigarettes in the district of columbia is more than five dollars uh maryland is seemingly moving toward a $5 per pack tax in July 1 of this year.

[03:29:43] We also have in Virginia a state tax on vape and liquid nicotine, but no local tax that's allowed under Virginia law. So I'm really pleased that we're taking this step and thank the chairman for his leadership during the budget process to get us to this point.

[03:30:02] I do think in our legislative program next year, we need to take another look at this issue because it's clear even though this is progress, we are still far behind the rest of the region in terms of the per pack tax. But probably more importantly, you know, the growing usage of vape, liquid nicotine, e-cigarettes that's not taxed at all at the local level by law in Virginia.

[03:30:29] So as part of the legislative agenda next year, we're going to be taking a look and adding some language there to try to make some more progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. Any further discussion? Seeing none, all those in favor of the motion say aye. Aye. Anyone opposed? Any abstentions? That motion carries.

[03:30:45] Thank you. Thank you very much. Supervisor Smith, our next public hearing is a public hearing on proposed amendments to the Code of the County of Fairfax, Chapter 61, Appendix Q, Section H, and Chapter 62. And as soon as staff is prepared, we would welcome a staff presentation.

[03:31:11] Good afternoon.

[03:31:29] My name is William Vinoy, Deputy Chief with the Fire and Rescue Department, overseeing the Office of the Fire Marshal. Here before you discuss the proposed amendments to the Code of County Fairfax for Chapter 61, Appendix Q, Section H, and Chapter 62. Chapter 61, Appendix Q, is the Appendix to Municipal Code for building provisions and establishes the Fire Marshal fees for plan review, acceptance testing, and inspections.

[03:31:57] The last time we had updated this fee was in January of 2015 and FY 2016. Chapter 62 is part of the county code related fire protection and establishes fire marshal fees for permits and inspections. And again, was last updated in FY 2016.

[03:32:16] Since 2015, we have not touched our fees and went with the increase in FY 2016. It was roughly a 20% fee increase, which put our cost recovery nearly 100%. Since then, since COVID and the impacts of COVID, cost recovery is trended downwards with 81% in FY2022, 76% in FY23, and 71% in FY24 estimated.

[03:32:45] As part of the county executive's FY25 advertised budget plan, it reflects a 35% increase in our expenditures as opposed to what we've seen in 2016 with a 9% decline in estimated revenues. At this point the projected at cost recovery rate would be less than 70% without any fee increases Staff originally recommended an increase from our current permit inspection fees of $150 to 195 with a revision to $172 and then with plan review and acceptance testing going from $156 currently per hour charged quarterly

[03:33:23] to $180 per hour charged quarterly when we were looking at Impact of projects and what would be impacted to industry? You'd see anywhere from a small build-out of a small project of impact of $52 at the original rate to now $24 with the revised rate.

[03:33:43] And then for a larger, large-footprint residential, you would see anywhere from $34, which is our original recommendation, to $15,792 for the revised recommendation. As we conducted outreach and sought feedback from industry, We worked with ESI, the Northern Virginia Building Industry Association, and NIOP, and all were pretty accepting of these fee increases and understood the need for these with very little feedback.

[03:34:13] With that, that concludes my presentation. I'm available for questions. Thank you very much. Are there any questions of staff? Supervisor Herity. Yeah. What efforts do we currently have underway to streamline and reduce the time and cost of the permit and zoning process?

[03:34:31] So we have multiple plan reviewers, and we post what our lag time is and try to communicate that and make sure that it's understood with industry, and we try to find refinements to make sure that it's communicated and the plans are moved through. Generally, when we see longer plan review times, it's due to either the complexity of the plan or the quality of the plan.

[03:34:51] If there's issues, it don't need to be sent back for revision, and it has to be reviewed again when it's resubmitted. So do we have an active, ongoing dialogue with the NVBIA, NAOP, and those about how we can reduce the cost and time of the process?

[03:35:07] We do. We do have regular meetings with them and regular conversations about trying to streamline. I think unlike our LDS partners, we are used as a quality assurance where they know they're going to get a thorough plan review. So they'll go ahead and put a less senior plan developer on there and then use us as a QA to kind of identify issues with those plans.

[03:35:32] All right. Thank you. Any other questions of staff? I'm seeing and hearing none. This is a public hearing. I have no one signed up to speak in advance. Is there anyone present here who would like to testify on this matter?

[03:35:47] This is a public hearing. Anyone who would like to speak on this matter? I'm not seeing and hearing anyone. Let me ask the clerk if anyone has called in. No one has called in. Any closing comments or recommendation from county staff? Okay.

[03:36:06] Questions, final call, questions from board members. Seeing and hearing none, I will now close the public hearing and recognize Supervisor Smith for a motion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Staff was asked to present the board with an option to reduce the proposed fee increases included in the staff report dated February 8, 2024, by 50%.

[03:36:24] those reduced fees are reflected in the memorandum from the county executive to the board dated april 15 2024 which has been tendered to the clerk and should be made part of the record of the proceedings as we have previously discussed it is imperative to give the public time to become accustomed to the increased fees for the fiscal year before the full amount of the fee increases become effective on july 1 2024 i therefore move that the board approve and adopt effective july 1 2024 the proposed amendments to the fairfax county code chapter 61 appendix q section 8 and chapter

[03:37:01] 62 with the fees as set forth in attachment 3 to the memorandum dated april 15 2024 i further move that the board of supervisors approve and adopt effective july 1 2025 the proposed amendments to the fairfax county code chapter 61 appendix q section h and chapter 62 with the full amount of the fees set forth in the staff report dated february 8 2024 the fees as effective on july 1 2025 will not exceed the fees listed in that staff report i further move that staff return

[03:37:37] with updates to the fees scheduled to the extent appropriate every two years commencing after 2025. I'm happy to second that motion. Discussion on the motion? Any discussion on the motion? Let me start with Supervisor Palchik.

[03:37:52] Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate the work that has gone into this and having a gradual approach, but continuing to monitor it to understand the impacts. I believe we have this for the LDS fees, but do you, trying to find it again, do we have comparison with surrounding jurisdictions on some of these fees?

[03:38:12] We do. We did submit for all the jurisdictions in the region. You do have those. They were just not posted. You have them posted. And we're somewhere in there. We can provide those. Within those fees, where we do an hourly plan review, other jurisdictions usually charge it by square foot and or appliance within those.

[03:38:35] So it's not quite an apples to apples comparison. But we did provide what an estimated cost would be for the region. Okay. Thank you. Supervisor Alcorn. yeah thank you um so supervisor smith mentioned uh the memo dated yesterday um which shows the uh the cost amount for 50 is 734 200. i guess my question for staff and maybe this is a county executive question um how how is that uh that amount to be covered just to get on the record sorry brian hill county executive we would probably be look at third quarter and do another

[03:39:13] analysis to see how we need to backfill if we need to backfill okay all right thank you supervisor Harity yeah hey I'm sure industry is going to be happy to see that it's only half this year and and not the full again as I said when we had this discussion I think we need to focus on not how we recover the cost but how we can reduce the cost and reduce the time and hopefully we get a robust effort going there as I know you've done in the fire department in the fire marshal's office has come a long way with industry and i just want to encourage you to continue that

[03:39:53] and i'm going to support this because it's a 50 but i don't know that i'm going to support the next 50 further discussion uh supervisor walk-in show yeah i really appreciate all the all the good work on this um and uh the motion for the phase in and just you know for those watching um in terms of fee increases across the board in the FY 2025 budget, Chairman McKay and I have submitted a consideration item to look at a phase in for some of the other fees that are part of the budget but don't require public hearing as these do.

[03:40:30] So there's been conversation certainly in the Braddock District around the senior center fees, adult daycare, adult day healthcare center fees, and we are looking at, at least in that consideration item, a similar phase in, which for me personally, I think, I think would be appropriate.

[03:40:50] Really appreciate this effort and the fact that we're committing, and I've said this over the last couple of years, we need to commit to a regular timeline of looking at fee increases moving forward so that we're not in a position of having to consider once every five years or 10 years or 15 years, an unexpected, very significant fee increase, which I don't think is fair to industry.

[03:41:13] I don't think it would be fair to folks in the community for us to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Supervisor Walkinshaw. And let me add that I'm supportive of this phased-in approach. I concur with everything that's been said. We had a committee meeting on this, and the board, almost to a person, made it clear that the amounts of the increases that staff was originally proposing were too much too fast.

[03:41:39] And this phased-in approach allows us to capture cost. If those costs are not captured by applicants, they're captured by everyday taxpayers. And so I think we have to be prudent in terms of cost recovery. But I also think we have to be realistic with how much an individual, a business, an industry, or just a regular county resident is impacted by these fees increased.

[03:42:04] As was mentioned in the presentation, the last time we increased this fee was calendar year 2015, fiscal year 2016, and that is far too long to go without making adjustments. And so I appreciate that

this motion contains a requirement that staff report back to the board every two years at a minimum with updates.

[03:42:27] Now, if it turns out that for some reason that has to happen more frequently, that is certainly allowed, but at a minimum, every two years we get an update on where we are with fees. And I would just add, you know, I've had the same concern, and I'll mention this later with a few other items that are coming up with regard to LDS and zoning ordinance about the challenges of getting through our process.

[03:42:52] Now, I've mentioned this a lot of times before, and I appreciate what Supervisor Herity said, because in particular, with the fire marshal, there had been dramatic improvements. And I pulled out that, you know, since the last time we did a fee increase, that was during what was then called the booster shot.

[03:43:12] It was a 20 percent increase aimed at improving speed, consistency, and predictability of the development review process and was a Fairfax First initiative. I think a lot of us remember that terminology, Fairfax First, but as a result of that, we know that moving site plan review in the fire marshal's office from on average 90 days then to 39 days today shows a dramatic improvement, and we know there's always ways to do better, and we hope that with any fee increases, we're continuing to go in the right direction in terms of helping people get through our process as quickly and as efficiently as possible,

[03:43:49] which is a benefit not just to the county and our staff, but also to the applicant. I mean, nobody wins with unnecessary delays. And so knowing those initiatives have made a difference, and I agree wholeheartedly that there's still movement, still ways to improve, and certainly we hope these fee increases will translate into an even smoother process for people going through the process.

[03:44:13] But I do think it's right to phase these in and to give people advance notice, not only of this year's increase, but of the potential, you know, of the known increase that will be coming next year as well so that they can plan for the next two years when they want to come through our process. And so for all of those reasons, I am supporting the motion. Other discussion? Supervisor Bierman. So this is consistent with the next several public hearings, but I just think it's important that when we talk about phasing it in, we actually are phasing it in it's not just this year it's next year with respect to this one we have seen fees that didn't

[03:44:51] change over nine years we've seen significant changes in our cost recovery we're going to hear the same story with the next public hearing the next one so when we vote on these things i think we should it is prudent i guess to not i guess it is prudent to go halfway this year and halfway next year but it is not prudent in my view to only go halfway this year and then turn around next year and not do it because we are looking at significant shortfalls this is a tough budget year next year will be a tough budget year as well and I think in some ways the best part of this motion is that we will start looking at this every two years so we don't sit here nine years

[03:45:29] from now having not taken action again yeah and Supervisor Beerman I just for transparency standpoint just want to make something crystal clear because I'm not sure Supervisor Herity caught this in the motion there are two motions here there's a motion that adopts the 50 fee increase and then there's a motion that further adopts the additional fee increase next year effective july 1 2025 so we in fact are acting on both years with the motion that's on the table i just want to make sure people understand that

that'll change my vote but yeah i just wanted to make sure you knew what what we were voting on and we are voting on both pieces here to the point

[03:46:07] supervisor beerman made of this is not just we're recommending this next year we're doing this next year any amount that we do not secure through this year or next year is an amount borne by our taxpayers and i just want to make that perfectly clear as well because the cost of us providing these services we know what it is the question is how much cost recovery comes from people coming through the permitting process with that if there's no further discussion all those in favor the motion please say aye aye any opposed charity nay any abstentions and that motion carries nine

[03:46:43] to one and that takes us to our next public hearing which is a public hearing on proposed amendments to appendix q land development services fee schedule of the code of the county of fairfax virginia county code regarding adjustment of the fees charged by land development services for plan review permits and inspection services. And at this time, I would recognize county staff for a

[03:47:08] staff presentation. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, members of the board. I am glad to be here tonight.

[03:47:26] This afternoon, my name is Bill Hicks. I'm the Director of Land Development Services. Our presentation will seem very much like the one you've just seen. Our fees are contained in Appendix Q of the county code. We are here because, as for the fire marshal and everybody else, we have not comprehensively raised our fees since 2015 as a part of the booster shot to improve the speed, consistency, and predictability of the development review process.

[03:47:58] Two years ago as well, unlike the fire marshal and the Department of Planning and Development, which you'll hear from in a moment, we moved into a special revenue fund, which by its definition means that our revenues should cover our costs at 100%.

[03:48:15] Our cost recovery last year was about 93%. This year we are projecting 76%. So we are moving away from that 100% cost recovery. So we've brought a proposal to the table to increase our fees, and I'll quickly walk through that.

[03:48:35] And as is discussed, you received a memorandum yesterday that divided that proposal in half. So I'll talk about both of those as we go forward. The first was a proposal to raise by 6% the technology surcharge that's on top of all fees plus the fire marshal fee, and that helps pay for things like plus and website, et cetera.

[03:48:57] The revised proposal moves that 3% from 4% on all fees, where it is today, to 7%. The second change would be a direct line item for the Building Code Academy.

[03:49:13] At 2%, this mirrors the state legislation that's required to put into the Code Academy. The revised proposal shows that at 1%, the difference would be made up to meet that state obligation out of the rest of the budget as we report that back to the state.

[03:49:33] We propose to increase fees by 25% on all building fees with the exception of elevator fees, which we think are appropriate today. The revised proposal raises those by 12.5%.

[03:49:48] And then site fees across the board were proposed to be raised by 10%. The revised proposal shows that at 5%. Then we've got a few dogs and cats left, and I'll read through those specifically. We were

going to remove obsolete fees for things like fallout shelters and a digitization fee and recycling study, so those would go from whatever they are to zero.

[03:50:12] There's no change between the proposal and the revised fee. We had proposed a new specific fee for pedestrian bridges, so we're not charging those in the same way we would a new building because the review is much less.

[03:50:29] We've divided that in half from $4,200 to $2,100. We have added a, we call it a second tier signature set fee for site related plans, which allows a perfect $135 was our proposal plus $80 a sheet that comes in up to 20 sheets that allows for a resubmission.

[03:50:53] If you're close to the end of your site review without having to be a full resubmission, we divided that in half. So it comes in at $67.5 and $40 a sheet. And then we also develop a new fee for minor revisions for site-related plans.

[03:51:10] That was proposed at $159. That comes in, round it up. It's a minor revision, would be for $80. And that's for use. If you've come in, you've got an approved site plan, and then you, say you move an area away on your home.

[03:51:26] Instead of having to start over with a new revision, this would be a minor revision. We took those proposals and modeled those out with current fees across five different sorts of projects, residential deck, single family home, townhome development, commercial retail tenant, and a new commercial building.

[03:51:47] We showed the cost of the fee based on the value of the project. And you can see those are single digits. That's then the gray existing fees. We show you what that would be with the proposed fees in option one and then our revised fees in option two.

[03:52:05] They all remain in single digits, so you can see what those are there. As Chief Fanoi mentioned, since we have met with the board during the work session, we have vetted this with industry.

[03:52:21] We've been to ESI, NVBIA, ProMed Atlantic, NAOP. We met with a, we don't have a flashy name for it, but the land use attorneys work group that we meet with regularly, and we also had a lunch and learn that was open for all. In those discussions, we had two general comments, and the first was that it would be very helpful if we had regular, more frequent, but smaller increases, which we all agree with.

[03:52:47] And the second is that on the second tier, what happens if my plan set affects 21 sheets or 30 sheets and it's minor? That is very easily managed with the ordinance as proposed because we define what that signature set is.

[03:53:04] So industry was pleased with that response. I would be glad to field any questions that you have. Thank you very much, Mr. Hicks. Are there any questions of staff? Any questions of staff? Let me start on this end. Supervisor Herity. Yeah, I'm going to repeat the earlier question, but let me start with, is the cost of the PLUS system included in the recovery numbers, or is that in the IT budget?

[03:53:30] That is born significantly in LDS, our portion of it, which is the lion's share is inside the Special Revenue Fund. So the software, the new technology, all that is born within your fund?

[03:53:45] Right. Now there are DIT and enterprise components that the general fund carries. And of course, when you look at DPD or the fire marshal or the health department, they have their own

obligations. But the lion's share is born on LDS. And we have the business side IT portion of the management of that system.

[03:54:07] And I'm aware of a number of them, but I'll let you explain in the efforts that you currently have underway to streamline the process and actually reduce the time. And we forget how important time is because time is money to the other side. I know you know that. You've heard it a million times.

[03:54:24] But what kind of efforts do you have currently under place to streamline? I very much appreciate the opportunity to respond to this. I think the very first thing that's fundamental to all is that we are constantly talking with industry. We have a number of meetings that we meet with industry routinely.

[03:54:42] And so we're hearing what they're saying and we're reacting quickly in what they're saying. And currently, I'll just mention some things that we have done. We have reduced our administrative time for site login and logout. That's the administrative burden at the beginning from seven days down to one.

[03:55:01] we post that metric weekly. And if we're over on that metric, we're truth in advertising, we state that, and then we get ourselves in hand. We've done the exact same thing on the building side. We've dropped from four days to one day. We post that every single week. We've posted all of our site plan times. Our times right now, as the chairman has mentioned, are 39 days to process a site plan. When I started during the booster shot, we were at 90 days. So we post those truth in advertising, and then we react very quickly. We meet with, there is a group called the Development

[03:55:39] Process Advisory Committee, which is industry, and Tracy and I staff that, the Director of Planning and Development, we staff that, Tracy Strunk and I staff that, we meet with them once a month, and we hear directly for things that they are concerned about. Currently, we are working closely with the chairman's office with industry and with vdot because much of the concerns are things that are somewhat outside of the county's purview right now so we're focused on that as our immediate task we also this is one thing we're doing we're going through each of

[03:56:17] our record types you know we've named all of our record types we've got 60 record types we built a permit library that helps our industry and our citizens work through our process. It's very clear. It has changed our dialogue with our customers. We're taking each record, our highest use record, and we're working through that whole process, mapping the workflow through that and looking for inefficiencies and finding efficiencies. We aim to do that through all of our big records.

[03:56:49] So those are just some of many things that we are tackling today. Okay. Other questions? Supervisor Alcorn. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Similar question. I'm looking at the memo from yesterday. For LDS, 50% of the original proposal is a bigger number.

[03:57:07] It's 5.7 million. And Mr. County Executive, is this also a FY25 third quarter matter? or so let me just let me clarify because i'm always thinking about lds when i get questions about permitting so when we look at all the other fees all the fees that are going to be discussed today they are fiscal 26 budget reduced so lds however is third quarter because they are self support but the other areas we're addressing today will be part of the fiscal 26 budget process

[03:57:42] okay so thank you for that clarification certainly lds being third quarter You know, I'm looking at what's available this year for third quarter. I know it varies. That's only $5.24 million that's unallocated. So we're looking at basically, now last year I checked it was about $10 million that we had available at third quarter.

[03:58:03] So are we digging ourselves a hole by putting this off for a year? I certainly support the policy of phasing in these, but I guess my question is, I guess, more of a cash flow question, Mr. Hill, you know, if we're not seeing as much money coming out of third quarter next year, what are our options for keeping this whole?

[03:58:31] Well, once again, we're going to review our FY25 budget, and then we will figure out ways to deal with LDS as well as all the fees associated. We will have at least a 12-month period to look at where we are and what we need to do for the following year.

[03:58:52] So we should be able to adjust if we need to at that point. Is that right? To take care of any budget? That's a hope, sir. Yes, sir. Okay. All right. That helps. Thank you. Okay. Supervisor Palachuk. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you much for your work on this. I think clearly you've done a lot of outreach and engagement with industry as well as with those others being impacted.

[03:59:14] I think one of the reasons I am especially supportive of the phasing in, in addition to the phasing is really because I still have outstanding questions and want us to be able to maybe come back during the year to a committee meeting on the impact on a few of the areas where we have priorities the way we do with our EV charging stations and looked at the fees there with things like child care facilities, you know, health care settings.

[03:59:49] I don't want to put that in here now, but as I was starting to see, and I don't see the comparisons to other jurisdictions with things like community gardens and areas that we want to see more of, I guess I would like us to be able to track that and come back to understand the impacts of those.

[04:00:11] Supervisor Pouchik, I think you're talking about the zoning ordinance fees, which is the next public hearing, so stand by. Sorry, sorry, I'm in between all of these. It would be an uncomfortable question for Bill to have to answer, but that's the next one. Okay. But if there are any impacts on some of the fees that have any negative impacts, I guess that's where I wanted to see the improvements.

[04:00:38] My apologies. It's already a long day, but I'll come back to that. That's okay. I was going to get the wrong one. Any other discussion on this item? Let me just, and, you know, we're at questions point here, but I do want to just make a clarification because I think there might be, could be easily some confusion from people watching about what's happening here.

[04:00:59] The fee increases that the county proposed at the 100% level that has been advertised here were assumed in the budget that we're getting ready to have a public hearing on later today. These are not revenues we already have.

[04:01:15] The board has not approved these, and so while there may be a hole in terms of what the county executive has projected in his budget next year, we're not reducing revenues that are already coming into the county. In fact, we're only increasing them by 50% of the 100% amount that was recommended by county staff to increase them for in the budget.

[04:01:37] And I just want to make sure people understand that because we're, in essence, phasing into what is contained in the county executive's recommendation. But our reason for phasing in is that we are concerned that, and as we said at committee, that the one-time increase that we were looking at that in a lot of cases is based on a 10-year time horizon was too much at one time.

[04:02:01] And we don't ever want to be in a situation where we wait 10 years again to make fee adjustments. And so this is softening the blow, recognizing that we're many years behind, but recognizing that if you're coming through our process and you're feeling the pain, it's a big increase at one time.

[04:02:17] And so we will still have to work that through in the next budget. That being said, it is true that any dollar we don't raise in terms of fee collections is a dollar that has to come from somewhere else because the overhead cost of going through the process remains.

[04:02:34] And so ultimately, any fee that is not realized or is not maximized to cover cost of operations is a dollar amount that is borne by the county population in general through our annual budget process. And so I just wanted to try to explain that in simplistic terms so that people watching understand what it is that's being proposed here and why we're asking questions relative to a budget that has yet to be approved by this board.

[04:03:02] And lastly, I would just say that the revenue numbers that are contained in the memo, of course, are forecasted numbers based on historic trends. And so, you know, if you are somebody looking to come through our process, what we are saying is that you probably should come through quick, come through now, take advantage of the fees that could be imposed in the next fiscal year in advance of the full imposition that would occur in the following fiscal year after that.

[04:03:31] And so I think from a transparency standpoint, that is a good reason to support phasing these in as we did with the last. But I just wanted to provide that clarification. If there are no other questions of staff, this is a public hearing.

[04:03:47] And I have no speakers who have signed up in advance to testify on this specific matter. Is there anyone here present who would like to speak on this subject? Anyone present who would like to testify? This is a public hearing. Seeing and hearing no one, let me ask the clerk if anyone has called in.

[04:04:02] There are no callers. No one has called in. Any closing comments from staff? We appreciate the support of the board and will follow as directed. Thank you very much. Questions from board members? Seeing and hearing none, at this time I will close the public hearing and recognize Supervisor Smith.

[04:04:19] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Staff was asked to present the board with an option to reduce the proposed fee increases included in the staff report dated March 5, 2024, by 50%. Those reduced fees are reflected in the memorandum from the county executive to the board dated April 15, 2024, which has been tendered to the clerk and should be made part of the record of our proceedings.

[04:04:41] As we have previously discussed, it is imperative to give the public time to become accustomed to the increased fees for a fiscal year before the full amount of the fee increases becomes effective on July 1, 2025. I therefore move that the board approve and adopt, effective July 1, 2024, the proposed amendments to the Appendix Q Land Development Services fee schedule of the Fairfax County Code with fees as set forth in Attachment 1 to the memorandum dated April 15, 2024. I further move that the Board of Supervisors approve and adopt, effective July 1, 2025, the proposed amendments

[04:05:18] to Appendix Q Land Development Services fee schedule of the Fairfax County Code with the full amount of the fees set forth in the staff report dated March 5, 2024. The fees as effective on July 1, 2025 will not exceed the fees listed in that staff report. I further move that staff return with updates to the fee schedule to the extent appropriate every two years commencing after 2025. I'm happy to second that

motion. Is there discussion on the motion? Discussion on the motion. Supervisor Herity. And I'll try to be brief. You know, I get a lot of good ideas from

[04:05:57] my residents, and I got one last night. I think it came in last night, yeah. And it shows the importance of cutting red tape and what can be done in the power, and it's one of the board's favorite topics. It's affordable housing, but I'm just going to read what the resident wrote. I went through and read the article. It's actually very good. I was doing reading over the weekend, and The Los Angeles mayor used her very first executive order to require that housing projects that are 100% affordable at 80% of AMI must be fully permitted by all city departments in 60 days.

[04:06:32] The requirement has a few catches, doesn't apply to rezonings, but the city received permits to build over 14,000 affordable units in the first 14 months since the order took effect. Most importantly, over 75% of those are being built with no subsidy.

[04:06:50] So Los Angeles is building more than 10,000 that we have as our target just by cutting red tape. The site being three times as dense, so we actually have more land to build on. I'm stating that because I think we have a lot of work to do on cutting red tape.

[04:07:13] And I know you've done a lot. Your numbers show you've done a lot, but I think we've got a long way to go. And I'm not ready to approve an increase a year from now in the second half, So I'm going to, again, vote no. But I do appreciate the work. I just want to encourage you to go look at what L.A. did there.

[04:07:30] Go look at some of the other examples and continue to work to cut the cost and the time. Supervisor Alcorn. Yeah, thank you. Mr. Herod, I believe Los Angeles has inclusionary zoning the way we do. And so some of those units, maybe even most of them, aren't getting a subsidy, but they're actually required.

[04:07:47] So I'm not sure how much of the cause and effect is there, but I appreciate your point. And can I just clarify one point, because I tried to make this point earlier, that our costs are relatively fixed and predictable. And so we're trying to adopt a fee structure so that the people coming through the process are paying the lion's share of the cost of going through the process.

[04:08:08] And so if one were to vote no on this motion, how much money would the Fairfax County taxpayers have to front to subsidize people going through the fee permit process for LDS? am i so um this will raise i think the number that this would raise is uh 5.7 million dollars the total package is 11.7 million almost 11.8 so the difference there is is 6.1 million dollars

[04:08:44] so the difference is what was that again 6.1 so a no vote is sending a 6.1 million dollar bill to the taxpayers to subsidize people going through our permitting process i just want to make sure people understand that because there is a cost recovery model that's in place.

[04:09:02] I was hesitant to go to 50%, but I strongly supported 50% because I think the fee increases that are in here in a one-year period of time are way too much when we're trying to build up our economy and get people through our process and get economic development going and support the strong economic record that we have in Fairfax County. But there is a cost to go through our process of review. And the question here is how much of that cost is borne by the applicants coming through the process or how much of that will be borne by the general county taxpayers.

[04:09:32] And so I just want to make sure those are the choices that we're making here. Supervisor Bierman. So you said that before the last increase that helped us get to better cost recovery, we were at 90 days on average, and now we are down to 39 days. Is that correct?

[04:09:51] That is correct. Look, I'm all for cutting red tape. And, you know, Supervisor Herity, we talked during, for instance, the audit committee about looking at ways to make sure that these processes move faster. But let's not forget the fact that when we increased costs last time, when we're paying more here, we're actually making it easier to move faster.

[04:10:18] That's part of this. It's about getting what you paid for. And rather than continuing to slough this burden off onto general fund taxpayers, trying to get more in line with the actual cost of this process makes sense. We can do that at the same time that we focus on cutting red tape.

[04:10:37] So I don't think it's a mutually exclusive thing, but I do think that trying to get us towards higher cost recovery makes more sense, not only for land development services, but for our taxpayers. Thank you, Supervisor Bierman.

[04:10:53] Supervisor Herity. Yeah, just to be clear, and I was ready to support the 50% increase. I'm just not ready to predispose we can't do better by the end of next year. And I appreciate your comments. They're right on target because time is money, and I fully understand time is money.

[04:11:09] And hopefully through our audit committee and some other things and Bill's efforts, we can end up getting there. But I'm not ready to buy into a 2025 rate yet. I was willing to buy into the one for this year at 50%. supervisor stork my my challenge is that we know who pays for this it's the general county resident really our property tax holders i have a problem with that i really was ready to do i debated it and even in committee i had said half makes sense but the more i studied this particularly when i looked at the comparison and i looked basically we're at 65 of the average of

[04:11:49] other counties around us to me that says we do have the opportunity to do more than we're doing So I'm going to support this motion, but I also see that we are leaving money on the table, money on the table that we're now turning around and taking out of the pocket of folks who are paying real estate taxes.

[04:12:06] So I'm okay with this because I realize it's a chunk, and I also like the process that we're now setting up. But I think you can make a great argument about why we should even have looked at doing the whole thing here because it would make a difference for our real estate taxpayers and, frankly, taking it from the money who are using it from the people using the service.

[04:12:25] So I think this is a good compromise, but I also know we've got a ways to go. And I also know that the more we can do to speed up this process, the more that we get those properties on the books, you know, at a higher assessed value. And they can pay, frankly, a little bit more money, and that helps us all.

[04:12:43] So I think we're looking for win-wins, and so I think the points that are being made are to do just that. So thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Stork. And let me just wrap up and thank Bill and his team because Bill and I spent a lot of time together. And I think it's well known that I feel like there's still a lot of room for improvement in terms of getting through our process and in terms of customer service. And that is why I set up a chairman's task force with industry to look at these issues in real time, address them. And I will tell you that significant progress has been

[04:13:17] made not just in the statistic that Bill shared but but overall and if there had not been significant progress being made I would be very reluctant to increase these fees but I do think a lot of the progress has been made was because of the booster shot that was made before certainly going to electronic plans in the long term is going to be a lot more efficient not just for county staff but for people coming through the process as well and so I do think there's improvements that have been made, but I will be the first to say that there's plenty of room for future improvement. And I know that, you know, Bill and his team are working nonstop on that. And we know that a lot of times

[04:13:56] when someone runs into a problem coming through our process, it's a matter of getting the type of customer service and support from our personnel that's needed. And these fees are in part what pays for the support staff that we have to help people get through the process. And so I do think that that's an important thing to keep in in mind and in consideration and as I've said before I do think that this is the right approach to phase this in because the amount that was given to us at one point in time you know that affects the smallest industries in the county if you're building one or two or three houses a year that type of fee increase dramatically affects your

[04:14:36] ability to deliver a property and so I think in in terms of phasing it in we have to be cognizant not just of the the big folks who come through our process but the little folks as well and i think this is fair to them and certainly making sure they know that this is a two-year phase and hopefully we'll have expedite people coming through our process people who are thinking about doing something in the county might actually now be incentivized to get that done quicker to get into under phase one of the fee increase and so that's another reason why i support the phased-in approach and why i'm going to support the motion with that being said all those in favor

[04:15:12] of the motion please say aye aye any opposed i hear any nay any abstentions and that vote carries nine to one thank you very much our next public hearing is a public hearing on a proposed zoning ordinance amendment regarding zoning application fees and planned district recreational facilities minimum expenditure and this is the last of these we had this batch of fee increase items this is the last of these before we get into matters related to the budget and so as soon as

[04:15:46] staff is ready we would welcome a county staff presentation good afternoon i'm tracy strunk the director of the department of planning and development and i'm here this afternoon to talk with you about the zoning ordinance amendment fees and also our planned district recreational facilities i have some additional staff including casey judge and uh here with me from our department and also randall farron from the park authority because of those p district recreational fees the zoning ordinance work program has had um increasing the fees on that for a number of years

[04:16:25] that's been on our priority one item on our work program my slideshow is not working do it the old-fashioned way i did well i'll start talking and while we wait for the picture to come up um

[04:17:03] The last time that the zoning ordinance fees were significantly increased, were comprehensively increased. There we go. Now it's in the right place. Let's make sure I get my numbers right. In 2009, we came before the board with a 200% increase.

[04:17:20] And again, in 2011, we had about a 3% increase. That you might notice is a two-year cycle. then because we had some direction after increasing fees by 200 percent as you can imagine to try and do it more often and so we we started bringing that forward and then various things have intervened over time the analysis basically since that time the changes you have already heard in the other hearings is primarily

driven by inflation because which also drives staff costs there has been a 36 percent increase in CPI since the last time that we amended the zoning ordinance

[04:17:57] fees so we have had some staff increase as well to address some of those board priorities that you all have been talking about we added some additional positions with the with the booster shot to try and smooth the process between our department planning and development the entitlement process and the site plan process that you just heard bill hicks speaking about as well we did some adjustment of fees with the zmod the zoning ordinance modernization that we did in 2021 and 2023 um primarily however we just looked at a number of fees that we actually reduced and then

[04:18:32] created new fees for uh uses that had not existed in the zoning ordinance before um i already spoke a little bit about the justification for the fee increase so i will speak skip off that we did provide in our staff report a comprehensive table that um because we we did advertise a very wide range of the the fees so this table shows you sort of different ranges at 10 20 30 and 35 percent the staff recommendation was a 35 percent increase and has as has been noted you all did receive in a memo yesterday a 17 and a half percent increase which was 50 percent of that original 35 percent

[04:19:12] there are a couple fees that didn't were not included in that 35 percent appeals we had had recommended a 20% increase, and then that was reduced to 10% in the memorandum that you received yesterday, and that was for their specific to increase, to keep the ability for people to make an appeal if they felt they needed to do that.

[04:19:35] We also have a few fees that are set by state code, certain of our telecom fees, and the fee for, if I get this right, home health care structures, home health care structures, people call them granny pods those are both set by state code and so there was no increase in those fees that's recommended to jump away from the zoning ordinance fees to the planned district recreational fees many of you know that in our p districts we call them our planned districts there is an expectation for amenities and one of those is recreational amenities and so the zoning

[04:20:12] ordinance actually includes a number that is expected to be spent on site for recreational amenities for the residential portion of a planned district that's currently $1,900 per dwelling unit that was last updated in 2017 most of those facilities are provided on site so this is generally not a fee that is ever paid it's not a fee at all in fact but it's it's an amount that is rarely paid in cash although in a very small district someone might might provide some money to the park authority instead of providing that on site we have found over time that generally

[04:20:49] people are paying much more than that for their amenities just what's desired by the market and so this would this would update that was again on a slightly different schedule and so that was a 25 or 26 percent increase that we had proposed with the amendment with the addendum that you received yesterday we have that would change that amendment from 2400 to 2150 I believe and again this is just the original staff recommendation to increase that to 2400 which in the memorandum that you received yesterday was was

[04:21:23] changed and just a note here that any application that's filed before the effective date would continue to receive the current fees in the past we used to assess the new fee based on applications that had been fully accepted in our office because actually of the improvements with the plus system where people can no longer sort of deliver one piece of paper and say hey I filed an application under the old

system and because the fee is actually assessed when the application is complete and technically filed in the plus system we are comfortable changing that so that when you file it even though it has not

[04:21:59] gone through the review in our office yet that that the fee the fee that you basically you pay when you file is the fee that you'll get so there so you could file your application on June 30th and even though we have not done the review of that you're still paying the current fees and under the the option to increase the the second motion that you make to increase the fees next year that will remain the same so the fees the fees that are in effect on the day that you hit complete on your in the plus system would be the fee that you would pay. I did not add a slide about the public outreach. You've seen that several times already.

[04:22:34] We did all the same public outreach and participated. Some of those we led, some of those LDS led, and we appreciate that partnership. And we went to all of those same groups that you saw before, and we're happy to answer any questions with that. Thank you, Ms. Strunk. Are there any questions of staff? Any questions of staff? Not seeing or hearing anyone. This is a public hearing.

[04:22:55] I have no one signed up in advance to testify on this specific matter. Is there anyone here present who would like to speak on this matter? Anyone present who would like to testify on this subject? Anyone present? This is a public hearing. Seeing and hearing no one, let me ask the clerk if anyone has called in. There are no callers. There are no callers. Any further closing comments or further recommendations from staff? I don't recall if I said that the Planning Commission recommended approval, but they did, and we have no further comments. Excellent. Thank you very much.

[04:23:27] Last call, questions for board members. Seeing and hearing none, I will close the public hearing and recognize Supervisor Smith for a motion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Staff was asked to present the board with an option to reduce the proposed fee increases included in the staff report dated March 15, 2024, by 50%.

[04:23:43] Those reduced fees are reflected in the memorandum from the county executive to the board dated April 15, 2024, which has been tendered to the clerk and should be made part of our record of our proceedings. Again, it is imperative to give the public time to become accustomed to the increased fees for a fiscal year before the full amount of the fee increases becomes effective on July 1, 2025.

[04:24:05] Therefore, I move that the Board of Supervisors adopt, effective July 1, 2024, the proposed zoning ordinance amendment for zoning application fees and planned district recreational facilities minimum expenditure and the proposed amendments to Appendix 1 relating to previous approvals as set forth in Attachment 2 to the memorandum from the county executive to the board dated April 15, 2024.

[04:24:30] And I further move that the Board of Supervisors approve and adopt effective July 1, 2025, the full amount of the fees and planned district recreational facilities minimum expenditure set forth in the staff report dated March 15, 2024, except that the fee for appeal applications will remain unchanged from the level that takes effect July 1, 2024.

[04:24:53] The fees as effective on July 1, 2025 will not exceed the fees listed in that staff report. I further move that staff return with updates to the fee schedule to the extent appropriate every two years commencing after 2025 You've heard the motion the chair will second that motion discussion on the motion any discussion on the motion Supervisor Palczyk. Thank you. So I just want the comments I said

earlier apologies coordinating child care and adult care at the same time Is that I do have some questions and concerns about some of the specific

[04:25:29] increases especially looking at our comparisons to surrounding jurisdictions for special permits especially as it relates to home daycare religious assembly and a few others so i appreciate the continued monitoring um and while i approve going forward on the tiered fee structure i guess today if that's what we call it uh the the two-tier structure would want to be able to understand any impacts and maybe further refine recommendations if there are areas of

[04:26:00] priority for the board where we could target maybe changes or supports on some of those fees okay and I think that would be good material for our land use process committee discussion the you know the question will be are there elements that are in this fee structure uses I should say that we want to pull out of the cost recovery model and i think that's a larger conversation uh that that is warranted uh to have uh so that we can understand the full picture of what those implications might be and

[04:26:37] having talked to supervisor smith i know that's something we can accommodate in the land use process committee uh further discussion supervisor harry just i was going to try to be quiet and save time but i would echo the child care i mean i think we need to go back and take a look at that and what we can do to have fewer people have to go through that process, but also things like urban parks, which has been causing delay on a number of my applications, and I think that's happened in other jurisdictions as well.

[04:27:08] Again, it extends the time. It makes it more expensive and more difficult for you to do your job, but that's us putting the requirements on you, and we need to go back and take a look at those. Further discussion? Seeing and hearing none.

[04:27:24] all those in favor of the motion please say aye aye any opposed parity nay any abstentions and that motion passes nine to one supervisor smith i do have a follow-on motion due to the changing nature of development in fairfax county i move that the board of supervisors direct staff to review alternative approaches to the perf per acre fee as part of the next comprehensive review of zoning application fees you've heard the motion i'm happy to second that any discussion on the the motion any discussion seeing and hearing none all those in favor of the follow-on motion please say aye aye any opposed any abstentions that motion

[04:28:02] carries and before we move on to the next item I know each of these had embedded in the motion a requirement that staff come back to us at least every two years with fee enhancements and of course that can happen sooner than that it doesn't have to be every two years but at a minimum every two years we should be getting an update and and I think you know our message to the county executive is not just in pertaining to these specific items that are here before us but fees in general in the county waiting ten years to update fees and then coming forward with a very large increase at one time is not not where we

[04:28:39] want to be and that's not a indictment of the staff before us but rather just philosophically we want to make sure this doesn't this doesn't happen again and we're looking at these with more regularity as we move forward Thank you. And with that, we are going to move on to our next public hearing, which is a public hearing on the FY 2025 effective tax rate increase. And as soon as our staff is assembled and ready,

[04:29:06] we would welcome a county staff presentation. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the board. I am Phil Hagan, director of the Department of Management and Budget. This is a public

hearing on the FY 2025 effective tax rate increase. The Board of Supervisors authorized advertisement of real estate tax rate of $1.135, 1.135 per $100 of assessed value, which is the rate upon which the FY 2025 advertised budget was balanced and an increase of four cents over the current real

[04:29:44] estate tax rate. The total increase in assessed value of existing properties is expected to be 1.91%, including an increase of 2.86% for residential real property and a decrease of 1.24 percent for non-residential real property. Based on the advertised tax rate and increases in the assessed values of existing properties, the effective tax rate would increase by more than 1 percent. As a result, Virginia Code requires this separate public hearing on the effective tax rate. I would note that while this public hearing is specific to the effective tax rate increase, individuals may also provide comments on the tax rate during the public

[04:30:21] hearing on the budget, which will begin later this afternoon and continue over the next two days. Thank you. Thank you very much. Are there any questions of county staff? Any questions of county staff? Seeing and hearing none. This is a public hearing and I do have six speakers who have signed up in advance to testify on this matter. And our first speaker is James Parmalee.

[04:30:45] Is Mr. Parmalee here? I've not seen him. James Parmalee. Do not see James Parmalee. I do know Thomas Cranmer is here. Thomas, if you could come on up. It's your turn. Following Thomas will be Arthur Purvis, who I know is here, Robert Whitfield, Charles McAndrew, and our last video is video testimony.

[04:31:06] But if Mr. Purvis, Mr. Whitfield, Mr. McAndrew are here, if you could make your way down closer to the podium so that when it's your turn to testify, you are ready. Mr. Kramer, welcome. The floor is yours. Thank you, Mr. McKay. I really appreciate your having me here.

[04:31:21] I just want to correct a couple of things. Rob Whitfield got sick last night and is not going to be here to testify in this session or the next one So I'm going to take his position in the next one also. So I was 58 now will be number 40 Just okay minor correction there Thank you very much. My name is Thomas Lambert Cranmer. I live at 221 Donmore Drive and Great Falls, Virginia

[04:31:56] I am delighted to be here to testify about the tax rate increase. You've seen the handout that I gave out. It's self-explanatory. I don't need to say what's in it because it's obvious, and it's a real problem.

[04:32:17] Now, I would like to cite one sentence from Supervisor Herity. He said in his newsletter to his staff and to all the people that he represents, many of you have shared with me that you are planning to leave Fairfax County because of the tax increases.

[04:32:45] Now, this is really a problem for the county. because these are people who have to pay the taxes. Now, just let me read to you what you already know in the write-up for this session.

[04:33:04] It should be noted that the total increase in the assessed value of the existing properties is expected to be 1.91%, including an increase of 2.86% for residential real property and a decrease of 1.24% for non-residential property.

[04:33:28] That means office buildings, basically. And the whole office market in this area has really gone to hell. And people are moving out. And so they're not going to office buildings anymore.

[04:33:47] to a large extent. Many people are basically employed by a computer, including my son, who doesn't live here. He lives in Phoenix. And so they, therefore, don't spend time in their offices.

[04:34:07] My son doesn't even know his supervisor. This is a new world. So, now, I just want to cite something that was said by J.P. Morgan. Jamie Dimon warns of the most treacherous time ahead, the most treacherous time ahead that might eclipse anything since World War II.

[04:34:35] The chief said that the instability associated with last year's invention, including major wars, high inflation, economic uncertainty, mounting terrorist activity, and growing geopolitical tensions with communist China, and obviously in the United States, have had serious ramifications that are poised to keep impacting America negatively. The ongoing wars in Ukraine and the Middle East continue to have potential to disrupt energy and food markets, migration and military economic relationships,

[04:35:15] in addition to their dreadful human cost. These significant and somewhat unprecedented forces cause us to remain cautious. And he adds further, Mr. Diamond's concern about higher inflation is shared by some of his Wall Street colleagues.

[04:35:39] And you may have seen the announcement that was in the press extensively about BlackRock CEO Larry Fink, who recently predicted that price pressures would stay elevated for longer than most people believe. So we're facing a real disaster for many people.

[04:35:59] Many people don't even have the money to pay for the taxes, much less food, and they're getting hit so heavily with their credit cards. They're going to grocery stores and using their credit card and paying 25% interest.

[04:36:17] They're getting wiped out. People don't have money. So my message is at the top of my handout, we can't afford a tax rate increase. Thank you very much for listening to my comments. And I appreciate your sitting through the extensive sessions for the last three days.

[04:36:40] Thank you very much. I'll be exhausted. Thank you very much, Mr. Kramer. I appreciate your testimony. Speaker number three is Arthur Purvis. And following Arthur will be Charles McAndrew, speaker number five. Welcome, Mr. Purvis.

[04:36:56] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, members of the board, I appreciate this opportunity to testify. I'm Arthur Purvis, president of the Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance. This hearing is entitled a public hearing on the proposed real property tax increase and is required by the Code of Virginia.

[04:37:20] The announcement of this hearing states in fine print that the proposed tax rate increase is not four cents, as the Director of Management and Budget just stated, but it is six cents.

[04:37:37] The extra two cents is due to rising residential and commercial assessments. And there are only six speakers who signed up for this hearing. Why is that? And the six speakers are either members of the Taxpayers' Alliance or heard about it from the Taxpayers' Alliance.

[04:37:53] And the reason is, is this is, or is intended to be, a secret hearing. It's because the supervisors want the public to think that the tax rate increase is four cents and not six cents, as was so studiously done by the Director of Management and Budget when he said the tax rate increase is four cents.

[04:38:14] No, this hearing is about a tax rate increase of six cents. So anyway, the supervisors only advertise this hearing in the legal section of the Washington Times where that is legally required. To increase public input to the budget, we recommend that you reform the Fairfax County real estate assessment notice.

[04:38:40] In Utah, the assessment notice includes the advertised tax rate, the homeowner's total tax with the advertised rate, and the date of the budget hearing, all on the front page. This is done by the Utah Truth in Taxation Law.

[04:38:57] In contrast, the Fairfax County assessment notice shows TBD instead of the advertised rate. The total tax increase is therefore understated because it does not include the 4 cent advertised rate. Also, the notice does not mention this legally required public hearing.

[04:39:17] The Fairfax assessment does mention the separate public hearing following this one on the advertised budget plan. It also states in fine print that the rate that would offset the assessment increase is $1.07, and it describes the assessment appeal process.

[04:39:37] However, all of this is in grayed out print on the reverse side with no notice on the front side to look at the other side. To reform the Fairfax assessment notice, replace TBD with the advertised rate, show the homeowners tax at the advertised rate, put the date of the budget hearing on the front page, add see other side at the bottom, print the other side in black instead of grayed out print, make the 6 cent increase the headline.

[04:40:10] State code says that the assessment notice should show the established rate, which refers to the advertised rate. So Virginia code permits you to do this. Instead of sending the notice out at the end of February, just wait two weeks and send it out after the advertised rate is established on March 5th.

[04:40:30] We will be encouraging Taxpayer Alliance members to contact their supervisor to see if you support reforming the tax assessment notice we think reforming the assessment notice would help you get more community input on the budget which is something you profess to want thank you thank you mr. Purvis speaker number speaker number

[04:40:56] five is Charles McAndrew welcome good afternoon mr. chairman and members of the county board and mr. County executive my name is Charles McAndrew and I've been

[04:41:30] coming down here preaching about the budget and taxes for almost 50 years going back that time we had two prestigious board members by the name of jack harry the chairman of the board and martha panina the vice chairman that's how far back i go my wife and i have been homeowners in fairfax county since 1968 i'm a board member of the fairfax county taxpayers alliance and i'm protesting the taxes have been doing this for a number of years we moved in green bar subdivision in early 1968

[04:42:05] my first real estate tax bill for the full year of 69 was 454 dollars the home cost 33 000 at that time and last summer the same house was selling a green bar for 680 000 in other words it increased 20 times my real estate tax bill last year was 10 499 for the house i'm now living in which is a higher priced house than the home I sold. Nevertheless, my real estate bill has gone up 23 times since 1969. Fairfax County real estate is increasing three times the household income

[04:42:44] and inflation from the year 2000 to 2024. Fairfax County chairman is proposing a 7.1% or $618 tax increase for the typical residential household. This is the second largest tax hike in 10 years exceeded by last year's 8.9 increase the proposed increase is more than double than the latest inflation rate recently released at 3.5 percent the proposed or adopted fiscal 29 fiscal 25 property

[04:43:20] tax 100 of assessed value for arlington county is last 1.038 louden is 0.865 prince william is 0.966. Stafford is 0.9175. And then there's Fairfax County at 1.135. This is outlandish.

[04:43:41] It is time to roll back the taxes. Thank you very much for your attention. Thank you, Mr. McAndrew. Our final speaker is speaker number six, Katie Gorka, who has submitted video testimony. Hi, I'm Katie Gorka, chair of the Fairfax County Republican Committee.

[04:44:03] When my husband and I moved to Fairfax County in 2008, we were able to rent a four-bedroom house for $2,000. Today, you're lucky if you can find a one-bedroom apartment for that price. Housing prices have been skyrocketing, growing at more than double the rate of income.

[04:44:24] This is too much of a burden on Fairfax County families. And on top of that, they've been paying higher prices for food, gas, energy, everything because of inflation. And now you want to impose an additional 7% tax increase through a tax rise and increased assessments.

[04:44:46] This is too much. Fairfax families have had to tighten their belts over the last few years. It's time for Fairfax County to tighten its belt. On top of everything else, you're pricing out vital service providers from being able to live here.

[04:45:05] Nurses, firefighters, policemen, teachers, they can hardly afford to live in Fairfax County anymore. No wonder we're seeing the first net outflow of residents since 1830. That's what these tax increases are doing for Fairfax County.

[04:45:24] And finally, you keep asking for more money, but I see services declining. We know that crime is on the rise, and our schools, look at the SAT scores in schools, have dropped dramatically. We have felt this personally.

[04:45:41] Just last year, our house was broken into. People broke in through our son's bedroom and back out again. Thankfully, he didn't come home until after they were out of the house. but I try to imagine what would have happened had they still been here when he came in.

[04:45:58] This is not acceptable. Fairfax County, Board of Supervisors, we say no to the tax hikes. Time to tighten your belts. Thank you for that video testimony. Let me ask you again, is James Parmalee here?

[04:46:18] I just want to call and verify one more time, call his name. Speaker number one, James Parmalee. I do not see him. Is there anyone else here present who would like to testify specifically on this item? Anyone present who would like to testify on this specific item? Okay, if you could come on down, please.

[04:46:35] Is there anyone else in addition that would like to testify on this specific item, which is the effective tax rate increased public hearing? Welcome. If you could please, when you're done with your testimony, if you could just sign in with the clerk on the corner on your way out. Welcome.

[04:46:50] Hi. I'm here today to challenge the board of directors to reconsider the current budget proposal and reject the four cents tax increase to the county's real estate tax unlike this board who received a 20 percent salary increase effective 2024 and I'm not quite sure what is in front of you but I am here today and when I speak to others and others are speaking to me I typically look at them eye to eye and I see that a lot of you have been glancing at your cell phones or whatever else might be in front of your screens however i've now sat here for an hour and a half and i would like your attention while i'm

[04:47:28] speaking thanks um so unlike the board who has received a 20 salary increase effective 2024 it is typical for citizens of fairfax county to receive just a three percent pay increase year over year for those not seeking a title position change um if that as we are all aware the cost of living has soared since the

beginning of coven 19. with all of this being said us taxpayers are constantly searching for ways to make ends meet and things to cut out of our

[04:48:00] families budgets as these minimal increases in our salary are easily surpassed by the 19 increase in everyday goods and services resulting from inflation examples of these cuts include delayed family planning delayed home repairs no longer eating out no vacations and canceling subscriptions et cetera since 2019 i have witnessed a 20 increase in my home's equalization rate however if i search zillow over the past six months only one of the six listings in my townhome community

[04:48:34] have sold for the appraised value that you guys are assessing my home at as such you're proposing an increase to a tax rate in which you are assessing my home at a premium i am not alone in saying that as my family considers having another kid we are certain that we cannot afford to expand our family here in fairfax county i'm asking you to take the difficult and time consuming task of sorting through the budget and beginning to prioritize the needs and wants of your citizens

[04:49:08] that do not require a tax increase we don't have that luxury i have taken the opportunity of looking over the budget and the proposals specifically for fairfax county public schools and i myself am a coach and i did recognize that middle schools did not have sports um offered after school however is this something that we really should be considering now when all of us are having to cut back there are many institutions and facilities out there that are allowing students in middle in the middle school ages to you know embark in these sports however

[04:49:47] they like however is that some cost that we need to you know take on now are there other things that you guys can call all right well thank you for your time thank you very much and if you could please sign in yeah if you could please sign in with the clerk uh let me ask if there's anyone else who would like to testify on this matter this is a public hearing uh seeing no one let me ask the clerk if anyone has called in there are no callers no one has called in uh closing any closing comments from staff no further comment however staff recommends that the

[04:50:21] record remain open until budget markup on april 30th thank you very much any questions from board members any questions from board members seeing and hearing none i will now close the public hearing i'm going to hand the gavel to supervisor smith so that i can make the following motion i move that the board of supervisors close this public hearing while leaving the record open for testimony until april 30th 2024 as part of the budget markup process that will permit persons who wish to testify on this matter to do so during the public hearing on the fy 2025 advertised budget

[04:50:55] plan capital improvement plan or cip and fy 2024 third quarter review by testifying as described on the department of clerk services page on the fairfax county website or by providing written testimony after the close of the public hearings i'll second that most motion is there any discussion seeing none all those in favor of the motion say aye anyone opposed any abstentions that motion passes thank you thank you very much uh vice chair smith and we have one more public hearing before we begin budget public testimony and that is a public hearing on proposed amendments

[04:51:31] to section 61.1-10-2 of the Fairfax County Code relating to sewer availability charges, including the fixture unit rate, service charges, base charges, and hauled wastewater charges. And as soon as staff is ready, if you could please give us a staff presentation.

[04:51:52] Good afternoon. My name is Shirom Lesanin, Director of Wastewater Planning and Monitoring Division. I am here with Elie Cotting, Deputy Director for Department of Public Works and Environmental Services and Emily Smith from the County Attorney's Office. The proposed rate increases for FY25 are the same as the ones you saw last year that we proposed for FY25.

[04:52:16] Those include a 2% rate increase for availability charge, 1% of which is to support our new sewer reimbursement program, a sewer service charge increase of 4.14%, or $0.35 per 1,000 gallons, A base charge increase of $1.64 per month for residential units and accordingly varying increases based on meter sizes for different types of units.

[04:52:45] The total impact of proposed increases on an average sewer bill is 5.8% or $3.51 a month. And lastly, no increases are proposed for hauled wastewater charges.

[04:53:00] I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you very much for that presentation. Are there any questions of staff? Any questions of staff? Seeing and hearing none, this is a public hearing, and I have no one who has signed up in advance to testify on this specific item.

[04:53:17] Is there anyone here present who would like to testify on this subject? Anyone present who would like to testify? This is a public hearing. Seeing and hearing no one, let me ask the clerk if anyone has called in. There are no callers. No one has called in. Any further comments from staff? No comments.

[04:53:33] I recommend that the Board adopt the amended ordinances as set forth in the Attachment 1 to this item in the Board package. Thank you very much. Questions from Board members? Seeing and hearing none, I will now close the public hearing. I will turn the gavel to Supervisor Smith so that I can make the following motion.

[04:53:53] I move that the Board adopt amendments to the Code of the County of Fairfax, Chapter 61.1, sanitary sewers and sewage disposal article 10 charges by amending and readopting section 67.1-10-2 of the county code as advertised. Second by Supervisor Stork. Any discussion? All those in favor of the motion say aye. Aye. Anyone opposed? That motion carries. Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Smith, and thank you to staff. Our final public hearing today is public hearing

[04:54:30] the first of three nights of public hearings on the FY 2025 advertised budget plan, the FY 2025 to FY 2029 advertised capital improvement program with future fiscal years to 2034 and to amend the current appropriation level of the FY 2024 revised budget plan as proposed in the FY 2024 third quarter review.

[04:54:55] During this public hearing, we will also accept testimony on the FY 2025 effective tax rate, as we traditionally do. We will start our public hearing by hearing from our partners on the Fairfax County School Board, and I would welcome down to the podium our school board chair, Carl Frisch, who I know is here.

[04:55:14] I see him. I see school board member Ilyung Moon here as well, and I don't see any. Kyle McDaniel, School Board Member Kyle McDaniel is here as well. If I see any others, I will try to recognize them.

[04:55:30] But at this time, we welcome School Board Chair from the Providence District, Carl Frisch. Thank you very much. And first, I'd like to thank all of the educators and school employees who are joining us here in the auditorium tonight. Good afternoon, County Executive Hill, Chairman McKay, and esteemed Board of Supervisors.

[04:55:50] I appreciate this opportunity to address you and our Fairfax County community during this budget public hearing. Public schools provide a foundation for a thriving community, and here in Fairfax County, we have the best public schools in the nation. Our strength comes from our people.

[04:56:07] It begins with the custodial staff who prepare our schools for learning each day, to our bus drivers who greet our students in the morning and get them to and from school safely. It's the teachers, administrators, and other building support staff who keep our students safe and engaged in learning.

[04:56:25] It extends beyond the school walls to our operational staff who share our mission of equity, excellence, and opportunity for all students. With a strong education, there is no limit to the success that our students can achieve, that every child can achieve. And as Superintendent Dr. Michelle Reed has said, high expectations require high support.

[04:56:46] And on that account, I want to be clear, our school board is grateful for the steadfast support we have received that our educators, our staff, and our students and their families have received from the board of supervisors over these many years. Parents choose to live in Fairfax County for our public schools.

[04:57:04] They expect a school system that provides rich academic experiences and high quality activities, including fine arts, STEM, athletics, and more. We must ensure that these offerings are available to every student regardless of their individual circumstances.

[04:57:20] Businesses expect a school system that drives strong workforce development to keep the next generation of skilled workers right here in our community. Still, with all of this demand, our budget request does not include new initiatives. We are focusing on what is needed to continue ensuring excellence in our schools.

[04:57:38] To invest in excellence, we must start with our best teachers. The FCPS financial year 25 budget proposes a pay increase for staff so that we can be more competitive when it comes to hiring not only our teachers, but our critical staff in our schools as well.

[04:57:55] With nearly 93% of our full-time staff working directly in our schools, these investments are critical. To invest in excellence, we must support our changing student population as well. While overall enrollment is down from pre-pandemic levels, our overall student population continues to rebound.

[04:58:13] And the number of students who receive supplemental services has grown significantly. Since the 2019-2020 school year, nearly 10,000 more students qualify for free and reduced-price meals, requiring greater targeted staffing at these schools. We've seen a 7.4% increase in students receiving special education services and a 5.1% increase in those receiving multilingual language supports.

[04:58:39] Nearly $47 million of our budget request represents the cost of the enrollment growth we've seen, and of that, 84% of the support is needed for these populations that require additional support. Any discussion, though, of school funding in Virginia cannot fail to acknowledge the continued underfunding of our public schools by the Commonwealth.

[04:59:01] I don't have to tell anybody at this dais that according to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, JLARC, Virginia provides less funding per student than our neighboring states, including West Virginia and Kentucky. We receive nearly $2,000 less per student from the state than the average nationally.

[04:59:21] Let me put that a different way. In order to just be average, the state would have to give us another $2,000 per student just to be average. If JLARC's recommended state education funding changes were implemented, FCPS would receive an additional $568 million each and every year from the Commonwealth.

[04:59:46] Just last week, Virginia's governor proposed a budget that decreases funding to public education relative to the General Assembly's adopted conference report. It includes cuts to Fairfax County public school programs for multi-language learners, multilingual learners, and early childhood education programs, a critical key to student success throughout their education.

[05:00:08] For years, school board chairs have stood before you at these public hearings, calling on the Commonwealth to finally step up and meet the needs of Virginia's public schools. With JLARC's nonpartisan review of state funding now complete and ready for everybody to read, and I do encourage everybody to read it.

[05:00:27] you can find it on Google. The time for action is now. Further delay is not an option. In conclusion, I would like to extend my appreciation to our budget chair, Dr. Riccardi Anderson, our vice chair, Kyle McDaniel, and my other colleagues on the board, Lee Burden, Alice Wickington, and Matthew Norton, and the entire FCPS budget team for their incredible work supporting our budget process.

[05:00:52] And I would like to again thank Chairman McKay, members of the Board of Supervisors, and County Executive Hill for their attention, consideration and steadfast support for our public schools in Fairfax County. Let us continue to work together as we do what is right for the students of Fairfax County.

[05:01:08] Thank you. Thank you very much, School Board Chair. Mr. Frisch, thank you for your testimony. We, of course, enjoy and respect the partnership that we have with Fairfax County Public Schools and how important they are to our economy.

[05:01:23] So we thank you for your testimony and the school board members who are here, as well as those who are not here for your service. Much appreciated. With that, we are going to begin our speakers from the speakers list. And before I make a few announcements about that, I do just want to remind folks that we have 79 people signed up to speak tonight.

[05:01:45] So if I call your name and we're appearing like we're getting close to your number, if you could please, please, please come down closer to the podium. It saves a lot of time in between speakers and respects the folks who are at the very bitter end of the night tonight so that they can get their testimony in today as well.

[05:02:04] And just a reminder, I'm going to go back and just remind folks at the beginning that we have a few rules for public hearings. People who are wishing to testify have been provided a number of options. They can testify here in person or they can provide testimony by phone or YouTube video for the videos that are played.

[05:02:23] Those videos have to be submitted in advance and at the designated point in the public hearing, I will call the speakers list. Some of them will be call-in, some of them will be video testimony, some of them will be in-person testimony. And as I said earlier, this is the first day of three days of public hearings.

[05:02:43] So if you are logging on or listening to this meeting or seeing it on TV, There are still opportunities to sign up to testify on our third day of public hearings, which will be this Thursday evening. So please take advantage of that if you wish to testify. With that being said, our first speaker is James Quigley, who is chair of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority Commission.

[05:03:07] We'll have five minutes to testify. He will be followed by Paula B. Sabu, who is Speaker No. 2, followed by Speaker No. 3, Keith Merlin, and Speaker No. 4, Siobhan Chase. If I called your name, if you could make your way down a little bit closer to the podium so that when it's your turn to testify, you are ready to go.

[05:03:26] Welcome, Mr. Quigley. Good afternoon, Chairman McKay and members of the board. I'm James Quigley, Chair of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority Commission. An entrepreneur in residence at Osage Venture Partners and CEO, board member of GoCanvas.

[05:03:45] I'm honored to speak with you today as you work on the fiscal 2025 budget. As the pandemic is now firmly behind us and we are faced with heeding global competition for both business investment and talent, I wanted to share how we at the Economic Development Authority, with the support from the county executive and his team, have worked to meet these challenges and those that lie ahead.

[05:04:12] When the EDA Commission was here speaking to you in April 2023, there were more than 68,000 job openings in Fairfax County. As of April 2024, that number has decreased by more than 20,000. Despite the increase, our unemployment rate remains stable at 2.3%, indicating a strong job market where companies are still hiring.

[05:04:37] Our labor force participation rate stands at an impressive 71.1%, surpassing both the state and the national averages. With the recent population growth of more than 2,500 in 2023, after several years of decline, this signifies we're steadily moving in the right direction and continuing to build a resilient economy.

[05:04:59] In 2023, EDA staff helped our business community grow and thrive, and more than 100 businesses announced creation of over 9,300 jobs in the county. Global government contracting leader Amentum and V2X relocating their headquarters to Fairfax County along with space cybersecurity firm Spider Oak.

[05:05:20] Tech giant NetApp opening their new public sector headquarters in Tyson's Corner. Aerospace company Blue Origin establishing their new Center for Engineering Excellence in Reston. CX leader Qualtrics opening their new AI innovation hub also in Reston.

[05:05:38] Near Star Fusion, Eclipse Technologies and Telecontrols establishing new headquarters in our community, and Armored Fresh Dev Technologies and Cargo Sense expanding their headquarters and footprint here, amongst many others. I want to thank County Executive Brian Hill and his team for their continued support in securing these incredible announcements, investments for Fairfax County.

[05:06:03] And I think you guys will find, too, that our partnership with the county and with the county executive has never been stronger. In 2023, the EDA talent program funded by this board since 2020 continued to elevate Fairfax County among competition has become a vital resource for our business community.

[05:06:22] To date, the EDA has helped more than 17,000 businesses connect with more talent so that they continue to grow. This is a big change from years ago where the EDA was known as getting people into offices. We've been focused on talent and workforce. With dedicated staff to support K-12 collaboration now, higher education institutions, engagement, and military community outreach, we are seeing increased participation by employers and increased hiring.

[05:06:50] In 2023, we hosted more than 50 career showcases with 20 businesses in six Fairfax County middle schools through our partnership with the national not-for-profit Think Big for Kids. We continue to engage 100-plus universities across the nation, 40 of which are HBCUs.

[05:07:09] We are pleased to report that more than 5,300 transitioning military veterans and military spouses were hired in Fairfax County through our partnership with the Fairfax Values Veterans Program. Our marketing to career professionals in key markets like Silicon Valley and New York City that have seen significant layoffs continue to help attract talent locally.

[05:07:31] In 2023, the web traffic of the talent program's digital hub, WorkInNorthernVirginia.com, surpassed 5,600, and nearly 90,000 of those visitors connected directly to open jobs in our region. In comparison, the digital hub's traffic was 2,500 in just this first year, and approximately 50,000 visitors were connected to jobs that year.

[05:07:55] And EDA-hosted and sponsored career fairs attracted nearly 10,000 job seekers. In 2023, the EDA continued to be an active partner and leader in developing sustainable and equitable economic development strategies for Northern Virginia and the greater Washington region.

[05:08:12] The second annual World Quantum Congress was held in Tyson's in September with 800-plus attendees from 20 countries. In September 2024, this global event will again be held in Tyson's. This is a premium event around the world.

[05:08:31] I see I've run out of time. We have our next team member coming up. I do want to say, though, this team has never worked harder post-COVID to get our revenues back up and to be focused on getting companies to continue to see Fairfax County as a leading location to start your business, move your business to, or grow your business.

[05:08:54] Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Quigley. thank you for your leadership as well speaker number two is palabi sabu welcome thank you it's been a long day for you so first heartfelt thank you for all the service you do and i know it's you give of yourself because it's certainly not for the money so really really grateful i'll keep it very short i'm palabi sabu i'm the assistant secretary of the fairfax county economic development authority uh in my day job i run harmonia holdings group which is an it's office services company for the federal government uh very honored to be on this board very honored to

[05:09:29] speak to you here on this platform today as you heard uh eda chair james quigley talk about the efforts eda is making the authorities making to support the community here i want to echo his sentiments uh being a business owner myself i see the business community thriving uh prospering in in the post-pandemic world with all the efforts the ED has put forward with all the partnership and support we have from all of you.

[05:09:56] If you allow me, I'll just read out some statistics that we have in the area. Today in Fairfax County, we are home to 10 Fortune 500 corporate headquarters, and we continue to announce new relocations, expansions, and decisions by major employers who stay and grow in Fairfax County.

[05:10:15] But even a better testament, and I speak for this community, is the small business community and the startup growth, growing companies, the startup ecosystem that continue to grow and continue to succeed. I myself am an immigrant who came with no money in the pocket except, you know, a loan on tuition and I run a midsize company.

[05:10:33] So this county is testimony to the success small businesses legal immigrants have in this area. I want to spotlight how the EDA and so many of our partners collaborated this past year to support this diverse business community I belong to.

[05:10:51] During the past year, SCORE mentors based at EDA work with hundreds of business people like myself, often on ways to start or rebuild their business in the post-pandemic world and to connect them with financial resources and technical assistance.

[05:11:07] The EDA also hosted bi-monthly in-person workshops that attracted hundreds of budding entrepreneurs and connected them with resources from local, state, and federal government. At these sessions, and I've mentored some of these sessions, aspiring entrepreneurs were connected with other entrepreneurs who are at different stages of their journey, mid, small, struggling, whatever, to share lessons learned so that the path is a lot easier for the newer crowd coming in.

[05:11:36] We also collaborated with the county executive and his team in promoting multiple innovative county programs, including the Million Dollar Fairfax Founders Fund, Fairfax Core, Fairfax Thrive, and Talent Up to support small business and startup growth.

[05:11:55] It has been our honor to support these innovative county programs that are making a difference in our community. Fairfax County is also the top county in the region for minority, woman-owned, veteran-owned businesses. I, again, am testimonial to that fact. I stand here. All my success owed to you guys.

[05:12:17] Together with the county executive and his team and our other partners, from government entities to nonprofits, we will continue to support our diverse business base, which is vital for building the economy for the future. Thank you, Chairman McKay and members of the board for the opportunity to speak here today about a growing and diverse business community.

[05:12:39] And together, happy to be part of building a booming economy in Fairfax County. Give back 30 seconds. Thank you very much, Ms. Sabu, for your testimony. And before Speaker No. 3 starts, I also want to recognize and thank a lot of staff members here from the EDA for your good work on behalf of Fairfax County as well.

[05:12:58] Thank you. With that, speaker number three, of course, is Keith Merlin, who is president of the Washington Airports Task Force. Keith, welcome. The floor is yours. Good evening, Mr. Chairman, members of the board. In interest of time, I will abbreviate my remarks. You have printed copies there.

[05:13:14] I just want to thank you and respectfully request a continuation of our funding for our grant. I want to report that Dulles and National are doing well. Fifty million passengers now for the two airports, which is a new record high, which is outstanding. United Airlines has begun construction on a new 14-gate midfield concourse that hopefully will replace the C&D concourse.

[05:13:37] It had rather bad shaped the first step in that. We have an exciting project going on right now. We're partnering with the VEDC, Virginia Economic Development Partnership, to come up with looking at

enhancing the cargo, expanding cargo operations at Dulles, which should be a real positive move.

[05:13:55] And lastly, we continue our role as a major force advancing air service in Fairfax County and for balancing service between National and Dulles so that we can grow businesses in D.C. and get families and businesses to their clients and to their friends and families across the country and around the world.

[05:14:13] And thank you very much. Thank you very much, Mr. Merlin. I appreciate your testimony. Speaker number four is Siobhan Chase. um speaker number four speaker number five and six will provide video testimony now siobhan welcome the floor is yours thank you good afternoon chairman mckay fairfax county board of supervisors members of the public are watching these presentations my name is siobhan chase and i am the vice president of the fairfax county chapter of the southern states police

[05:14:46] benevolent association also known as sspba i'm speaking to you today on behalf of the sspba but specifically about our animal protection police officers and the proposed effort and the proposal in the advertised budget the opinion of the sspba on this matter is not unknown to county management or this board but i will state it once more publicly so it is abundantly clear the fairfax county chapter of the sspba as exclusive bargaining agent for fcpd vehemently opposes the proposal by county management to eliminate the animal protection police officer positions

[05:15:23] We have opposed it since it was brought forward by the county during Fairfax County's first ever round of collective bargaining negotiations. This proposal that has been haphazardly put forward by county management shows little to no benefit to the community, to the budget, or to county operations.

[05:15:39] Furthermore, it is damaging to the county's commitment to transparency, productive labor relations, and employee equity initiatives. This proposal has changed multiple times since it was publicly presented in January. The reasons it has been put forward, the goals of the proposal itself, and the impact on costs and operations have all changed. We have been able to counter every single argument the county has made in support of this proposal. Fairfax County does not have an increased animal intake because of APPOs. Fairfax County's animal intake is lower per capita than our surrounding jurisdictions and is still lower than pre-COVID animal intake. Fairfax County does not engage in a discriminatory

[05:16:16] animal control enforcement model. We have proven this. The APPOs engage in a community-based policing model and provide education and services to the community and refer them to the Department of Animal Shelter regularly. One of the consistent things said about your animal protection police officers by your own county management seems to be an ACO would do this or an ACO would have this training or an ACO wouldn't do this. I would like to remind the board what the Code of Virginia states. The Department of Police may include an animal protection police officer who shall have all the powers of an animal control officer as defined in 3.2-6500. Every single one of your

[05:16:53] animal protection police officers are animal control officers. They are ACOs with the highest levels of training in animal and law enforcement training. That is how we conduct ourselves in Fairfax County. They are animal control officers by operation, by statute, and by mission. The mission of FCPD's Animal Protection Police is to protect the public while defending and promoting animal welfare and the humane treatment of animals. We do not have conflicting missions.

[05:17:22] We can work together in partnership like many other county agencies. The county just needs to be willing. We are willing. Your APPOs are willing. We are willing to come to the table to discuss policies,

procedures, and partnerships that promote services in the community, humane treatment of animals, public safety, and any other initiative that is to the benefit of the community that we serve.

[05:17:43] The director of the animal shelter recently did a phenomenal job spearheading legislation to expand vaccine and microchip clinics. This was a much-needed community service that APPOs refer to people regularly in the community. We can work in partnership to bring these services to the community.

[05:17:59] This proposal is also opposed by EQUAC, the Mount Vernon Council of Citizen Associations, the Fairfax County Federation of Citizen Associations, many wildlife groups, and many members of the community, including former and current animal shelter volunteers. We have made our points in more detail to all of you.

[05:18:15] They will be summarized and sent again by the end of the week for review. This decision will have major implications for the county, the community, and its employees. I do not envy this board. This budget cycle is heavy, but so is the burden of public service. I would like to remind you that we did not bring this forward in this budget cycle, but since we are here, this decision must be made, and it must be made properly.

[05:18:37] I will challenge this board to consider that this is not solely a decision about APPOs versus ACOs or even about how animal services will be rendered in Fairfax County. This is a precedent. Is this board willing to set a precedent to blindly approve a budget item that is heavily opposed, not backed by accurate data, is wrought with concerns surrounding integrity and transparency, and damages their working relationship with their first ever police union?

[05:19:02] Or is each member of this board willing to make a separate informed vote with their own opinion or perspective on the matter about what they believe is the best outcome for Fairfax County? The SSPBA believes that this item should be removed from budgetary consideration before markup. However, if that is not the case, then the SSPBA believes that one of the board members before us should motion that this item become a separate vote from the whole budget package.

[05:19:27] If the decision is to be made via public vote, then you as board members owe it to your community, your employees, and the SSPBA to show where you stand and how you will vote on this issue. I'm almost finished. You know our stance, and it won't be the last you hear of it. I will conclude with a statement the chairman made during this board's inauguration in January.

[05:19:46] Chairman, you quoted your high school motto and stated it was how you wished Fairfax County to be governed. The motto is, advance always. Do we want to advance, or do we want to go backwards? Thank you. Thank you very much, Siobhan, for your testimony, for your testimony and for your service.

[05:20:05] Speaker number five is Kathleen Prucknell, who has submitted video testimony. Hello, my name is Kathy Prusnell, and I am one of two second lieutenants with the Animal Protection Police. I'm speaking to you as an individual today, not on behalf of the Fairfax County Police Department.

[05:20:27] I was hired just over 20 years ago on August 11, 2003. I went through the police academy as the only animal control officer in my class. I wore a brown shirt, and I stuck out like a sore thumb. I didn't even realize I'd be going to the academy until my final job interview, when they told me I had successfully completed the hiring process.

[05:20:45] I had no idea what to expect. I had no military or law enforcement in my family, and I was scared, but all I'd ever wanted to do was work with animals. I would have done anything. I went into the academy with the belief that it was a waste of my time. Just another hurdle to jump before I began my career.

[05:21:05] It didn't see the value in learning about domestic violence cases. How to control a scene when a family member of a deceased person arrives. Crime scene procedures, defensive tactics, courtroom testimony, directing traffic, active violence, and school shooters. I thought I would never use this training.

[05:21:23] I did recognize that much of it was a series of tests. Prove I would be able to carry the huge responsibility that comes with the job. Even as an ACO, I was still an officer. but I honestly resented having to complete the police academy. That was 20 years ago. I worked the street as an officer for 15 years before I was promoted to be a supervisor.

[05:21:43] I've seen all of the changes, all the progress we've made in the last 20 years, and in the time I've become a convert, I would never ask anyone to do this job without sending them through the police academy. I learned firsthand how important that foundation of knowledge is. I joined that training every time I walked up to a door, alone, the difficult job that had to be done, every time I initiated contact with a known gang member, Every time I was alone on a dark highway, putting a suffering animal out of its misery, this job takes a toll.

[05:22:15] It has been said there will be no loss of benefits to the current APP officers. After 17 years on the job, I was diagnosed with hypertension. I was actually diagnosed at my mandatory physical and immediately placed on restricted duty until my blood pressure could be medicated to a safe level. This occupational disease that I have is covered by workers' compensation because of the heart-lung bill.

[05:22:36] The mandatory exam and coverage under the heart-lung bill are examples of the many benefits ACOs cannot be afforded. There are many others. Fairfax County has never been satisfied with the minimum. Everyone knows this county expects and deserves the gold standard. Our police academy continues to revise and expand its training, and I see how the officers coming out of the academy today are better prepared than I ever was. If you accept the proposal, you're setting Fairfax County back 20 years. I appreciate your time. Thank you. Thank you very much for that testimony. Speaker

[05:23:10] number six is Sarah Paisley, who has also submitted video testimony. Good afternoon, chairman of the board. First of all, happy Animal Care and Control Appreciation Week. My name is Sarah Paisley, and I've been a Fairfax County Animal Protection Police Officer for six years.

[05:23:26] I'm a part of the Southern States Police Benevolent Association, and I'm speaking as an individual, not on behalf of the Fairfax County Police Department. I am unable to attend this afternoon due to having to work, but I felt it was very important for me to speak in front of the board in reference to my disapproval of the Animal Services Division's consolidation proposal.

[05:23:45] I find it concerning that county management and other entities are proposing a change of services without truly understanding what exactly animal protection police officers do. No one from the county executive's office has rode with an animal protection police officer, and others involved in the decision-making process have only completed one single ride-along to base their decision off of.

[05:24:05] Animal services has always been a tough and complex field. My time working in the community has shown me that most calls are not black and white. I feel as though the best and most

effective way to perform this job is to have the highest quality of training, safest practices, and providing officers with the tools needed to succeed.

[05:24:24] Taking away the sworn law enforcement status from our officers and providing significantly less training to them will only be taking away from the tools that are currently afforded them. County management and the director of the animal shelter have presented continuously changing reasons for this proposal, many of which have been disproven or can be simply fixed by communication.

[05:24:45] One reason we have heard is the perceived notion that animal protection police officers do not offer resources and services to the community. Animal protection police officers work with the community on a daily basis. They operate on a tiered enforcement model, which is very much in line with the Fairfax County Police Department's policy on procedural justice.

[05:25:05] Cases are often held open for weeks, if not months, working with community members to gain compliance. Officers go out of their way on many occasions to assist people in the community, such as the officer who purchased a Fairfax County dog license for a community member, the officer who went to the nearest store to purchase a collar for an unhoused man whose dog chewed through their harness, or the officer who purchased an ear flush for a dog owner who simply could not afford it on her own.

[05:25:31] These are just a few instances where officers have assisted the community without the help of the animal shelter. Now that the animal shelter has programs in place, such as the resource center, training services, the pet food pantry, and monthly low-cost vaccination and microchip clinics, animal protection police officers are identifying the need for these resources in the community and offering them on a daily basis.

[05:25:54] The offering of animal shelter services and the elimination of animal protection police do not directly correlate. Please consider the dedication these officers have provided the county, the rapport that they've gained in the community, and the relationship they have formed over the years. Losing these things will cause animals to fall through the cracks.

[05:26:12] Thank you for your time. Thank you very much. Thank you, guys. Thank you very much. Speaker number seven is Taylor Namoff, to be followed by Speaker eight, Jennifer Milburn, Speaker nine, James Parmelee, Speaker 10, Louise Epstein.

[05:26:29] If I called your name, please make your way down closer to the podium. Taylor, welcome. The floor is yours. Thank you. Hello. My name is Taylor Namoff. I'm an animal production police officer with Fairfax County with six years of experience. I'm a PBA member and speaking as an individual and not on behalf of the Fairfax County Police Department.

[05:26:46] I first applied to Fairfax County after obtaining my Master's of Science in Criminal Justice. What attracted me to Fairfax County employment was the position of Animal Protection Police Officer. I felt a calling to protect those who cannot speak for themselves, and this job was the perfect fit. In the last six years, I've seen terrible things.

[05:27:04] I've seen an emaciated dog on the verge of death that the owner told me was perfectly healthy, an entire house that was covered in urine and feces from 85 cats that have overrun, and the owner had lost control of the population. I've seen a dog owner beat and kick his small Maltese for simply behaving like a dog.

[05:27:21] I've seen unrestricted dogs hit by a car and die, and I've consoled the owners who have completely unraveled at the scene of loss of their pet. I've also processed a crime scene where a man shot his service dog only to then make it walk down four flights of stairs while bleeding to death. Even with all of that, I remain committed to this job.

[05:27:39] Even though I've seen and experienced a lot of negative sides of this work, I've also experienced so much good. This includes reuniting baby wildlife with its mother, Saving a gosling that was stuck on some fishing line, reuniting a loose dog with its owner, and bringing a bag or two of food to an unhoused family.

[05:27:56] It goes without saying that the type of work Animal Protection Police officers do day in and day out touches the lives of Fairfax County community. Some of it is thankless, but much of it is not. I'm thanked regularly by the community I serve, and I'm thankful they call us for help. Your Animal Protection Police officers did not select this career path for money or notoriety, but to protect the most vulnerable members of society, animals, and people alike.

[05:28:16] Our status as law enforcement officers only enhances this mission. As an animal protection police officer, I'm not only covered under the heart and lung bill, but also line-of-duty death benefits. I have two small children, and I'm currently pregnant with my third child. And I've already committed to serving the county of Fairfax as both animal control officer and a police officer, but I'm now faced with an unnecessary ultimatum, the same for my colleagues.

[05:28:40] This proposal claims that no change in pay or retirement would happen, but what has not been discussed is the change in benefits for the traumatic scenes, exposure to hazardous materials, or protection and benefit to my family should I be killed in the line of duty. If I were to choose to become an ACO, I would forego the benefits provided to a law enforcement officer and potentially leave my children without their mother and any assistance should the worst occur.

[05:29:02] I would be doing a disservice to myself and to my family to walk away from those benefits that I was promised when I was hired as an animal protection police officer. The discourse behind this consolidation model has severely impacted the morale and mental health of every animal protection police officer. Sorry.

[05:29:18] We've served for Pex County and FCPD faithfully and to the best of our abilities. And I'm begging you to allow us to continue the path we've forged. That's what's best for your employees, your community, and your county. Please keep Fairfax County the gold standard in animal protection.

[05:29:34] Thank you. Thank you, Taylor. Speaker number eight is Jennifer Milburn. Welcome. Good afternoon, Chairman McKay and other members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

[05:29:56] My name is Jennifer Milburn. I have been a Fairfax County Animal Protection Police Officer for 26 and a half years. Today, I'm speaking to you as a private individual in opposition to the elimination of the Fairfax County Animal Protection Police Officers. In the mid-90s, I was inspired by my lifelong love for animals and began pursuing a career in animal welfare.

[05:30:17] I sought a job working for an animal shelter and later worked for the Humane Society of the United States, working both in their investigation section and their government affairs section. However, I still wanted to do more. I wanted a job where I could use the laws that I'd helped get passed.

[05:30:32] I applied for a job with Fairfax County, and I was hired as a Fairfax County animal warden in 1997. Not long after graduating from the police academy, the county decided to move animal services to the police department. I recognized the significant long-term value in the change.

[05:30:50] While attending the academy, it was quite clear that officer safety was and still is the most important topic. It is always reinforced. For some to imply that working in an animal control function does not deserve or does not require the protections and training afforded to sworn law enforcement, shame on them.

[05:31:09] There can be no price tag placed on a human life. The proposed change does nothing except devalue the lives of those with a heart to serve and protect both humans and animals. ACOs, Bobby Evans, Roy Markham, and Alvis Carrington were all shot and killed in the line of duty.

[05:31:27] I'm sure that they would have fought against this proposed change as it strips protection from officers performing animal control. Recently, three D.C. Metro Police officers were shot attempting to serve an animal cruelty warrant, and an Arlington ACO was threatened with a gun while responding to a leash law complaint just earlier this month.

[05:31:46] Many have referred to Fairfax APP as the gold standard, the definition of which is the best, most reliable, or most prestigious thing of its type. Isn't something that valuable worth keeping? Fairfax APP stands out as a prime example of the police department's 30 by 30 initiative with 55% of officers and 62% of supervisors being female.

[05:32:08] APP also mirrors the one Fairfax concept and represents a diverse community with 26% being bilingual or multilingual and 26% belonging to a minority group, myself included. while communication stands out as a primary concern as was noted in the 2015-2016 study quote there is no one-size-fits-all organizational structure for animal services organizations end quote yet here we are recommending that we align with neighboring jurisdictions to shoehorn a one-size-fits-all approach the study also suggested improving communication by implementing

[05:32:43] dispute resolution processes to better collaboration do those processes exist now if they don't, why not? The study also cited examples. I'm almost done. The study cited examples of successful partnerships, the most notable being partnership between the NYPD and ASPCA that just celebrated their 10-year anniversary of that partnership. Continued development and communication within the Animal Services Unit can enhance the current model for greater achievement and lead to further success for both entities. As a dedicated employee serving Fairfax County residents, I implore you to not eliminate APP, but to encourage agency

[05:33:20] leaders to find creative solutions. Thank you. Thank you, Jennifer. Speaker number nine is James Parmalee. Is James Parmalee here? Speaker number nine, James Parmalee. I'm not seeing him. Speaker number 10 is Louise Epstein, Chair of Budget and Tax Committee, McLean Citizens Association, and has five minutes. Ms. Epstein, welcome. Sure. Good evening, Chairman McKay, supervisors, and County Executive Hill.

[05:33:56] My name is Louise Epstein, and I'm testifying tonight on behalf of the McLean Citizens Association. The MCA is over 100 years old, we're nonpartisan, and we have 40 board members who are also active in other groups. Our Budget and Taxation Committee includes three chief financial officers, a

bunch of lawyers, economists, consultants, business owners, retired senior federal and local government finance and budget staff and long-time community volunteers for the first time since i joined this

[05:34:31] committee in 2012 our top concern this year is rising property taxes we also are increasingly worried about our ability as a county to pay for unavoidable and growing future expenses every year we read the budget we read the answers to the budget questions we watch your meetings We read staff reports, articles, and studies about WMATA deficits, pension plan liabilities, and capital expenses.

[05:35:03] We want our county to be positioned to pay for all these rising expenses in future years without massive property tax increases. You have very capable staff. Please ask them for some more budget cuts.

[05:35:19] Use their ideas in a new fiscal sustainability five-year strategic plan. which would limit residential property tax revenue increases to inflation. A fiscal sustainability strategic plan would be an excellent companion to your current strategic plan, with its focus on spending priorities.

[05:35:41] This year, average residential assessments rose 2.9%. Some people's assessments rose by 10% or more. The inflation index for our area rose by 3.6%. A few weeks ago, you voted to cap the tax rate increase at four cents.

[05:36:01] We ask you to increase our property tax rate by no more than one cent, because for people whose assessments rose by 10%, that's still a roughly 11% tax increase. Our resolution also discusses school system costs.

[05:36:17] We analyzed raw data from FCPS documents. We contacted UVA to ask why it projects steeper enrollment declines than Fairfax County public schools. We learned that FCPS staff were not always giving complete budget answers, and then we watched school board meetings where the staff didn't give school board members complete answers either.

[05:36:40] I want to highlight two school system-related recommendations in our resolution, which illustrate this issue. First, instead of using scarce bond money to renovate our many aging schools, the school system plans to spend $80 million to build a new school in Dunloring.

[05:37:01] Projections show that surrounding elementary schools have and will continue to have empty seats in five years. The latest justification that more future developments that are not under construction will generate more students is not being used by FCPS to determine capital needs anywhere else in the county.

[05:37:25] Before spending $80 million, the school board should provide adequate data to justify the construction of this elementary school. Second, we appreciate the fact that you, our supervisors, are working with your three pension plans to reduce their unfunded liabilities.

[05:37:44] The school board just did the opposite. Before you even had a chance to vote on the transfer, the school board voted to expand ERFC supplemental pension benefits. They recharacterized this during their meeting as a one-time cost so they could fund it with money from their end-of-year budget review.

[05:38:06] School Board members voted for these benefits without knowing how much they would cost. For example, the new 5-year drop benefit raised the ERFC contribution rate by 0.88%, according to a presentation which I've sent to you, or given you, to the ERFC trustees.

[05:38:27] However, the CFO presentation to the school board only disclosed the net increase of 0.38%. Plus, these estimates all use ERFC's 7% discount rate. If ERFC used the same 6.75% discount rate as the

county plans, then ERFC's unfunded liabilities and the estimated cost of drop would be higher.

[05:38:54] Please read the details about all this in our resolution. And when you vote on the fiscal 2025 budget, please send a clear signal about fiscal responsibility. Thank you very much for all your time and service. Thank you, Ms. Epstein. I appreciate your testimony and the work of the McLean Citizens Association.

[05:39:16] Speaker number 11 is Arthur Purvis, to be followed by speaker number 12, Brian Engler, and speaker number 13, Miriam Smolin. If I've called your name, please make sure you're down close so you're ready to testify. Mr. Purvis, welcome.

[05:39:32] Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the board. I'm Arthur Purvis, president of the Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance. We appreciate county and school employees. As an election officer, I've seen clean schools, dedicated teachers and administrators, and the hard work of the Office of Elections.

[05:39:50] It is unfortunate, though, that the elaborate security measures for Election Day are jeopardized by unrestricted absentee voting. Before my wife passed away, the rescue squad came over four times to help her. They were wonderful. My wife said, you cannot pay the rescue squad too much.

[05:40:07] Similarly, I assume that the county and school unions appreciate the taxpayers who provide $5 billion annually. You can tax us too much, and if you do, we leave. You are biting the hand that feeds you.

[05:40:23] Since FY2000, real estate taxes have been increasing three times faster than household income. The FY2025 average household tax will be $8,700. It would have been $4,500 less if taxes had increased at the same rate as household income.

[05:40:44] Taxpayers are leaving. According to the GMU Center for Regional Analysis, Fairfax County ranked eighth in the nation between Philadelphia and Chicago in domestic out-migration as a percent of population. The presentation itself was entitled, Symptoms of a Struggling Region, a Path to Mediocrity.

[05:41:09] The deterioration was evident in the 1980s when, according to the book, The Fight for Fairfax, developer Till Hazel was, quote, convinced that public schools are failing to prepare young people for college and the world at large, end quote.

[05:41:24] FY 25 raises and benefit hikes for 38,000 county and school employees will cost $367 million. You know how much your real estate and car tax hikes will raise? Less than that, $309 million.

[05:41:43] Teachers will have had 20% raises over three years. According to the county, inflation over those three years was 7%. Non-uniform employees would get 17% raises and uniform would get raises between 21 and 27% over the last three years.

[05:42:02] We are told these raises are necessary because county salaries are not competitive. At a recent town hall, I asked my supervisor and the director of management and budget, what is the average Fairfax County salary? They did not know.

[05:42:18] While the school system publishes the average salary, which is increasing from $86,000 to $90,000, the county's three-volume budget does not publish average salaries. It's a Fairfax County secret.

[05:42:34] However, we estimate the average salary to be $95,000, including $97,000 for police and $102,000 for fire and rescue, and that's before overtime. The reason for hiring shortages is the declining birth rate. There are not enough younger workers to replace retiring baby boomers.

[05:42:53] Raises will not fix that. Moreover, neither the county nor schools have provided evidence that they're losing employees en masse due to compensation. Most will lose salary, pensions, and job security in the private sector. Are 20% raises due to union contributions?

[05:43:12] Democrat supervisors received $260,000 in union campaign contributions for last November. We recommend that you increase FY25 spending by $63 million instead of $363 million by freezing salaries until, one, the school system fixes K-3 reading and arithmetic curriculum so parents don't have to teach the basics at home, often at great expense, and so low-income children master reading and arithmetic by the critical third grade.

[05:43:44] Two, the county shows it is making business-friendly permitting and inspection processes and does not rely for prosperity on casinos. Three, the county and schools provide data showing that they are losing employees to the private sector due to compensation.

[05:44:05] Four, supervisors pledge to not receive union campaign contributions, which are a conflict of interest. And this still leaves $55 million for increased pension and insurance rates. If unions want compensation that outpaces inflation, they should run a school system in a county that increases household income faster than inflation.

[05:44:28] Schools need to teach phonics and multiplication tables. It's critical that schools provide our increasing low-income population an escape from poverty and a chance at the American dream. Thank you. Thank you, Arthur. Speaker number 12 is Brian Engler, chair of the Library Board of Trustees, and has five minutes.

[05:44:47] welcome mr engler thank you good evening my name is brian engler i'm the chair of the fairfax county public library board of trustees and i'll be speaking on behalf of that board i appreciate the time you've given me today to speak about one of our community's most vital and trusted resources our libraries fairfax county public library is the largest and busiest public library system not only in virginia but also in the entire southern united States. Last year, FCPL experienced nearly 3 million visits to our branches with an average

[05:45:21] of 232,000 visitors per month. We're on track to see almost 4 million visitors in the current fiscal year as people continue to flock to our libraries. In 2024, Fairfax County Public Library is celebrating our 85th anniversary. It was on February 1st, 1939, that your predecessors on the Board of Supervisors voted to fund the start of a public library system for Fairfax County.

[05:45:48] Their initial allocation, $250. It's hard to imagine that such a small initial investment would provide the first bookmobile and eventually grow into our current robust multi-branch public library system. Our library is deliberately positioned to support many of the county's strategic plan areas, most notably lifelong learning, economic opportunity, and cultural and recreational opportunities.

[05:46:18] FCPL offers free programs and events throughout the year, ranging from author presentations to early literacy story times, crafting workshops and yoga classes to tax assistance for seniors and more. In addition to year after year increases in foot traffic and program attendance, we've seen larger growth in readership both physical and digital book collections are heavily used so much so that many items have months long or even years long hold lines last fiscal year we circulated over 11 million items and are on track to see 12 million items circulated this year with over 525

[05:46:57] 000 active card holders half of the county's residents are using the library and the numbers are ever growing. The foundation of our library is our collection of books. The library's mission is to develop a collection that informs, engages, and inspires the diverse community it serves.

[05:47:16] The collection offers users a variety of formats, viewpoints, and subjects that are available on open library shelves and through the website. While the library budget will see an increase in staff salaries proposed for fiscal 25, there's no additional money to support the book budget. The library board is incredibly grateful that our library system is not taking larger cuts, but this does not reduce the need for more books to satisfy the voracious readers of Fairfax County. The impacts of the library's collection development budget falling short every year include not

[05:47:54] enough e-materials to satisfy the ever-increasing demand, fewer copies of homework related materials to help students longer wait times to get the books you and your constituents want to read and perhaps most troubling old and sometimes outdated items in many subject areas this year we'd like to turn special attention to the latter specifically to the library's adult nonfiction collection our community relies on the library's material being current, accurate, and available without too long of wait. Many areas of our non-fiction collection

[05:48:32] are years out of date, and there are not enough funds in the book budget to purchase materials to replace them. In some categories, more than 60% of the library's items are outside the recommended age to keep them on the shelves, including collections supporting small and local businesses, home care and child rearing, computer sciences and graphic design, travel, and most concerning to me, medical topics. Last year, the Board of Supervisors generously allocated a one-time funding addition of $300,000 for the collection budget to reduce wait times on popular digital

[05:49:10] and physical fiction items. That was a huge help, though limited in scope, and we thank you again. This year, the Library Board of Trustees would like to ask for the library to receive a permanent increase to our collection budget that would allow the library to provide a current and accurate non-fiction collection.

[05:49:31] Thank you for your time and for your continued support of our public libraries. Thank you, Mr. Engler. Appreciate your testimony. Speaker number 13 is Miriam Smolin, chair of the Fairfax Library Foundation, has five minutes as well. Welcome.

[05:49:47] Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Miriam Smolin, and I'm serving my second term as chair of the Fairfax Library Foundation Board of Directors. Previously, I was honored to serve two terms as the chair of the Fairfax County Public Library Board of Trustees.

[05:50:04] I'm happy to have this opportunity to discuss the 2025 budget for Fairfax County as it relates to the Fairfax County Public Library. The Fairfax Library Foundation staff and volunteers are hard at work fundraising and advocating for the Fairfax County Public Library.

[05:50:21] As you know, the foundation provides funding to our library system to expand the reach of the services that the library provides beyond the funding that the counting provides. For example, this past year, we provided funding for the Ready to Read program, the Early Literacy Outreach Program, Changing Lives Through Literature, and 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten, all of which are programs provided through our library system to positively impact the lives of young children.

[05:50:50] The foundation funding for these programs was just about $390,000. And as I'm sure you all know, last year, thanks to generous community support, the foundation sponsored the highly popular Children's Summer Reading Festival. The purpose of that festival was to celebrate children's out-of-school reading throughout the summer months and prepare them to return to school in the fall.

[05:51:14] As it turned out, this was highly successful and popular. It happened on two different Saturdays in two different library locations, and we hosted more than 2,500 families and children for these amazing mornings. The library summer reading program, as a result of this success, had a record-breaking 15,000 kids participate in the summer reading challenge.

[05:51:37] We are now fundraising to host the second annual Children's Literacy Festival, which will occur this summer in June and in August, and we're hoping to host even more families. The number one goal of the foundation is to provide supplemental support to the Fairfax County library system, but these efforts, as you know, in no way replace the funding that is provided in the Fairfax County budget.

[05:52:01] As Brian just mentioned, year after year, the library has seen increasing usage in foot traffic, program attendance, and readership. That is all very good news, but the difficult news is that the funding for the library needs to keep up with the expanding use. The foundation would echo the request that was just made that the Counting's budget make permanent the supplemental funding that was offered last year so that we could continue to expand those high priority areas for Fairfax County's readership.

[05:52:32] Finally, I want to share with you that this is the 30th anniversary year for the partnership between the Fairfax Library Foundation and the Fairfax County Public Library. We are currently planning a festive 30th anniversary event in the fall to celebrate. You'll all get an invitation, and we certainly hope that you can join us.

[05:52:50] Thank you for your time. Thank you very much, Miriam. Speaker number 14 is Michelle Jefferson, who will be followed by Heather Thomas, Maria Isabel Liva Alfonso, and Nicole Miller. If I called your name, please make sure you're down close so that when it's your turn to testify, you are ready.

[05:53:14] And Ms. Jefferson is chair of the Community Action Advisory Board and has five minutes for testimony. Welcome. Good afternoon. As stated, my name is Michelle Jefferson.

[05:53:29] I am the Community Action Advisory Board chair, also known as CAB. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. The CAB's mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of people experiencing poverty by influencing the decision-makers, providing funding, and taking action to address the root causes and conditions of poverty and injustice. In Fairfax County, there are over 62,000 people living in poverty. The CAB extends its gratitude to the Board of Supervisors and Supervisor Alcorn

[05:54:07] for their leadership in addressing the ongoing challenges faced by Reston Strong. As you strive for a more permanent solution, transparency in the transition process is crucial, particularly for the community members who will be affected by the changes in spaces. Effective communication can help alleviate fears and ensure that everyone is informed and involved. Fairfax County has a commendable record of accomplishments in health and human services, yet there is

[05:54:41] always room for improvement while we are focusing on our local budget it is important to acknowledge our local finances are influenced by our federal policies addressing the broken system at the federal level and working with our state and federal partners is imperative and fairfax county can be the

model to lead for that change additionally continue fostering collaborations between the non-profit organizations and the um and the county and lead to increased opportunities

[05:55:17] efficiencies by working together towards common goals we can maximize the impact of our efforts and create a stronger more resilient community cab is pleased to see the proposed fiscal budget includes an increase for health and human services employee we must do everything possible to support them in addition as we're looking at things always have a representative from the community at the table so when we're making decisions we know how that will impact them as you consider the budget items before you cab requests the board not to cut hss programs to

[05:55:56] offset spending reduction the cab wishes to express support for investments imposed in other priorities which comprises only two percent of the county's vital emergency services the cab would also like to request that board funds programs that help families attain and retain affordable place to live in closing i recommend that the board look at the housing match dark board as a potential housing solution we can think through that a little bit deeper and maybe put it as part of our rfp and our funding additionally as you move forward i heard the

[05:56:36] tax thing i did hear it we're still asking for that additional penny for the the real estate tax for prevention of affordable housing it is clear subsidizing will not resolve the housing shortage our workforce development shortage food insecurity and child care challenges instead we must prioritize continued investment expansions of public partner public private partnerships by tackling the underlying issues within the broken systems we pave the way for sustainable success in addressing these critical issues let's empower fairfax by embracing radical

[05:57:15] innovation to tackle our most pressing issues head-on our goal is to ensure every member of our community has access to housing, food, child care, that enables them sustainable support to support their needs and that they thrive.

[05:57:34] So I thank you once again for your time. Thank you very much, Ms. Jefferson. Speaker number 15 is Heather Thomas, who is the vice chair of the Community Action Advisory Board. Welcome. The floor is yours. Good afternoon, everyone.

[05:57:51] As he said, my name is Heather Thomas. I'm the vice chair of CAB, but I'm also the president of the Fairfax Family Council. Thank you for giving me this opportunity today to talk to you about some very important concerns and issues that are being experienced by Fairfax County residents. We are facing both a housing and a child care crisis.

[05:58:10] As housing costs rise, low-income individuals in our community, including long-term residents, are being priced out of Fairfax County. For example, my family and I live on a tax credit property, which is considered affordable housing. The rent for our unit is now over $2,100 a month, costing over $25,000 a year, not including basic utilities.

[05:58:33] In some areas of the county, rent is even higher. To put this into context, a person working 40 hours a week at $12 an hour would have a gross income less than that, coming to $24,960 a year. Rental prices are more than 50% of any household income on these types of properties that are supposed to be considered affordable.

[05:58:56] Two years ago, when I was here before you, I asked you all, how is this affordable? To create policies and programs that properly address the issue of affordable housing, we must honestly ask

ourselves if affordable housing exists in this county. Truly affordable housing means being able to afford rent and basic utilities, even if you're working a minimum wage full-time job, without needing any type of assistance for food, for housing, for medical, for child care, etc.

[05:59:28] When looking through this lens, we have no other choice but to admit to ourselves that the reality is there is no truly affordable housing in Fairfax County. Our neighbors that are being most affected by this unstable housing and eviction are not those at 60% of the median income, but those that are living at or below the federal poverty level.

[05:59:49] There are about 5,500 housing vouchers in the county. This leaves more than 20,000 households living under the federal poverty line without rental subsidy. Sadly, many of those in poverty are unable to access low-income housing options as they have minimal income requirements, including many of the properties owned by Fairfax County.

[06:00:10] Countless county residents are forced into illegal housing situations or that is substandard housing. In addition to exorbitant housing costs, families with children are having to deal with trying to afford child care. For workers with low to moderate income, these costs can be prohibitive.

[06:00:30] Furthermore, families with young children face the additional feat of being able to have access to quality early childhood education programs. Without access to affordable quality child care, families continue to work and to go to school and might resort to leaving their kids in compromising positions just to put food on the table.

[06:00:50] Targeted efforts will have to be explored beyond the recent expanded eligibility in the Child Care Assistance and Referral Program for 275% of the poverty level to 350%. In line with one Fairfax County policy, every Fairfax County resident, regardless of income, deserves a place to call home and quality, affordable child care for their children to grow and thrive.

[06:01:16] Thank you for your time. Thank you, Ms. Thomas. Speaker number 16 is Maria Isabel Leyva Alfonso. Welcome. She will be followed by Nicole Miller, Holly Elizabeth Hazard, and Susan Lamy. If you are here, please make your way down closer to the podium. Ms. Alfonso, welcome.

[06:01:37] Good afternoon. My name is Maria Isabel Leiva Alfonso. I am a regional representative on the Fairfax County Community Action Advisory Board. I want to thank the board's supervisor for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the CAF and the individuals and families living in Fairfax County that are struggling to afford high-quality child care.

[06:02:00] And as a result, they must sacrifice their place in the workforce and have fewer opportunities to improve their economic mobility. In Fairfax County, the average cost for a full-time child care for a preschooler ranges from $60,000 to $22,000 per year.

[06:02:21] This cost goes up by several thousand dollars for an infant. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are about 7,900 Fairfax County families with children who have an annual income below $25,000.

[06:02:39] As you can see from these numbers, child care can cost almost as much as a family's entire income. This could make employment and economic independence for a family extremely difficult to reach and maintain. I can speak from personal experience on this issue.

[06:02:57] Finding and paying for child care has been a very challenging experience for me. I look everywhere for suitable in-home care for my son that I could afford. He went through four different caregivers and had very bad experiences. In order to work, I have to have child care, and to afford child care, I have to have a job.

[06:03:18] This is a never-ending, stressful cycle that many families face every day. The calls for child care do not end when public school begins, since it is very hard to find care for kids before and after school and during the school breaks.

[06:03:35] School-age child care, SAC, is an excellent affordable county program that operates under a sliding scale fee. SAC is also able to consider families' financial circumstances when determining the program fee.

[06:03:52] Unfortunately, it is very hard to get into SAC because of lack of staffing. This can impact each SAC's location number of available slots and children can sit on a waitlist for a very long time. I've been waitlisted for after school care for two years now. I am still 22nd on the list.

[06:04:12] Even though there are multiple ways to register for SAC program in person, on the phone, online, It can be very hard to get a sport at certain locations. The registration process opens at 8 a.m., and by 8.30 a.m., they are almost full, and children get waylisted.

[06:04:32] Additionally, finding affordable childcare during the summer is the hardest for school-aged kids in the time frame of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. This is what parents are working year-round. Thank you so much for your time. Thank you very much for your testimony. Our next speaker, I believe, has changed again.

[06:04:52] This was a call-in, then was in person. I think it's a call-in again. Speaker number 17, Nicole Miller, is that a call testimony? Oh, you are here. Okay, you very much are here. Welcome, Nicole. The floor is yours. Thank you. I decided to come in person because I testify at these sound hearings, and I never come down and say what I have to say to your faces, so I wanted to come down and share with you how I actually feel.

[06:05:15] So I met with the director of the DTA this year at my house, and we went through all the paperwork, And I realized that the person who originally built my house sold it for $19,600. My house now, neighbors sold their house last week for $775,000.

[06:05:32] So that's the difference between my house originally and the house now. I've had five houses on my street sell this year with an unpermitted second basement apartment. All those homes have sold for over $700,000. Comparing that home to a house without a second floor basement, you're seeing a $2,000 plus rental ability in that basement that I'm not having, but yet you're comparing me to the sales of that house.

[06:05:56] I don't find that fair. So the standard features of the homes are looked at, square footage, all that. But what's not being looked at is the fact that that person has a $2,000 to $3,000 rental base in the basement. So recently in our community, we've had some crime happen, and we have found that several of the homes in our neighborhood have large quantities of people living in them.

[06:06:18] Recently, a home five houses away from me had a drug raid, and it turned out 21 people were living there. So when I filed a code enforcement complaint on over-inhabitation, I found that the law says

that you only need 50 square feet per person in the house. So if you take 1,100 square feet divided by 50, how many people can legally live in that house?

[06:06:37] It's easy to afford a house for $800,000 at 8% interest when you have a $2,000 apartment in the basement and you've got 21 people contributing to the cost of that house. For somebody like me, it isn't that easy. So I'm a typical Fairfax County resident. We're a childless family.

[06:06:53] We live here, pay taxes, and I chose student loans over having a kid, and I'm now in my 40s. And we've decided that after everything we've been through that we want to bridge that gap and have kids. So at my age, those things cost a lot of money. So IVF is $20,000 a shot, and we're looking at that, but we've saved for that.

[06:07:11] So for us, having to pay more and more for everything is taking away from our ability to have a family, things that we waited for because we chose to pay our student loans and get low-paying government jobs before we were able to do those things. So for the last couple of years, my husband, who is my godsend, I've had COVID four times, vaccine, COVID.

[06:07:32] One thing I found out in the last year here in Fairfax County, there is absolutely no doctor who treats long COVID or any of the associated vaccine and injuries that happen. So my husband and I, I'm having to travel out of state, out of county to pay for thousands of dollars worth of treatment every month in order to just exist, exist in this life.

[06:07:50] If you've ever had long COVID or you know what long COVID is, that's the fatigue, the brain fog, the debilitating condition. And this county spends zero money on actually doing any kind of research on new things that they can that they're doing everywhere else but here to treat people like that and so when I hear things like the students are having low scores on their SATs those scores are going down I think to myself does anybody ever treat those kids or test them to see if it's not just their testing ability if maybe they also serve have long COVID and those types of things and it's sad for me that how much we pay and we don't spend any money on things that you guys told us was safe to get done was the

[06:08:28] vaccine and I think I thank you for your time and I just wanted you to know that I appreciate all of you here tonight, actually looking at me in my face and listening to everything I have to say, because it's hard to come up here and be on this side when you struggle with so much and tell you guys exactly how you feel. So I appreciate all of you guys.

[06:08:44] Thank you very much. Thank you, Nicole. Thank you very much, Nicole, for your testimony. Speaker 18 is Holly Elizabeth Hazard, who's here. Suzanne Lamy, Farazi Khan, and Sean Corcoran.

[06:08:59] If you're here, if you can make your way down closer to the podium, we are on speaker number 18. Welcome. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the board. I'm Holly Hazard, and I'm a resident in Mason District. I have over 40 years' experience in the field of animal protection, and I'm here to talk about the animal shelter's proposal.

[06:09:17] I applaud Fairfax County's effort to restructure the county animal protection program. It's best for our county, our animals, and our community. All of our neighboring jurisdictions use animal control officers who work under the shelter. Most calls for service are related to sick, injured, orphaned, or stray animals.

[06:09:35] They are not police matters. ACOs can deliver the programs of the shelter directly to pet owners. They aren't limited to the police department's costly enforcement model. These are aspirational reasons for the combination. However, they are also practical ones. Let me address the elephant in the room with no pun intended.

[06:09:54] Best management practices for any organization would suggest that having one program of any organization with split authority, power, culture, and goals leads certainly to inefficiencies, conflict, and waste. The split authority in these agencies has led to a lack of accountability on the part of the police, intimidation of the shelter staff, whether intended or not, and a serious waste of our county resources.

[06:10:15] You have been provided with letters from past animal sheltering directors, all deemed exemplary, who left Fairfax County in part due to the, quote, dysfunction, end quote, of having two agencies responsible for animal care and control. One former director wrote to you, quote, The police department's captain's post over animal control changed so often that it was hard to develop a relationship of trust and gain traction on a mutually beneficial culture.

[06:10:42] Every time a new captain came aboard, the officers used that opportunity to mount a campaign to discredit animal shelter leadership and initiatives. This is not a problem of the past, and I find this astounding. Our own police department filed complaints with the Division of Wildlife Resources against our own shelter staff, their own county employee peers, for federal wildlife trafficking violations.

[06:11:05] This caused our own county executive, our state wildlife department, our county attorneys, the director of our animal shelter, and others to spend time on this ridiculous charge. Our own employees were investigated, and one had to hire her own attorney for doing their job because our own police department used their powers against our own employees.

[06:11:25] We've inadvertently created a difficult work environment, and we lose competent, caring employees as a result. No one is suggesting that our APPs aren't dedicated and responsive. They are. No one is suggesting this work isn't dangerous at times. It is. We simply recognize that there's a better way, and this is understandably upsetting.

[06:11:44] Change often is. But that's not a reason for the status quo. We don't often have an agency coming forward to suggest how we can spend less money and do a better job. But that's what the Department of Animal Services has suggested. We don't need sworn police officers in Calvary Vests responding to calls for stray dogs and injured squirrels.

[06:12:04] We can move to a collaborative model for animal welfare and adopt the same service model that has worked successfully for decades in our neighboring jurisdictions. Thank you for your time. Thank you very much, Holly. And speaker number 19, I hope I'm pronouncing speaker 19's last name correctly, Susan Laum.

[06:12:23] Laumey, thank you. Good evening, everyone. Allow me. I'm here to speak in opposition to the animal police proposal. I'm representing the Virginia Dog Army. Our group advocates for companion animals. In this instance, we find ourselves in the unusual position of having to defend protections we already have.

[06:12:48] Our members are asking, why can't we have both an effective animal shelter and a highly efficient animal service police force? Virginia's reputation has been stained nationally in recent years by the notoriety of criminal animal cases.

[06:13:06] Michael Vick, Invigo, the Natural Bridge Zoo, they didn't happen in Fairfax County. We have an animal police service. We might like to think that criminal animal cruelty doesn't happen here. But there are more felony cruelty cases in our court regularly than most residents are aware.

[06:13:28] Names like Quincy and Noodles come to mind. Several have asked, why is this a budget question? And why under the proposal would the shelter need a fourth management position versus abolishing and restructuring its existing positions?

[06:13:43] The proposal has surfaced with some unexpected maneuvers, avoiding our newly established collective bargaining process, political solicitation on public property, and finding itself here in the budget approval process.

[06:14:00] Animal advocates, naturalists, wildlife rehabbers, long-time shelter volunteers, as well as police unit members, past and present, are crying foul. We can kill this budget question and approach our needs with true and open, full community participation, or we can face the community's ongoing questions about why this proposal, without documenting proposed savings, is being forced through as a budget-done deal with only promises of a better system.

[06:14:32] Thank you. Thank you very much. Speaker number 20 is Faraz Khan, Sean Corcoran, and speaker number 22 will be Charles McAndrew followed by Kyle Stone. If you could be down close and ready when it's your turn to testify, we are on speaker number 20.

[06:14:53] Welcome. The floor is yours. Good afternoon, Chairman McKay and Supervisors at County Executive Health. My name is Faraz Khan and I have been here in Fairfax County for the last 50 years.

[06:15:09] My husband and I raised three children here, and I still have one child here living with his two sons. So when I'm testifying here, I think about three generations. My late husband and I moved over to the current split-level home in 1993.

[06:15:30] We decided to build a small addition so that we could live there as we age instead of moving to a nursing home. When I was younger, I was a biology teacher for 29 years. I taught biology here and I worked for American Red Cross as a volunteer teaching American First Aid and CPR for 10 years.

[06:15:54] And still now I'm working as a volunteer for some organization for poor children education in Somalia and Malawi and back in Pakistan. My husband was an economist since he passed away 15 years ago.

[06:16:15] I have been living on Social Security and part of his income, a pension. When we brought this house, we paid the mortgage. I brought the long-term care, and we saved money so that we could enjoy living at our home when we retire.

[06:16:34] Until COVID, my property tax increased very reasonably since 2019. However, my assessment have increased by about almost 40%. Taxes have increased.

[06:16:51] The home around me have been down and replaced by large mansions. But we haven't changed anything. We have a still simple living. I realize that you need money to pay your policemen and your firefighters. You need to maintain parks.

[06:17:07] I understand everything. And you need public schools where my children will be going, go on, and my grandchildren will be going. However, please find a way to cut the cost so that we can reduce our property tax and I can pay a reasonable increase in my property tax.

[06:17:30] But for the last five years, the increase has become so unreasonable. And our homes have increased in value, but my income is not increasing as the same rate. So please reduce our property tax rate so that I can continue to live and enjoy my home.

[06:17:52] Thank you very much. Thank you very much for your testimony. Thank you. Speaker 21 is Sean Corcoran. Mr. Corcoran, welcome. Good evening.

[06:18:10] Chairman McKay, members of the Board of Supervisors, Mr. Hill and staff, thank you for having us here today. My name is Sean Corcoran, and I'm the chairman of the Employee Advisory Council. As you know, the EAC is recognized through county ordinance as a peer advocacy organization supporting the over 10,000 married employees of Fairfax County throughout the General County, Police Department, Fire and Rescue Department, and Sheriff's Office.

[06:18:37] As members of the council, we recognize the incredible benefits that the county provides and work to create an environment where employees can not just work but thrive. We do this on a number of different levels, such as the annual awarding of the Don Smith Awards, Providing morale boosters like food or snack trucks to work locations throughout the county, attending and supporting agency-specific training or events, and working with and representing individual employees in workplace challenges or grievances.

[06:19:04] I am proud to say that my fellow colleagues who sit on your Employee Advisory Council volunteer their own time and energy because they are not just invested, but emotionally invested in the success of their fellow colleagues and the county as a whole. Last year, we came to the board with the theme of restoring dignity in the workplace.

[06:19:22] Overall, Fairfax County and you made incredible strides in meeting this challenge. Not only do we see a fully funded market rate, we also saw historic achievements as the county successfully completed contract negotiations with police and fire collective bargaining units.

[06:19:39] As Fairfax County enters a new era, we ask that you continue the investment. It is vital that the agreements that have been reached be fully honored. In addition, it is incredibly important that we do not neglect the investments made in the general county workforce as they navigate a path to effective representation.

[06:19:57] It is vitally important that the board fully fund the market rate adjustment. The board fully funded the MRA in FY 2024, providing employees with some level of ability to stay afloat against unprecedented inflation pressures. We must continue to fully fund the MRA in FY25 to at least keep pace, even though the county workforce has seen diminished compensation growth over the last 15 years.

[06:20:20] I want to emphasize, as we do again and again, that this is not a race. Funding the MRA simply allows county employees to maintain the ability to make basic ends meet. Secondly, we ask that you fully fund compensation programs, including the police and fire collective bargaining agreements.

[06:20:38] The board has shown its support for collective bargaining process. Realizing the hard work of so many on both sides of the negotiating table will be an incredible milestone for Fairfax County. Furthermore, we must ensure performance, merit, and longevity adjustments are fully funded for general county and non-represented uniform public safety employees.

[06:21:00] Over the past couple years, strides have been made to correct some of the catastrophic decisions that led to inequitable compensation systems. We must remain committed to reestablishing Fairfax County as an employer of choice. Third, we ask that you maintain the current Animal Protection Police Unit within Animal Services and refrain from any reclassification.

[06:21:19] Changes were made around 2016 to reorganize animal control officers to animal protection police due to legislative revisions. These changes have led to a better trained, better organized, and more professional entity that serves the citizens of Fairfax County with distinction.

[06:21:35] Changing the organization yet again in a relatively short time frame will arguably diminish the positive advances that the board saw fit to enact. And just on a personal note, having been kind of involved in that process from the beginning, working on the legislation that got it done, working with many of you to make sure it got across the finish line, and then administratively, as MPPO Milburn had talked about, the patchwork systems that we had up to that point.

[06:22:06] We had game wardens. We had people that come in, you know, the late 90s, early 2000s, and then the different systems to kind of bring that all together and really get to someplace where it was a win. I think it was a win across the board. You know, to come back in a relatively short time period and kind of want to reinvent the wheel, I just think we're in the wrong spot.

[06:22:27] And so I personally would like to see us maintain the system that we have because I think it is a great service to Fairfax County. And I say that not just as an employee and an employee advocate, but also as a taxpayer and a resident. Let us enter this new era with strong commitments to our workforce and continuing to invest in our greatest resource, our employees.

[06:22:48] Together, we can create a thriving and equitable environment for all. Thank you. Kyle Stone, Speaker 24, Anita Herrera, and Speaker 25 is a call-in.

[06:23:08] Okay, welcome, Mr. McAndrew. Good evening, Mr. County Executive and Mr. Chairman of the Board and the members of the County Board.

[06:23:29] My name is Charles McAndrew, and I'm here today to protest the outrageous salaries of the Fairfax County public school officials. I understand that the chief experience and engagement officers paid $244,000, and the chief equity officers paid almost $249,000 annually.

[06:23:54] This is more than the U.S. Secretary of Defense, who has paid $221,400 and is responsible for a trillion-dollar budget and millions of military and civilian employees. The superintendent has paid, this one really knocks me for a loop, $407,832.

[06:24:12] That's more than the President of the United States who makes $400,000. These are examples, in my opinion, of overpaid executives. And keep in mind that a congressman and a senator make $174,000 annually.

[06:24:30] I understand, Mr. Chairman, that you had a real problem with the FCT budget back some time. I believe that you stated that the FCPS requested a school transfer of $165 million is unrealistic, which I certainly agree.

[06:24:48] The transfer to the school should be substantially reduced, especially that they expect a 6% salary increase, which should not be given to the top 25 paid high executives at the FCPS. The advertised

budget is $3.8 billion, and that includes an increase of $8.6 million over the previous $3.8 million, even though the enrollment is estimated to rise 1%.

[06:25:17] In the meanwhile, the latest inflation rate is 3.5%, and yet FCPS wants their budget double the inflation rate, and as SAT scores continue to go down.

[06:25:33] fairfax county public school spending has increased six times faster than enrollment since the year 2000 through fiscal 2024 so my request is to cut the transfer of funds to fairfax county public schools by 100 million i want you all to know that that it sounds like i'm always down here complaining but i do have some some uh fine people that i've dealt with And that's Christine Jackson and Paul Hagen and Joe Lahat and Lee Burden, who's a CFO of the public schools.

[06:26:11] These are very competent people, and I want you all to know that I'm not always complaining. These are compliments for these people. Thank you very much for your attention. Thank you, Mr. McAndrew. I appreciate your testimony. Speaker number 23 is Kyle Stone, who's chairman of the Fairfax County Park Authority.

[06:26:29] If Anita Herrera is here, if you can make sure you're down close, you will be speaker number 24. Mr. Stone, welcome. Thank you. Good evening. My name is Kyle Stone. I serve as the chairman of the Fairfax County Park Authority Board. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the board for the opportunity to address you today.

[06:26:47] I want to express at the top, first and foremost, my appreciation for the park and recreation investments included in this year's proposed budget. Our park system, all 24,000 acres of it, and its hundreds of courts, fields, and facilities, plays an essential role in the everyday lives of individuals, families, and entire communities that hold vastly diverse ages, abilities, and interests.

[06:27:09] With your support and partnership, we make a difference daily for county residents by providing positive experiences and amenities that enhance the quality of life in Fairfax. Since I was here about 12 months ago, our boards have engaged in a number of constructive conversations on a range of topics including what is to me the most pressing short-term challenge facing the park system and that's maintenance years of expanding our parks trails and facilities to meet the demands of a growing community has made it increasingly difficult to fully fund maintenance requirements park staff has stretched dollars they've pinched pennies and they've creatively applied savings

[06:27:44] associated with persistent vacancies and one-time funding granted by this board to create a patchwork of funding to minimize how far we fall behind each year but in spite of those best efforts we still fall behind a little bit every year and over time we now have a deferred maintenance backlog in excess of 100 million dollars so it's heartening to see that in contrast to last year when I enchanted this board for relying on one-time funding this budget proposal includes a real and significant 2.6 million dollar baseline investment in this key area and placing us on a much more positive trajectory moving forward. This perpetual funding removes a measure of uncertainty in our

[06:28:23] planning and will help us begin to address consequential park care and upkeep tasks ranging from trash removal and recycling to forest management and athletic court and trail maintenance. But as you are all very well aware, this is not the only challenge before us.

[06:28:40] Earlier this year, we were able to present to you the findings and recommendations from our equity consulting partners. The transformation of a system, the park system, where profitability and

equity compete as some 60 percent of our operating budget is generated by a user fee of one form or another in one where opportunity and access is more broadly available to all county residents will not be quick it will not be easy and it will not be inexpensive but it will serve as the centerpiece in next year's park authority budget request to all of you everyone should understand at the outset that an undertaking this substantial will not resolve within a single budget cycle but we are we at the park authority are grateful for your commitment to engage and

[06:29:20] move forward with us on this effort i think we all realize that in part doing so will mean newly committed funding to the park system and i recognize that the board is challenged in its ability to expand county revenue the general assembly has limited the options available to you and the obvious choice the real estate tax already poses a significant burden to county residents that we've already heard this evening i do believe however as i did last year that there all alternatives the meals tax or transit occupancy tax in particular that merit real consideration as that concert concert conversation unfolds thank you very much for your time thank

[06:29:56] you very much kyle appreciate thank you for your service speaker number 24 is anita herrera chair of the fairfax county park foundation we will have a call in speaker number 25 but let me Go ahead and call Speaker 26, David Simon, 27, Robert Carney, 28, Amy Martin.

[06:30:15] If you're here and can make your way down a little bit closer, that would be appreciated. We are now on Speaker number 24. Ms. Herrera, welcome. Thank you very much. Good evening, Chairman McKay, Vice Chair Smith, and District Supervisors. As stated, I am the chair of the Fairfax County Park Foundation Board, and I thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today.

[06:30:37] The Foundation supports the Park Authority by raising funds, obtaining grants, creating partnerships that supplement tax dollars to meet our community's needs for parkland, facilities, and services. That need continues to grow with greater expectations and desires from the community to bridge the gap so that all residents have access to recreational opportunities with places to play and exercise, along with open space areas and other incredible park amenities.

[06:31:09] Your constituents continue to demonstrate their love of the park, the Fairfax County parks, that are important for their quality of life. That being the case, the Park Foundation strongly supports the investments included in the proposed 2025 budget to enhance park and field maintenance, waste reduction efforts, and forest management.

[06:31:31] All of these will have a distinct and recognizable impact on the user experience in the park system. Making the move towards addressing these perpetual needs with permanent baseline funding, which is more effective than one-time Band-Aids, will assist in reducing dependency on fees and help make park programming and amenities more accessible to everyone.

[06:31:55] Even with this funding, there are still more needs for which the Park Foundation is constantly working with businesses, civic organizations, and individual residents to raise supplemental funds to help address all those needs that we can. Also, there are an increasing number of our neighbors in every district who make voluntary contributions to the extent of their ability.

[06:32:18] The Park Foundation's status as a 501c3 independent nonprofit corporation enables individuals, organizations, businesses, and foundations to contribute monetary donations, grants, donor-advised funds, vehicle donations, and IRA, Qualified Charitable Distribution gifts.

[06:32:37] I joined 73 others who have included a future Legacy Circle gift to the Park Foundation in their wills. I am very proud of our contributions over the years, which exceed $18 million to date. There are many accomplishments worthy of mention, and I will highlight a few.

[06:32:56] Most recently, in this last fiscal year, the Park Foundation secured more than $2 million from thousands of donors for Park Authority programs, events, and projects. Also, more than 37,600 residents and friends enjoyed the ever-popular summer entertainment series of 189 concerts, movies, and children's shows held in every supervisory district.

[06:33:22] And finally, I want to acknowledge the generous donors who funded interactive stream features, that is, science, technology, recreation, engineering, arts, and math, for the Woodland Stewardship Education Center at Eleanor C. Lawrence Park in Chantilly.

[06:33:39] Thank you, Supervisors, for providing resources for the Park Authority's Mobile Nature Center staff. This, coupled with the support from Park Authority advocates and voluntary donations secured by the Park Foundation, resulted in the first Wonder Wagon.

[06:33:56] This special vehicle will help activate the One Fairfax policy by bringing environmental education and outreach programs to our neighbors in opportunity areas and to popular events, including Earth Day Fairfax, which is this Saturday at Sully Historic Park, where the first Wonder Wagon will be unveiled.

[06:34:19] The Park Foundation Board was an early adopter of the One Fairfax Racial and Social Equity Policy because it's the right thing to do. Our work helps more Fairfax County residents to access high-quality parks and important programs.

[06:34:38] We urge the Board of Supervisors to continue its active support and engagement with the Park Authority Board in finding new and creative mechanisms by which we can make the benefits of our award-winning park and recreation system more accessible to all residents of Fairfax County. Please join us in promoting the good work of the Park Authority to accomplish even more. On behalf of the Park Foundation, thank you. Thank you very much. Our next speaker is speaker number 25, Fariborz Fatima,

[06:35:12] has called in think uh can you hear me yes yes we can hear you good evening distinguished chairman and distinguished members of the board my name is fariborz fatemi i'm an almost 30-year resident of drainsville in fairfax county over 65 years old now retired in the last three years my land tax assessment has increased by 15% each year. My overall tax went from $3,000 when I bought my home

[06:35:49] to almost $20,000 now. Taxes that are rising to the level of confiscation. When I appealed my assessment, the tax assessor told me, and I quote, the subject neighborhood is heavily sought after market area, which has become very popular with the high-end builders and individuals who purchase older properties, to have them demolished and replaced by bigger homes, unquote. Having made a good decision almost 30 years ago to purchase my property should not be a reason to be penalized

[06:36:23] year after year. I've not found oil or gold on my land, nor built a second story on my house. My wife and I plan to stay in our home for as long as we have together. My supervisor, Jimmy Beerman and Mr. Chairman and Supervisor James Walkingshaw have heard about this confiscatory problem from me on many occasions, as did former Supervisor John Faust and Supervisor Penny Gross, now both retired. I deeply appreciate the attention and attempts to find a resolution.

[06:36:59] That is why I come before you once again to advocate for seniors in the same predicament in his eye, badly in need of property tax relief. Numerous times, our esteemed governor has stated that he wants to help the people in the Commonwealth. It's his budget that represents what is most important to him, tax cuts for corporations and his well-off friends. He would be hard-pressed to find any assistance for seniors over 65 who comprise close to 20 percent of the Commonwealth's population. Another grilling example, he proposed to spend three billion dollars of

[06:37:36] taxpayers' money to build a sports stadium that would help the few but hurt the many, rightly rejected by the legislature, but nothing for seniors. Many states and localities have passed laws to support their seniors, long-term residents who want to stay in their homes and to protect them from property taxes boarding on confiscatory. For example, many states have programs to allow counties to freeze property taxes for seniors. And 10 states limit how much property tax values

[06:38:08] can increase. Some cap real estate taxes at 3%. The governor could follow how other states are helping their senior citizens, but he won't. It's really up to you to help. Supervisor Walkinshaw, head of legislation, could come up with legislation that would address this inequity. The recent changes to update property tax relief for seniors, unfortunately, do not go far enough and do nothing to help a situation like mine. And I know many other seniors suffering from the same problem. With all due respect, there's no help appealing to the tax assessor

[06:38:45] and appealing to the Board of Equalizers, which seem to be influenced by developers and the tax assessor's office and in need of reform. The aforementioned are just some ideas if acted upon would assist many long-term seniors with their property tax problems.

[06:39:01] Please help. Thank you again, and stay safe. Thank you for your testimony. Our next speaker is David Simon. He's the chair of the Fairfax Area Disability Services Board, and he has five minutes. Welcome, David.

[06:39:22] Hello, everybody. As stated, my name is David Simon, and I'm the current chair of the Fairfax Area Disability Services Board. It's fact that support for residents with disabilities are every bit as essential in Fairfax County as are our roads, our first responders, and our public schools, so I want to emphatically thank you for the opportunity to touch on several budget items that will have significant impact on people with physical and sensory disabilities in the Fairfax area in the coming years. Specifically, I want to reference three funding items that the Disability Services

[06:40:01] Board wanted to highlight, and these are not in any particular order. The first item is the increased funding that goes along with the transfer of Fast-Tran operations from neighborhood and community services to the Department of Transportation. Fast-Tran, TOPS, and connector services are a critical support for the disability community, and we hope that this change and the funding increase will promote more reliable and efficient operations, and along with this acknowledgement, would like to request that this change include more frequent connector services on weekends. The second item is the additional funding for the Office of Elections, and it's

[06:40:40] our hope that the new positions that this funding supports will help ensure that necessary support for accessible voting are in place, which will in turn help ensure that the voice of Fairfax County residents living with disability are heard just as loudly as all other county residents.

[06:41:00] The third item that the Disability Services Board would like to highlight is the importance of the increased funding and new positions allocated to and in the Department of Housing and Community Development intended to support the creation, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable housing throughout Fairfax County.

[06:41:20] I would like to point out that accessible affordable housing is even less financially attainable than affordable housing in general, and I urge that the Board and the Department of Housing and Community Development continue working to alleviate this need.

[06:41:36] Thank you for your time, consideration, and for your continued efforts to support the unique needs and requirements of individuals with disabilities in Fairfax County. And thank you. Thank you all. Thank you very much. We appreciate your testimony. Our next speaker is Robert Carney, followed by Amy Martin and then Harry Jackson.

[06:41:58] Is Robert Carney here? Okay. Amy Martin, speaking as president of Friends of Greenspring, and has five minutes. Good evening. This started out to be a good afternoon, but that's the way it works.

[06:42:14] And I want to thank you all, actually, for sitting in these hearings. It's wrenching to hear all the needs. It's wrenching to hear the issues that people have. And I commend you for your compassion and your understanding.

[06:42:33] I'm Amy Martin. I'm the president of Friends of Greenspring, known as Frogs. That's the Fairfax County Gardens, Green Springs, not the retirement home, although I'm eligible for that as well. I'm speaking on behalf of Frogs and also on behalf of the Fair Parks Alliance, which is a coalition of Friends of Parks.

[06:42:57] We raise money. We provide thousands of hours of volunteer effort to support the parks. And you've heard from the Park Foundation, which also raises money. You've heard from the Park Board, which is another set of volunteers which works.

[06:43:13] And I'm assuming you'll also hear from the park authorities. Our point of view is because we work very closely to the staff and in the parks themselves. First of all, I'd like to thank the Board of Supervisors for last year's additional support to the parks.

[06:43:31] The extra funding for forestry and invasives management filled a crucial but ongoing need. It was very welcome, and we appreciate that you recognize the impact that parks have on the environment, on people's well-being, and the added value to the community.

[06:43:53] Also, we really appreciate the fact that people are arguing for sustained parking funding for the parks, as represented by the previous speakers. However, and there is a however, I want to act like Oliver Twist and say, please, sir, we want some more.

[06:44:18] What we would really need is, on the ground level, insight for people. We need personnel on a permanent basis to do the insight activities, as much as in the overseeing staff.

[06:44:39] Last year, because of the maintenance issues, the Fairfax County Park Authority withheld $2.1 million that we're supposed to fund on-site people. That's the people who take care of the gardens, take care of the forest, pull down the vines from the trees, help people in the parks, supervise volunteers, generally serve the public these people are very scarce on the ground in this current staff are working flat out but cannot keep up with this kind of

[06:45:16] maintenance of the trails the wetlands to plant and weed the gardens to learn how to run the mill at the Colvin run mill because they don't have anybody to back up the current current incumbent and you just can't hire one of those off any of the hiring platforms the parks are not sustainable without permanent on-site people so we're asking you to significantly fund more personnel the

[06:45:50] parks and libraries section of the budget is the tiniest sliver if you look at the budget and we've already heard from the libraries as well about how important these two activities are they are universally important to everyone in the county all groups all ages all ethnics backgrounds all languages so this area needs to be beefed up despite all the other needs as well there is

[06:46:27] another issue on the table for parks and that is the equity study that was mentioned that's very important it supports the one Fairfax initiative which which Fairfax is very thoughtfully put into place but in that is aimed towards the fee-based services things that people have to do like summer camps and swimming and golf and things like that the kind of things that we're talking about here are not fee-based they are the kind of things where people can walk into a park and enjoy them like the trails and the wetlands in the gardens and that

[06:47:05] kind of maintenance as kyle mentioned is falling behind so please support that thank you thank you for your testimony next we have harry jackson followed by donna james and then we have julie cochran on a call is harry jackson here okay donna james okay as donna comes back down i'm going to call the next few people so they can get closer 32 is cater gomas 33 is meredith mckean 34 is

[06:47:40] elizabeth endy and 35 is les shockley if they could come down closer that would be helpful thank you donna thank you um so i'm donna james i'm the executive director of computer core and a 35 year resident of mason district and i've been executive director of computer core about five years i'm speaking today just to thank you all for keeping digital equity in the budget it's really incredibly important for everybody individuals like the folks we serve and also businesses every agency non-profits you just think how fast technology is always changing

[06:48:19] we're always having to learn about technology but there's a lot of people who've been really left behind our students at computer core are adults they're seeking higher wages and better jobs They're primarily women and immigrants here in our Fairfax County neighborhoods, and by helping them, we're helping raise the tax base in the area, and just all around really important.

[06:48:43] We were very pleased to be recognized at the Information Technology Committee last October for Digital Inclusion Week, and we look forward to that again this year, and we're really happy that digital equity is part of Fairfax County's strategic plan.

[06:49:00] Digital equity includes both low-cost internet services, classes like the ones we provide. We serve over 500 Fairfax County adults a year in free online classes, and we also support local Fairfax County agencies and nonprofits.

[06:49:16] We do not currently receive any funding from Fairfax County, but we just feel it's so important for the entire county to support these services and to make sure digital equity is still in the budget. I wanted to give a quick example of somebody from the Springfield District who's kind of a typical one of our students.

[06:49:35] Her name is Almaz, and she is from Ethiopia. She has a bachelor's degree in Ethiopia. When she came to the United States, she does have her working papers, and she became a CNA. She makes $15

an hour, works part-time, and like many of our students, she came to Computer Corps to just move up the career ladder professionally, gain digital skills, and get those digital skills.

[06:49:58] The National Skills Coalition says that basically 92% of jobs require digital skills. And if you get like one, you get a 23% wage bump. And if you have two, you get more. We teach at least 10 before the students even enter our Zoom classrooms.

[06:50:15] So we do hope that we're really helping the district. And I just want to say it's our 25th anniversary. So Computer Corps is having a couple parties. One is at the Wish Center in August. One is in the Hunter Mill District in the Reston Town Center, Microsoft Garage.

[06:50:32] That one's in May. And we'll send invitations. And then I guess the last thing is just that we do accept computers to refurbish at some point. I'd love to have the Fairfax County contracts redone to send us all the computers. I think you have a long-term contract with somebody else.

[06:50:50] We refurbish them. certified non-profit refurbisher with microsoft we wipe them clean etc etc so we're really good place to keep things out of the landfills and responsibly recycle your equipment thanks for your time thank you very much our next uh speaker is a phone call julie cochran hi can you hear me yes we can hear you julie go ahead i just wanted to say that i'm not totally opposed against the nca ncs raising of the of the fees but i think 35 is a little bit too much maybe we can go 60

[06:51:30] because 60 or 65 that would be good um i just feel like it's that's a little bit more reasonable than throwing up to 35 and i hope you all will consider it thank you very much we appreciate your testimony you're welcome okay our next speaker is cater gumis followed by meredith mckean and then elizabeth endy and cater is a community member on the council to end domestic violence and has three minutes thank you good evening esteemed members of the board of supervisors

[06:52:09] thank you for granting me the opportunity to address you and the public today my name is kader gumas i'm a constituent from burke virginia a corporate leader and an appointed immigrant community representative to the fairfax county council to end domestic violence also known as CEDV. Today I stand in front of you not only as a representative of CEDV but also as a woman, a mother, and a long-term survivor of domestic violence. This year marks the 25th anniversary of my move to the United States from my home country, Germany. My journey to the United States

[06:52:48] has been marked by many achievements that I'm grateful for. I've graduated from several universities and I'm currently finishing my PhD in Leadership and Change. I've become a US citizen, a homeowner, a parent and a corporate leader, but it has also been shadowed by the trauma of domestic violence.

[06:53:09] A burden that I will continue to carry and heal from for the rest of my life, something I did not plan for when I moved to the U.S. Come to find out, recovering from the trauma of domestic violence is a lifelong journey filled with the obstacles and hurdles to overcome. And given the statistics of the national coalition to end domestic violence i'm not alone in this struggle one in four women and one in seven men are impacted by domestic violence in our society and these are only the

[06:53:44] numbers based on the reported cases even animal abuse has a role in domestic violence cases as i was listening to previous testimonies today the 2022 report from the national network to end and domestic violence, underscores the harsh realities confronting our community.

[06:54:03] In Virginia alone, 123 requests for critical services in domestic violence situations went unmet in a single day due to the lack of resources. Nearly half of these requests, 47%, were for emergency shelters and transitional housing.

[06:54:21] It is clear that we must do more to combat domestic violence and support survivors. This is not merely a private matter between family members. It impacts our entire community and exact a heavy toll on our economic well-being as a nation.

[06:54:38] We must do a better job as a community in the fight to end domestic violence. We need comprehensive actions from increased community outreach to training for law enforcement, courts and mental health providers to robust funding for crisis intervention and long-term support programs.

[06:54:58] Your decisions regarding budget allocations will shape the extent of our collective response to this pressing issue. The need for action is urgent. Without adequate funding, countless survivors will be left without the safety, help and support they desperately need.

[06:55:15] I urge you, as leaders of our community, to prioritize funding for domestic violence services in the budget. Thank you for your attention and your consideration. us take a stand against domestic violence and ensure that survivors receive the support and resources they deserve thank you thank you very much for your testimony we are now on speaker 33 and that is meredith mckean to be followed by elizabeth penday and les shockley if i called your name please be ready to testify welcome miss mckean thank you um good evening chair mckay and

[06:55:53] all members of the board I am Meredith McKean I am vice president of programs at Northern Virginia Family Service which is a comprehensive human services provider and nonprofit partner to the county and delivering essential and accessible services I am the vice chair of the Fairfax County Council to end domestic violence and I am also a Fairfax County resident I am really grateful for the opportunity to talk with you today and I would like to start by saying thank you to the board for your increased support for non-profit human services organizations that's a priority that is reflected in this proposed budget recognizing the value

[06:56:32] of non-profit partners and effectively addressing the needs of our community one of those needs that i will be focusing on tonight is domestic violence based on my work with mbfs and with the council to end domestic violence each year mbfs provides services to over 30,000 individuals in our region, nearly half of whom are Fairfax County residents and a majority of whom have experienced trauma and violence. In terms of addressing domestic violence, NVFS provides an array of services for individuals and families who have experienced or are currently

[06:57:08] living with domestic violence, with a focus on providing services and meeting the needs of underserved communities and children. In this role, we are on the front lines in responding to needs of survivors and we depend on the continuum of county and other non-profit providers to be able to collaboratively address the complex needs of the people that we serve the council to end domestic violence exists to guide the development of an inclusive and survivor-informed coordinated and collaborative community response to domestic violence in fairfax county is comprise excuse me

[06:57:43] It's comprised of elected officials and representatives from schools, the judiciary, human service organizations, the faith community, nonprofit organizations, local universities, and community members, and I'm very honored to be a part of this very dedicated group.

[06:58:01] The work of the CEDV and continued investment in the full array of domestic violence services provided by county and nonprofit partners is vital for our community. Vital because domestic violence has a cost. Domestic violence impacts the lives of the residents of Fairfax County in innumerable ways every single day.

[06:58:21] And while the personal consequences of domestic violence are profound, there are also many costs to communities. Just one example, according to the CDC, in the United States, the collective lifetime societal economic costs associated with domestic violence response, so including medical care for injuries, including lost productivity from work, criminal justice systems, and other costs is $3.6 trillion.

[06:58:50] What that equates to is approximately $100,000 per survivor over a lifetime. therefore working to end domestic violence and to mitigate its harms benefit survivors and the community emotionally and economically it's vital because domestic violence is preventable investing and preventing violence before it occurs is an essential and cost-effective strategy to build safe stable and stable and nurturing communities currently statewide across Virginia more and more teens and young adults are in need of domestic and sexual violence intervention services we can reverse these

[06:59:27] trends in our county if we invest in prevention and it's also vital because domestic violence is a community issue that requires a community response so as we work across systems to build up more evidence-based holistic family oriented culturally specific and trauma-informed responses to domestic violence we must place value and also resource on integrating safety and accountability practices into the coordinated community response in a meaningful way that includes survivor voice and choice we must also identify and resource more mental health services for survivors of domestic violence and their families

[07:00:07] agencies in our community such as domestic and sexual violence services in the Department of Family Services and Northern Virginia Family Service both provide these specialized services but the staffing levels of our programs are not sufficient to meet the need and the level of need that exists in our community therefore we need your help to ensure that our frontline sexual and domestic violence crisis agencies have the resources that they need to both prevent and respond to violence in our communities we need you to prioritize budget funding for the resources that meet the needs of survivors to ensure that these essential services are fully funded, so our vital shelters, the first-rate hotline,

[07:00:47] and the county and community-based mental health and trauma recovery services that our community deserves. Without these services, not only will survivors be underserved and placed at further harm, but the wider community will experience significant costs and risks as well. So please join us as we work together to support a community where everyone is free from violence. Thank you.

[07:01:08] Thank you very much. We are now on speaker number 34, Elizabeth Endy, to be followed by Les Shockley and David Walrod. If I called your name, please be ready to testify. Welcome. Hello, supervisors. So nice to see you.

[07:01:25] Thank you for the hard work you do on behalf of Fairfax County. My name is Elizabeth Endy. I'm here today representing Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions, a group of 2,888 supporters and climate activists who are working to develop local solutions to the climate crisis.

[07:01:46] We believe Fairfax County must conserve and expand the existing tree canopy, especially in vulnerable communities, and should change policies that reduce the health and size of our urban forest.

Trees provide incredible benefits to Fairfax County.

[07:02:03] They increase property values, salability of homes, reduce stress, improve health, provide wildlife habitat and especially during this time of year provide a lot of beauty but there's more here's a list of some of the large-scale benefits from our trees fairfax county's urban forest annually removes 7 580 pounds of pollutants from the air saving 15.5 million

[07:02:35] sequesters 166,000 tons of carbon, saving 31 million, and reduces stormwater runoff by 1 billion gallons, saving $10 million. Wow. But these big benefits can't be sustained if Fairfax County's urban forest canopy continues to decline, as it has since 2014, and certainly won't allow us to meet the CCAP goal of a 60% tree canopy coverage by 2030. Our latest figures show a decline in

[07:03:10] tree canopy coverage from 57% in 2014 to 55% in 2018, or net loss of 718 acres of tree canopy coverage. And the latest data is more than five years old, so it was taken well before road improvement, stream restoration, and infill development project boom that thrived during the pandemic. The figures are included in my written notes and data provided by the Chesapeake Bay program. The map you see before you should sound the alarm for you, particularly in the

[07:03:48] Drainsville, Hunter Mill, Providence, Springfield, and Mount Vernon districts, because there's more than one acre of net tree cover loss for almost every segment measured in these districts. And tree cover can be lost quickly due to construction and severe weather.

[07:04:04] The impact on stormwater flow, air and water pollution, air temperature, and wildlife habitat is greatly impacted when mature, healthy trees are taken down. So what can be done to protect Fairfax County's urban forest? Adopt land use ordinances and other county policies that require, whenever possible, the preservation of healthy, mature trees first, not last, during any development and infill accessory or linear project that disturbs the land improve how mature trees are evaluated

[07:04:39] by adopting more precise objective assessment tools in order to discourage undervaluation of mature trees in developing a tree conservation plan additionally in the fy 2025 budget we ask you to increase support to address the growing problem of invasive plants which are compromising our tree canopy, create education programs, and expand support for the invasive management area program. Establish a tree replacement policy across all county agencies, including FCPS, FCPA,

[07:05:14] and board-owned land. This could be funded by the Tree Preservation and Planting Fund, an environmental and energy program grant, or through a portion of the funds earmarked for trees in the OEEC budget. Protect and enhance our parks and small green spaces, which are important assets for climate resilience, biodiversity, open space, ecological corridors, and unique places.

[07:05:43] Please help Fairfax County's hardworking tree canopy to flourish so it can continue with its noble job. Thank you. Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Les Shockley, who is Budget committee chairman for the NAACP. Welcome, sir. The floor is yours. Thank you. Good evening, Chairman McKay and members of the board. My name is Les Shocker. I'm budget committee chair for the Fairfax County chapter of the NAACP, where Miss Nikki Zimmerman serves as our president. The NAACP's

[07:06:18] mission is to advocate for political, educational, social, and economic equality for all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination. Today, I'm here to talk to you about those issues that impact underserved communities in the county and to ask for your help and funding and enforcement to support these objectives. Promoting education is an important priority for the NAACP. We ask the Board of

Supervisors to request a school board report on the state of literacy for students of color and students specifically in poorer communities in grades K through three who have

[07:06:55] been targeted in the first phase of the switch to structured literacy. The school board should be required to establish a clear measurable plan to improve literacy through 12th grade for this target group with regular reporting on progress towards this goal. Number two, presently the NAACP would like to see Fairfax County public schools report its efforts to fill the instructional positions for the existing pre-K programs, secure space for these programs, and fill the seats that have gone empty for lack of community outreach and target communities. Looking ahead, we are

[07:07:33] advocates for robust universal early childhood education beginning at age three for children of color and all families who need it in alignment with the learning and equity goals of the Fairfax County Public Schools strategic plan. Number three, the NAACP's assessment of the county school is that it has underperformed in areas of hiring and retention of black teachers. We believe there is a disproportionate turnover rate relative to other groups which needs to be addressed.

[07:08:05] We ask that the board address numerous complaints brought to our attention by calling for school board reporting on current hiring and retention data to create a transparent, data-driven plan to increase, hire, and improve retention of black teachers.

[07:08:20] The NAACP is a strong advocate for legal redress and requests the board of supervisors use its authority to expand police oversight and accountability. We ask that the board strengthen the Civilian Review Board and the independent police auditor by assigning them the full authority permitted under Virginia Code Section 9.1601. To do this right, the Civilian Review Panel will need greater authority to do its work, which will require more investigators and support staff.

[07:08:55] We ask the board to fund this body with adequate resources. We are also advocating for funding for legal counsel in civil and family matters. Legal cases can create a financial burden on people and families with limited means.

[07:09:12] Lawyers are often unable to accept meritorious cases because they cannot afford to provide services on a contingency basis. We are requesting the county establish a fund for citizens based on income and family criteria to enable eligible applicants to have access to legal services for tenant, employment, child custody, and consumer transaction cases.

[07:09:35] We request $5 million be appropriated to start this SEED program. Fair housing has long been a central priority for our organization. Safe and affordable housing is a human right and necessary component of any fair and equitable community.

[07:09:52] The NAACP continues to advocate for the equivalent of two cents on the tax dollar or roughly $65 million annually to preserve and construct affordable housing. This was a commitment the board made in its budget guidance last year. To achieve the county's goal of 10,000 new affordable housing units by 2034, a higher level of funding each year will be needed.

[07:10:14] The NAACP has four areas of priority in housing. Number one is fair housing. We seek the Board of Supervisors' active oversight in ensuring the county continues to develop and meet meaningful and measurable goals in its fair housing plan.

[07:10:32] Number two is equitable development, which benefits all people who live in the county. In line with the One Fairfax policy, we are asking the board to implement equitable land use policies, have more extensive county outreach, and inclusive facilitated public hearings.

[07:10:50] Number three is tenants' rights. We ask for your assistance in making sure the Department of Housing and Community Development has the financial and oversight capacity to ensure that all county properties meet health and safety codes and are well managed. We urge you to provide the direction and resources needed to help establish residence councils as a valuable feedback mechanism on general building conditions.

[07:11:14] Fourth, more work has to be done to reduce homelessness, which disproportionately impacts the black population in the county. Fairfax County is one of the richest counties in this county, and despite the economic challenges we face, we are optimistic these initiatives can be accomplished. There's work to do, and we stand here ready to work with the county as partners to get it done.

[07:11:33] Thank you. Thank you very much. mr shockley appreciate your testimony speaker number 36 is david walrod president of the fairfax county federation of teachers speaker number 37 is video testimony and then after that we will hear speaker 38 will cooper and speaker 39 susan gankarov if you all are here please make yourself available come down closer to the podium at this time mr walrod welcome the floor is yours Good evening Chairman McKay and members of the board. My name is David Walrod. I'm a special education teacher with Fairfax County Public Schools and I'm the current president of the

[07:12:12] Fairfax County Federation of Teachers. I'm here today to urge you to fund the budget request made by FCPS Superintendent Dr. Reed. I've heard many members of this board make the point that schools are underfunded by Richmond. This is true. The legislature's own bipartisan study shows that Virginia schools receive less state funding relative to neighboring Maryland and West Virginia.

[07:12:34] The budget passed by the General Assembly offers some correction to this, but does not make up the entire shortfall and does nothing to correct the decades of ongoing underfunding. The formula for state funding also ensures that Fairfax County sends significantly more to Richmond than it receives in return.

[07:12:50] All these issues remain true. If I were here speaking to the governor and members of the General Assembly, I would tell them to pass the budget aligning with the recommendations of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission. I would advise them to stop underfunding Virginia schools and stop underfunding Fairfax County schools.

[07:13:11] I would remind them that their chronic underfunding of schools has an impact on all parts of the county and Commonwealth, not just schools. But I'm not speaking to the governor, and I'm not speaking to the General Assembly. I'm speaking to you. The question before you is this.

[07:13:26] What are your priorities? If your priority is having Richmond solve problems, then you can wait for them to pass a fair budget at some unspecified point in the future. If your priority is having a robust workforce now and in the future, then you'll make sure schools get what they need. The responsibility of funding our schools is also yours to bear.

[07:13:45] Let's be clear here. Dr. Reed's budget is not unreasonable. It is not unrealistic. Her budget does reflect the needs of the district. Retaining teachers and educational staff is a need. The hardworking

teachers and operational staff of Fairfax County Public Schools work hard on a daily basis to provide our students with the best possible educational outcomes.

[07:14:09] Everybody in our schools gives their all every day for the future of Fairfax County. From the bus drivers getting students to school safely, to the cafeteria workers ensuring our students are fed and ready to learn, to our instructional assistants providing one-on-one and small group support, to our mental health teams, to our music, art, PE, special education teachers.

[07:14:30] It's an all-hands-on-deck approach. However, our educators heard Board of Supervisors members call it unrealistic for Dr. Reed to request money to provide a smaller compensation increase than in neighboring Loudoun County, a smaller average compensation increase than in neighboring Prince William County.

[07:14:49] That would continue to see Fairfax County lag behind our neighbors in Alexandria and Montgomery County. The future of education in Fairfax County can't be solved by blaming the General Assembly and passing the buck along. We need you to step up and fund our school as a Dr. Reed's request.

[07:15:05] Educators deciding whether to stay in Fairfax or leave for higher-paying neighbors or the public sector won't be comforted by knowing that they'd get paid more with a different state budget. Vague promises of future salary increases won't attract more qualified educators to join Fairfax County public schools.

[07:15:22] Educators and support staff leaving SCPS hurts the students and families we serve. It isn't their fault, but rather due to chronic underfunding and lack of recruitment and retention planning. I'm urging you to fund Dr. Reed's proposed budget. To do this, all you have to do is give schools the same share of the county budget that you've historically provided.

[07:15:42] A transfer of the 5- and 10-year average of 52.6% of the county budget, the 15-year average of 52.8%, the 20-year average of 52.7% of the county budget, Any of those would either fully fund schools or leave a manageable shortfall, depending on exactly where the final state budget and amendment process lands us.

[07:16:04] Choice lies with you. Should the state provide more? Yes. Absolutely. And I'll be happy to work with any of you on improving state funding. But you know what the state is going to provide. It's up to you to keep our schools world class and pass a budget that retains the valuable education staff we have.

[07:16:22] asking you today to fund our schools and stand with those who work day in and day out to make our schools run. Thank you. Thank you, David. Speaker number 37 has provided video testimony. Good afternoon, Chairman McKay and members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

[07:16:41] My name is Laura Martinez, and I want to thank you for allowing me to bring this message on behalf of the Fairfax County Advisory Social Services Board, or ASSB, which I have the honor of chairing. The ASSB interests itself in all matters pertaining to the social welfare of the people served by the Fairfax County government. It monitors the formation and implementation of social welfare programs and meets with the director of the Department of

[07:17:15] Family Services, DFS, to make recommendations on policy matters. The DFS provides vital programs and services that help support vulnerable Fairfax County residents, addressing safety and protection, furthering economic self-sufficiency, supporting family resilience, and improving the quality

of life for residents. We thank the Board of Supervisors for their continued commitment to essential human service programs, particularly those provided by DFS, even while dealing

[07:17:55] with significant revenue constraints and other budget pressures. That being said, the top concerns of the ASSB for the fiscal year 2025 center on maintaining staffing levels and avoiding cuts to health and human services and affordable housing.

[07:18:18] Social and economic disparities persist in our economy and in our community and our most vulnerable residents are currently experiencing significantly rising rent and utility costs and cuts and benefits and food insecurity, all coupled with underemployment. And additional budget reductions would impact much-needed services, making it much more difficult for them to thrive and, in many cases, to survive. Many county human services agencies are already

[07:18:55] working at capacity because of labor force issues cutting deeper into human services affects the ability to maintain a vital human service system, which is very important for our county. In addition, the federal Medicaid unwinding will have a ripple effect, straining the county's health safety net programs. As the number of uninsured children and individuals grows, these programs will face a surge in demand for services. This could strain their limited resources, potentially

[07:19:32] hindering their ability to serve existing clients effectively. The ASSB would like to highlight the Board's commitment to increasing baseline funding for affordable housing, a firm step in the right direction, definitely. We understand that revenue constraints seem to have made this difficult to do in, you know, in fiscal year 2025. And the ASSB supports and urges the board to consider, one, reaffirming its commitment to the goal of 10,000 new homes by 2034. Two, directing

[07:20:09] the county executive to add recurring resources for affordable housing in fiscal year 2026. Three, directing the county executive to find, whenever possible, substantial one-time funding for affordable housing to be added in the 2024 fiscal year carryover review, and in subsequent quarterly budget reviews.

[07:20:33] Finally, we ask that as the Board of Supervisors looks to fiscal year 2026, no cross-the-board cuts be required of the FS. Please. Budget reductions should be made thoughtfully and strategically with robust consideration and understanding to the effects of the cuts.

[07:20:53] Thank you so much for the opportunity to provide comments on the budget during this time. Have a good day. Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Will Cooper. Mr. Cooper here. That's speaker number 38.

[07:21:10] Speaker number 39, Susan Gankarovs. If you can come on down closer to the podium when I call your name, Barbara Boardman. And we know Robert Whitfield is not here, but Mr. Cranmer is going to speak on his behalf.

[07:21:26] Speaker number 41 and speaker number 42, Casey Utley. If I call your name, please make sure you're down here closer to the podium. Speaker number 39 is Susan Goncarvos. Okay.

[07:21:51] Yeah, please come on up to the podium and welcome. The floor is yours. Good evening.

[07:22:10] I have a written statement, which shouldn't take too long. My name is Susan Gonkarovs, and I'm proud to represent the Lincolnia Senior Center Advisory Board in Mason District. I'm a Mason

property owner, retired FCPS teacher, proud parents of daughters raised and educated in Fairfax County Mason District schools.

[07:22:34] My parents were active in Lincolnia Senior Center, and the first year they were open. The reason our family moved to Fairfax County was so my parents could enjoy their retirement and participate in the center. My mother taught doll making at Linconia, and I am proud to be a volunteer painting teacher, organizer of a yarn clinic, as well as serving as the advisory board president.

[07:22:59] One of our missions is to provide support for active fiber crafters who work on projects for folks with terminal illnesses. We help seniors job memories of their cultural heritage when we sit together and work with our hands. And the reason for my visit this evening, the projected increases in membership fees fails to take into account the senior population served by this community.

[07:23:23] As a senior center located in a part of Fairfax that touches so many other boundaries, our center would be most adversely impacted by a projected membership increase. Our community shares borders with Alexandria, Arlington Falls Church, and we are a highly diverse community with many participants who may or may not be able to afford such an increase.

[07:23:45] Simply put, a projected increase, what is being suggested, would negatively impact our scope, our diversity, and our quality of programming because it would affect our members' ability to pay. We also know that there will be no real impact to the budget shortfall that is projected by raising our membership fees because membership fees don't provide the operational money for the centers.

[07:24:17] What it would, in fact, is impact negatively our membership. And we are too very busy trying to provide as much diversity and as welcoming and getting rid of isolation as possible. For many of our seniors, Linconia Senior Center represents social networking, opportunities to learn new skills, share experiences with people from other cultures.

[07:24:39] The center provides a strong leadership enthusiasm for enhanced communication, healthy exercise, lifelong learning, and a chance to leave behind the isolation left by COVID, family responsibilities, and the need to join other facilities that are not or nearly financially available dear to them.

[07:24:59] Even more simply, the proposed fee increase would have little or no impact in any plan that would alleviate a several million dollar shortfall, but it would pose a significant detractor to those who are on fixed incomes, myself included. Seniors are the builders and users of our nation's infrastructure.

[07:25:17] Our centers are cultural resources and should not be considered sources of revenue. Linconia is a significant asset to the future of Fairfax County, our future. And even though we're very old, we still have a future. And we plan to be very vital in that.

[07:25:34] Linconia is this community that chooses to augment participation in level of activity to promote good health and improve quality of life. We are all about quality, and we invite every single one of you to come and participate. We have a very good lunch program.

[07:25:51] We have dances. We're going to be starting a movie program. We have ping pong. We have a senior Olympic billiard temperature there, and we're good. we're very good um so i hope i've covered almost everything there um we can we're we're looking to also become part of a very active what we hope

active um arts community that that mr jimenez is talking about for mason district we not only want to volunteer for that but we want our center to

[07:26:27] have a framing system so we can invite artists to come and show and we're also considering the idea of a sculpture garden so that and if you give me back my kiln you'll have a good a good clay program too because i did that for 22 years all right so yeah i didn't stop i didn't stop um we have good leadership we have good friends and these people have come to mean a sense of security for a commute in a community which is so important to all of us and i thank dr mr jimenez for bringing the arts back to fairfax and in the vitality in which we plan to do it we want to be

[07:27:06] part of that thank you so very very much oh thank you perfect timing thank you miss gonzora so well well orchestrated uh speaker number 40 is barbara boardman i'm sorry uh yes barbara boardman uh who will be followed by tom cranmer welcome hi um i'm barbara boardman for the league of women Voters. I don't think I'll be as exciting and cool as she was. The League of Women Voters is a grassroots nonpartisan organization that cares deeply about elections, voting, and civic engagement,

[07:27:43] and we're glad everyone's here for that. We are submitting testimony in overall support of the FY 2024 Fairfax County proposed budget with a focus on election services and strong support for sustainable compensation for FCPS teachers, school staff, and county employees.

[07:28:01] We acknowledge the challenge of balancing the need for investment in a broad range of services the county must provide against the unpredictability of our revenue stream and tax burden in changing economic times. For those who only focus on the issues of tax burdens, they should acknowledge the necessity of increasing the revenue stream to maintain the county services that make this county a desirable place to live and thus increasing our property values.

[07:28:28] We want to focus on the administration of free and fair elections, which is foundational to the function of our county governance, and ironically, the administration of these services is not free. The League strongly supports adequate funding for the Office of Elections operations to ensure continued smooth, safe, and secure elections in Fairfax County.

[07:28:50] Our Elections office operates in the face of continually increasing demands on their workforce and their time. Thus, we support the increased staffing in the budget. Without trust in elections and confidence in the rest of the county, government's function becomes vulnerable.

[07:29:09] We applaud the efforts of the county to ensure smooth running of elections. The FCPS transfer includes significant investments. We've all heard about the JLARC study indicating how little Virginia spends compared to the national average.

[07:29:25] But quality teachers and staff are the core of the education system that brings families to our county and increases the necessity to restore the quality of the school system and attract quality teachers. Retention and recruitment of quality employees is an issue throughout the county, and we depend on a myriad of services from the county.

[07:29:45] These workers serve us for safety, protection, and maintenance of many essential services, and it is untenable to us that those who provide our services often can't afford to raise a family in our county. We are pleased that this budget addresses the major issues of support for FCPS and for salary and wage adjustments to keep up with the cost of living increases for county workers, especially our first responders.

[07:30:10] We highlight that the budget invests in league priorities, such as affordable housing and mental health, And we appreciate the budget commits of 1.3 million and 7 FTEs to start the commitment to the 10,000 affordable housing units by 2034.

[07:30:27] For mental health, there is funding for Diversion First, which we care about, and 1.2 million and 6 FTEs. We respect the board's support for early childhood education, preserving 72 slots for early childhood. This is not anywhere near the actual requirement, but we hope the county will continue to try and find more funding for early childhood education in the future.

[07:30:53] Access to affordable child care is essential. If we are to ever achieve any semblance of gender parity in the county, more and more women leave the workforce or do not enter it because of their need for child care. In summary, the League of Women Voters strongly supports the 2024 Fairfax County proposed budgets for its physical responsibility and its commitment to the services that make our county a great place to live.

[07:31:17] Thank you for what you're doing. Thank you very much, Ms. Boardman, for your testimony. And we are now on speaker number 41, who was Robert Whitfield, but will be filled in by Tom Cranmer, to be followed by Casey Utley, Fran Lewandowski.

[07:31:35] If you are here, please come on down closer to the podium. Tom, welcome back. Thank you very much. I'm delighted to be here. Under current circumstances, though the topic that you have just gotten is something that's rather unfortunate, but I'm not surprised.

[07:31:57] My thesis originally was surprised by war. I communicated with one of the local synagogues about my analysis of the lack of preparation in Israel for the attack that they recently had.

[07:32:17] I have spent most of my life in over 58 different countries dealing with the governments and analyzing political risks in those countries. And many countries are totally unprepared.

[07:32:33] So I think that the important thing is to recognize that we're in a new situation here in the United States and around the world. And, you know, the president was supposed to speak to everybody and tell them what's going on.

[07:32:53] The study went to bed. You know, this is abdication of leadership. Leadership is defined sometimes by getting people to do things that they don't want to do.

[07:33:11] And we don't have leadership here in the United States. And this is a great danger to us. I am suggesting that basically that all of you act as leaders and prepare the people here for war.

[07:33:29] That's the right word, war. Because that's what's coming. And if you read the newspapers or watch television, people talk about World War III.

[07:33:47] This is terrible. I grew up during World War II. I knew about it. I had airplanes flying over my house in California with training. It's been sort of basically part of my life since I was a kid.

[07:34:07] And I have spent a lot of time talking to leaders in the countries where I've seen great dangers. And many people don't listen, they don't do anything, and they wind up suffering. You know, many of the bridges in the United States have just shut down.

[07:34:31] You probably saw the pictures of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, all around the United States. the Muslims are causing lots of trouble recognize it recognize your leadership role in all this

and preparing people to think about what they're going to do as individuals you're not going to go help every individual but you are going to need to prepare them to think and to act and get advice

[07:35:09] hopefully from all of you. Thank you, Mr. Kramer. Speaker number 42 is Casey Utley to be followed by Fran Lewandowski. Ms. Utley is organizer showing up for racial justice. Northern Virginia has five minutes. Welcome. Hi, I am here with showing up for racial justice, the Northern Virginia chapter. And I've been here a minute at these meetings, at your committee meetings, at your hearings. Over the last 10 years, we've seen you respond to police brutality and abuse of

[07:35:44] power by repeatedly funding studies that reach the same conclusions over and over. This county has intense racial disparities in police use of force and community surveillance. Even the pro-policing organization PERF has told you to create more oversight, yet crickets. Following the murder of Natasha McKenna, this body instituted an all-carry taser policy, making the weapon that sent her to the hospital and ultimately her death mandatory for police. We saw you respond to the murder of

[07:36:20] John Gere with a multi-year debate about police oversight, only to hire a police auditor who mysteriously never finds any fault with police use of force, and a civilian review panel that has no power to investigate or hold police accountable. You created a mental health diversion program, yet police still make the decisions about who gets diverted. Giovanni Martinez didn't get diversion when he sought help for suicidality. Instead, a mental health trained sheriff's deputy ended his life. You said you needed more crisis intervention training. Then your crisis trained

[07:36:57] officers murdered Aaron Lynch when his parents called for help. Despite the NAACP's opposition to his appointment, y'all hired Chief Davis, a man who claims that pointing a gun at a civilian isn't a show of force, but a demonstration of authority. No wonder we've had more police shootings in recent years. Tim Johnson was pursued on foot and killed allegedly over a pair of sunglasses. FCPD has been investigated by the Washington Post after allegations of collusion

[07:37:37] with sex traffickers. Women in custody have been sexually assaulted by sheriff's deputies in the jail, and incarcerated laborers are paid slave wages to do work for the county. Every time these things happen, you give a head fake toward improvement, but it's never met with robust policy change and you celebrate and eagerly fund these harmful institutions you reduce police harms against community members to learning opportunities and yet you've learned nothing people are still being killed and y'all won't even say their names you want to act like this

[07:38:16] county is making progress and focused on building one fairfax but who for who do you serve the money tells us the answer time and again you've increased funding for police all the while FCPD continues to murder assault and jail black and brown people in our community with impunity this year when the budget is tight and you're having to address shortfalls you're planning to increase police funding at the expense of housing education some of the other things we've heard today many of us have been up here asking pleading and demanding change and at every turn you subvert it

[07:38:53] and then aggressively financially reward bad behavior, none of that creates safety. Again and again, you tell us that we need this kind of policing, that as a community, we need to build relationships with the abusers. We don't need more trust in police.

[07:39:10] We don't need more coffees with the cops or more food drives and PR opportunities that are meant to make us more comfortable with the status quo. Our silence will not be so easily bought. We see

who you serve, and it's not the people of this county.

[07:39:27] It's time to make real progress. Invest in real safety for our communities. Housing, education, health care, violence intervention, public-funded spaces for connections like parks and libraries, life-giving services and supports.

[07:39:45] Divest from racist policing. Stop throwing our money away into the black hole of state violence. we're all watching and we won't go away thank you speaker number 43 is Fran Lewandowski and we'll have video testimony followed by speaker 45 Terry Harley 46 Joanne Walton 47 Thomas Ward if you could all be ready to testify Ms. Lewandowski welcome the floor is yours good evening thanks so

[07:40:17] much for this opportunity to speak publicly about Fairfax County's FY 2025 budget I am Fran Lewandowski a licensed clinical social worker with Fairfax County Public Schools, and a member of the Executive Board of the Fairfax County Federation of Teachers. I have worked as a social worker for FCPS for 20 years. I decided to speak today because our budget is a statement of our priorities.

[07:40:44] I appreciate this opportunity to reflect with you on our priorities as a community, because through this budget, we are creating our future, and we are creating possibilities for future generations. Let's reflect on the wages and working conditions of our educators.

[07:41:01] According to data published in the Washington Post in 2022, teachers have been resigning in greater numbers in Fairfax County than in neighboring jurisdictions. At the school I support, we've lost some talented and effective young teachers in the past five years.

[07:41:20] They've just walked away from teaching. Their departure was a real and significant loss for our learning community. The reasons they left varied, but the instability created by their departure put pressure on the remaining staff and undoubtedly harmed some students. Dr. Reed's budget proposal seeks to remedy this problem by bringing FCPS to the top of the wage scale among neighboring school districts. In Chair McKay's February 6th and April 9th newsletters, he highlighted data about Northern Virginia's economic prosperity.

[07:41:58] This is good news for all of us. However, tax revenues have been unstable in almost all local jurisdictions in our metro region, and local governments have limited authority to raise tax revenue. Given this reality, I asked the Board of Supervisors to consider raising revenue through a progressive tax on high-value real estate transactions.

[07:42:22] According to the Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy, 17 cities and counties in the U.S., including Montgomery County, Maryland, adopted this type of tax to support the critical priorities of housing and education and to build more resilient and inclusive communities.

[07:42:40] This type of tax has proven to be popular with voters. When put on the ballot, measures to enact or expand a tax on high-value real estate transactions have succeeded 86% of the time. Given the collective productivity and prosperity that we enjoy in Fairfax County, we can create a future that supports and prioritizes our children, and we are obligated to provide superior wages and working conditions for our educators.

[07:43:12] We can't continue on this path of burning through new educators every five years. We must stabilize our education workforce by creating sustainable working conditions and adequate funding mechanisms to support these initiatives. Other jurisdictions have accomplished this task. It's up to us to

prioritize our children and their education to create the conditions for a future that we can be proud of. Thank you for your attention.

[07:43:41] Thank you very much. Speaker number 44 has submitted video testimony. Hi, my name is Whitney Redding. I'm volunteer-in-chief of The Friends of Homes Run, which is 501c3, grassroots, all-volunteer, stewardship group. So far this year, we've organized or otherwise supported 50 different stewardship events, and that can be invasive removal, tree stewardship, and litter cleanups.

[07:44:10] So we're all about helping the park authority and the county to get a handle on the major problem with invasives and pressures on our stream valleys. And we understand and recognize that it's not going to be something that happens with money alone.

[07:44:29] It has to involve every party, from the county to the park authority to the resident, getting it together and pulling this weight. So it is in that frame of mind in which I'm going to say, first of all, please and thank you about the park authority budget as proposed for FY25, that there are no major cuts, and in fact, there is a little bit of increase in a couple of different areas, such as bamboo removal, the waste issue, park operations, including a special forestry contract, and the invasive management area program also got

[07:45:06] a little bit of money. Yay! So thank you for that. I hope that you will hold the line on that up to now. For the past several years, there's been 0.6% of the general funds have gone toward the park authority, which is not a whole lot for 24,000 acres and all the upkeep that is required. And yes, the park authority does have other funding streams, but we want to keep those funding streams fair to the users who go to rec group centers and they can't afford to pay for all of the problems in the park. So it will take an investment from the county.

[07:45:39] I would like to say, though, that there are two funding streams of the Invasive Management Office, and one is kind of like the EIP carryover, things that can carry over basically from year to year, which is useful when And they're doing things like hiring contractors.

[07:45:55] But the other thing that they really need as well is an additional full-time merit position, which has to come from the general fund. If not this year, then FY26. It just has to happen. It's going to have to happen because, you know, here we are as organizations, and it's not just Friends of Helps, right?

[07:46:12] There's a lot of organizations that are scaling up our support for the county and the residents and the park authority. And we need the backbone in the IMA office to be there so that we can lean on them, they can train us.

[07:46:28] It's not something you get trained on in a day. I think I made my point about that, I hope. Here we are in the Holmes Run right now. I'm really close to the stream, and, you know, the problems are just everywhere, you know. So here's a vine.

[07:46:45] For example, this is porcelain berry. It goes all the way up, probably 50, 60 feet up. here's some bamboo. So you get the idea. But these streams are also beleaguered by the runoff. And so the last thing I will say is I hope that you will continue to support this storm utility, the stormwater utility fee, and not let that fall victim to some more temporal concerns. Because the absolutely outsized problem of the stormwater runoff and how it's only going

[07:47:21] to get worse with the worsening storms means that you cannot cheat yourselves on how you manage to pay for the needed changes and needed upgrades that happen. So thank you very much for

your attention, and if you have any questions, you can always reach me offline.

[07:47:38] Thank you very much, Ms. Redding. Speaker number 45 is Terry Harley, to be followed by Joanne Walton, Thomas Ward, Caitlin Priest. If you're here, make sure you make your way down a little bit closer. Ms. Harley, welcome. Hi, thank you. I'm Terry Harley, an ecosystem developer and manager. I greatly appreciate the board allowing me to appear. I'm here to respectfully ask the board to allocate funds in the 2025 budget that are desperately needed for environmental protections, including the invasive management area program and programs to educate residents and builders on the importance of native plants.

[07:48:17] In 2011, I theorized if I planted for monarchs, it would help all insects and all native wildlife. It was true. In fact, I found it also attracted native insects rarely seen in northern Virginia anymore, and also some more migratory wildlife.

[07:48:33] So I began studying insect and bird migration, native plants and trees, and invasives. When my stepson asked me to volunteer at his middle school, I approached the principal, and she said the gardens were a mess, so I became the garden lady. I began teaching eco-principles to the students in an after-school program that included developing and managing food and pollinator gardens, a rain garden, and an adjacent park through the Invasive Management Area Program.

[07:48:56] I worked thousands of student hours, and students won awards for their efforts, including the National Wildlife Federation green flag. More important, the students grew to understand the importance of nature, and many developed gardens in their high schools and neighborhoods. My message to you is what I told the students.

[07:49:14] Each of us is responsible and must care for the environment. And now in Fairfax County, we must be responsible for correcting the extensive damage caused by developers and residents. It's happened for a host of reasons, but an overwhelming problem is the lack of oversight, especially around contract breaches by developers.

[07:49:31] Strict requirements exist for replacing old growth trees and forests removed during development, but it's not being done. I was born in Alexandria in 1963 and have lived all but six of my 61 years in Fairfax County. It hurts to see what's happened to the vast open spaces in woods my friends and I played in.

[07:49:49] These largely still existed until mass land deconstruction occurred with the Springfield flyover. And the latest beltway expansion displaced local hawks and turkey buzzards and at least one eagle. Another problem is developers use grubbing and dozing to remove vegetation because it's cheaper and faster than working around old-growth trees.

[07:50:08] And that's the core problem, because one native red oak supports about 450 species of flora and fauna. When that oak is removed, the animals die because they don't have time to relocate. And then the trees are replaced with non-natives that don't support wildlife, don't provide necessary canopy, are aggressive and outperform native plants and escape into our public lands.

[07:50:28] This process is so destructive and the only oversight is land management. There is no oversight for the environment and the vast money involved in developing land in Fairfax County creates a serious conflict of interest when it comes to the environment. marriage between land development and invasive management is critical but necessary as separate but equal partners in sustainably and responsibly

sourcing and developing the land and the position must be held by an environmental specialist even loudon county recognizes the need and is working to make the environment as important as development but i know we can do better in fairfax fairfax

[07:51:04] county i just i love it here and i appreciate everything y'all do but i'm asking you to please um vote for the environment thank you so much for your time thank you very much miss harley uh speaker number 46 is joanne walton i don't see joanne uh speaker 47 thomas ward is thomas ward here let's see anyone speaker number 48 caitlin priest ah she is here very good welcome thank you

[07:51:36] good evening mr chairman and the board my name is katie priest and i am a proud fcps special education teacher and supporter of public education. I am in my ninth year of teaching and have taught in Massachusetts and northern Virginia, working exclusively with middle and high school students. I come to you today urging you to fully fund the proposed budget. I want to share a few data points with you. The county transfer from the Board of Supervisors to FCPS has typically been 52.6% of the county budget. In fiscal year 24, it reduced to 51.6%,

[07:52:12] and the county's executive proposal for fiscal year 25 has further reduced the ratio to 51.4%. If the county's budget were to return to allocating 52.6% of the county's budget to FCPS, that would amount to approximately an additional $63 million that would account for almost the full difference in FCPS and the county's proposed budgets.

[07:52:34] The increase in the county transfer request in FCPS advertised budget is the middle of the road compared to the increase it asks in surrounding jurisdictions. FCPS is asking for an increase of 10.5%, while our two most comparable in-size neighbors are asking for more.

[07:52:50] Loudon asking for 11.3%, and Prince William asking for 10.6%. The FCPS budget request allocates $171 million to enhance compensation, while the county budget is allocating $148 million for a much smaller number of employees, meaning the amount per employee in the county budget is higher than what is being asked for schools.

[07:53:12] The county budget also includes much higher than six percent increase for some employees subgroups including police and fire Whose pay increases range between seven point eight five percent and ten point six nine percent in summation strong schools Or I'm sorry strong public schools equals strong community strong communities Fully funding the budget will show teachers that you have faith in us Fully funding the budget will ensure important assurances for teachers district-wide most notably a six percent salary increase for all teachers and an 8.0 contract hours kept for special education teachers.

[07:53:48] Without this, special education teachers will lose approximately $5,000 from our salaries. Please show FCPS teachers and students that you care about our public schools. Teachers are resilient. We have persevered through a global pandemic, meeting the rising social and emotional needs of our students.

[07:54:04] We face political and community scrutiny, criticism, and backlash. Teachers deserve fair compensation for the job that we do each day to ensure that our students have a world-class education here in Fairfax County. Thank you. Thank you very much for your testimony.

[07:54:21] Speaker 50 is Chris Lewis. Is Chris Lewis here? Chris is. Shelly Arnaldi and Gwen Whitaker. Emily Vanderhoef are next up. If you're here and can make your way down a little bit closer, that would help.

[07:54:36] Mr. Lewis, welcome. Thank you. Good evening, Mr. Chairman and members of the board. It's a long night. I'm a former teacher. I'll try to keep this interesting. I'll start with the hard part. I'm here to ask you to do, and your staff, to do the hard thing, which is to find a way to fully fund our schools.

[07:55:00] I'm a lifelong resident of Fairfax County, a former Fairfax County teacher. I spent a few decades as a leader in our IT department. I now have a unique view working with the school board where I'm inspired daily by our commitment and our incredible workforce.

[07:55:18] I'm also saddened as I see our teachers struggling as they're asked every day to do more without the competitive compensation that they deserve. Everyone here has lived through and understands the effects on education of COVID. No need to trigger anyone's PTSD recounting those years.

[07:55:38] But it's not good, and it's just not getting better, and resources are becoming scarcer. What FCPS needs now is the most qualified, committed educators to help our kids navigate this challenging moment, teachers who will bring the energy every day and inspire our future generations.

[07:55:58] But unfortunately, our neighboring school systems got a big head start on us and now offer better compensation packages and are luring away the talent we should be attracting, leaving us with the more difficult task of staffing our classrooms. Hopefully all of you have seen the fantastic education movie, Dead Poets Society, and remember that scene when Robin Williams invites his students to climb up on his desk in order to remind them that they must constantly look at things in a different way.

[07:56:29] What I'm asking tonight is for all of us to think about funding schools in a different way. With 90% of our budget being allocated to funding our staff, we have to stop talking about them like they're just ones and zeros on a budget sheet. We're talking about investing in people, and not just any people, the ones who shape young minds every single day.

[07:56:51] I know that FCPS is big. We all know the numbers, 10th largest, 200 schools, 30,000 teachers, 180,000 students. It's easy to get lost swimming in the numbers. Our job, though, is to ensure each and every one of those students and teachers and staff know that we care about them, and they feel valued for the incredibly hard work they do and put in every day.

[07:57:13] I don't want to think about classrooms missing dedicated instructional aides. I don't want to think about special education teachers. The cornerstone for inclusive learning leaving us for opportunities elsewhere, they say, makes them feel more valued. And we can't ignore the needs of our multilingual learners, a vibrant and growing part of our community, who need help navigating the curriculum so they graduate on time.

[07:57:38] These are the educators we lose if we don't invest in them, and this is the time now we're at a crossroads. Our children are tomorrow's leaders, innovators, and citizens, so I'll leave you with the same hard question and ask.

[07:57:54] Work with your staffs. Find a way to fully fund our schools. Thanks. Have a good evening. Thank you very much. Speaker number 51 is Shelly Arnaldi. Is Shelly Arnaldi here? Speaker 52, Gwen Whitaker.

[07:58:12] Gwen Whitaker. Speaker number 53, Emily Vanderhoof. Emily is here. Speaker 54 is a call-in. We have a couple call-ins after Ms. Vanderhoff. Okay, welcome. Good evening, Chairman McKay and

members of the board. My name is Emily Vanderhoff. I'm a first-grade teacher in FCPS and a leader in my union, FCFT.

[07:58:37] I've been asking you all throughout this budget process to fully fund the school transfer request. I understand that this year is a tighter budget year with modest real estate revenue. I don't agree, however, with the characterization that Dr. Reed's needs-based budget proposal was unreasonable. If you had funded the school transfer at the long-standing average of 52.6%, along with what Dr. Reed anticipates we may be able to get from the state, the FCPS advertised budget would be fully funded.

[07:59:04] At this point, I understand that you're limited in what you can do in the FY25 budget after having set the tax rate ceiling at four cents. And I'm not advocating to further underfund county employee salaries because I also believe that the MRA should be fully funded. We find ourselves in a position where both schools and county employees stand to receive smaller compensation increases than our neighboring districts and than the calculated MRA at a time when staffing shortages across all areas are critical.

[07:59:31] The biggest draw to Fairbanks County is our world-class school system and our excellent public services. We cannot continue to offer the quality of services residents expect when we cannot attract and retain employees with competitive compensation that affords them the ability to live within the county. At this point, we are struggling to even have licensed teachers for every classroom.

[07:59:51] This issue is especially dire in special education, where around one-third of our special education teachers are either provisually licensed or unlicensed teacher trainees or long-term subs. This issue will only worsen when we cannot afford to keep pace with the salaries in surrounding districts.

[08:00:07] It's time for this board to seriously consider taking actions that are under your control to diversify the county's revenue stream so that we are not so reliant on the whims of the real estate market for the bulk of our funds. The meal tax and hotel tax would be a good start. The meal tax has been implemented in many nearby counties and cities without issue and provides an additional revenue stream to support fully funding county public services.

[08:00:30] While it won't address the full shortfall of this year's budget, taking this action would show that you are seeking to exercise every option within your power to fully fund competitive compensation for school and county staff. Thank you. Thank you very much. Speaker 54 is Helen Morrison.

[08:00:46] Helen Morrison. Ah, that's right. She's a caller. Okay, she's not on the line. Ron Corey is. uh ron can you hear me okay yes i can welcome the floor is yours thank you very much first of all thank you for uh for having me today my name is ron corey i'm in the sully district actually i moved to virginia 25 years ago for relatively low taxes and a great school district today my feeling is in many ways we have neither my taxes were originally twenty four hundred dollars when

[08:01:21] I moved here about 25 years ago. Today, they are $10,000 and climbing, about a 400% increase. Now, everything goes up, but these increases are far outweighing any inflation and any wage increases that any of us have, or many of us have had. Recently retired, I will be leaving mainly due to these taxes. Many seniors cannot afford these increases any longer. Virginia will be losing good, hardworking people and many retirees. Listen to our great Governor Youngkin.

[08:01:55] Thank you. Thank you. Speaker number 56, Joseph Miller. Mr. Miller here. Okay. Speaker 57. Do we have Speaker 57 on the line? I have NL Wilson.

[08:02:12] Okay. How about Speaker, you said not 58 either? Sheriff Vaughn. Okay. Cheryl Binkley. Cheryl Binkley here. Cheryl Binkley not here.

[08:02:28] How about Ms. Alan Krishnan? Is he on the line? He's not on the line. Lisa McDermott. Lisa McDermott. No, Lisa McDermott.

[08:02:49] Okay. The phone lines are working, right? Okay. Misha Chernov. Ah, we have a winner. Misha, speaker number 62.

[08:03:06] Welcome. The floor is yours. Good evening, Chairman Kay and supervisors. My name is Misha Chernoff. I am a resident of Reston, Virginia, and I'm a proud FCPS educator serving the students and families of Fairfax County for over 28 years.

[08:03:28] I thank you for this opportunity to speak tonight about the budget. My remarks this evening pertain to fully funding the transfer request made by the superintendent. I appreciate that the Board of Supervisors has a long history of supporting FCPS and have worked collaboratively with our superintendent and school board for many years.

[08:03:52] This year, however, it feels different. During the Joint Budget Committee meeting with the school board, I was alarmed to hear Supervisor Herity suggest that the board should look at cutting teacher pensions as a way to improve salaries.

[08:04:07] I never hear the same kind of advocacy coming from him for cutting the police and uniformed employee pensions as a way to increase their salaries. It was also discouraging to hear Supervisor Stork say that this is the first year he cannot support fully funding the transfer request because it's really high.

[08:04:29] when the transfer request is 1.2% below both the 10- and 5-year average transfers of the county budget to schools. That 1.2% would close the funding gap by two-thirds.

[08:04:46] With this aside, I have a question for the Board. Given the declining commercial tax revenue, just the beginning of several tough years, Given the report from the JLARC study, which highlights the fact that the Commonwealth of Virginia has woefully been underfunding education for decades, my question is this, what do you plan to do in the meantime to support the students of Fairfax County?

[08:05:11] In the meantime, do we sit and watch the students of Fairfax County not have highly qualified licensed educators guiding them in the classroom while we wait for the General Assembly to act? Do we sit and watch the students of Fairfax County not have the support staff, bus drivers, cafeteria, and custodial staff in our schools while we wait for the commercial tax revenue to increase?

[08:05:35] Do we treat the students of Fairfax County as if they are caught in an ugly divorce between the county and the Commonwealth and tell them we're sorry, but it's someone else's fault? Or do you do what is within your power? Do you act and move forward in implementing a meals tax in which a portion of the revenue could be used to fund our schools.

[08:05:57] Our students cannot wait for Richmond. The students of Fairfax County need you to act boldly to find a way to fully fund their education. I thank you so much for your time and for your service and your partnership with the county public schools.

[08:06:13] Thank you. Thank you very much. Speaker number 63, do we have Ms. Hurdy on the line? Okay. Or Lois Ruckert, speaker 64.

[08:06:31] Okay, and are we working on Glenn Morrow? Okay, while we're doing that, is Mary Adonaut here? Mary Adonaut present? Let's see her. How about Melody Dunn?

[08:06:51] Or Tony Savio? Keith Elliott? Ah, Keith. He's going to jump the line a lot. He's speaker number 71, but here in person?

[08:07:14] That's my eye, so. Welcome. They're winning one to nothing, at least that was at one point. At any rate, thank you for the time, Chairman McKay and members of the Board of Supervisors. My name's Keith Elliott, and I'm here to speak about the budget, obviously.

[08:07:31] And the one item when I ran on for solely district supervisor was on taxes. The real estate taxes, I have a real estate background, and as you increase the taxes, you increase the expenses for the individuals. I've managed investor-owned properties and HOAs, and when you're qualifying individuals to buy a house, taxes come into play.

[08:07:51] And so when the taxes are higher, people can't afford it. If you have investor-owned homes, they are paying rent, right? Or excuse me, they're renting their place to somebody who wants to rent it. And that person is going to raise the rent for the taxes to offset their income, right? So as the rents, as the taxes go up, so do the rents.

[08:08:09] And if you look at the average salaries of people graduating from college, it's only right around $60,000. And at $60,000, you can only afford $1,500 a month in rent. Where can you find a one-bedroom apartment for rent here in Fairfax County for $1,500? So consider the taxes.

[08:08:26] As you increase it, it just affects everything. So I think in the way of instead of increasing the taxes, look at the spending. I think we have a spending issue. I think just by all accounts that I've seen here today, you've had at least a dozen people speak about different parts of the budget.

[08:08:42] And, you know, it's not Christmas time, obviously, but I think it's wonderful that we try to act and try to do all the things for everybody. But you can't do it for everybody. But I think what you can do is appoint a panel to review the budget, and that panel can look at all the essential spending, separate it, and then non-essential spending, and separate it.

[08:09:03] And then you as the Board of Supervisors can review the different items and then understand it and then make a vote to say, hey, maybe we can cut this back, cut this back, cut this back, increase here for the teachers, increase here for the police departments, those essential spending. If it was good, Mr. McKay, for the past, like, say, Kate Hanley and the previous Democratic boards, to have a panel to review the budget, why isn't it good enough now?

[08:09:27] So, I'd just like to say that if Supervisor Herity would like to raise a motion to have that as an item to be discussed, I would love to have that seconded so you guys can have an open discussion about trying to appoint a panel to review the spending of the county.

[08:09:43] I appreciate everything you do. I continue to pray for everything, and hopefully you guys have the wisdom to do the right things for our county. I've been a long-time resident, lifelong resident as well, and I'm not going anywhere. Thank you guys very much for your time. Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Thank you very much. If we don't have any, number 64, Lois Ruckert, welcome.

[08:10:06] Can you hear me okay? Ken, thank you very much. Sure. All set. So should I begin? Yes, please. Yes. Good evening, Chairman McKay and District Board Supervisors. Yes, I'm Lois Ruckert, and I'm proud

to say I'm president of the Little River Glen Senior Center's Advisory Council.

[08:10:26] Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to address you at the public hearing about the county budget. The reason I'm speaking to you is because of the slated 50% senior service membership dues increase for both Fairfax County residents and non-residents.

[08:10:48] Presently, the payment is $48 a year, and it's slated to increase to $75 for county residents. and from $100 for non-county residents to $150 in the 2025 budget.

[08:11:08] No doubt each of you supervisors try to support your district's senior population and the outstanding work of the senior center directors and personnel. A special shout-out is right now for our Braddock district supervisor, James Walkinshaw, for his interest and support of programming, as well as his visibility at Little River Glen Senior Center.

[08:11:37] Thank you for listening to our concerns and for coming back to us with Karen's suggestions. Please consider me as a voice for not only our senior center, but 13 other senior centers, As I don't know if many of them do not have advisory councils, and others, it's a little intimidating to speak to the Board of Supervisors.

[08:12:05] They may not feel comfortable doing so. Everyone at this hearing is well aware that the senior population is arguably the most vulnerable population in Fairfax County. Yes, our seniors are on a fixed income and therefore are the most affected by the increases in food, medical expenses, gas, and insurance.

[08:12:29] Little River Glen Senior Advisory Council addressed our membership regarding a workable solution for the dues dilemma. Believe me, we realize that an increase in dues is warranted.

[08:12:48] In all honesty, we cannot recall there was an increase in the last 10 years, possibly 20. Wow. However, an increase of 50% is just too much for us to be able to deal with.

[08:13:05] Please, we are suggesting possibly a 25% increase, moving our dues from 48 to 60 and from $100 for out-of-county residents to 125.

[08:13:22] Thank you for listening to our membership's valid concern regarding the dues increases. The Little River Glen Advisory Council respectfully requests that you reconsider the proposed 50% dues increase and act fairly on a proposed lesser membership dues increase.

[08:13:50] Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Ruckert, for your testimony. Do we have any of those other callers that we missed? And that is number 65.

[08:14:05] Mr. Morrow, welcome. Thank you. I'm only here because my tax assessment keeps creeping up to the point where at my age, I'm not sure how much longer I can keep up with the scope creep of both the tax assessment and the insurance, homeowner's insurance I have to pay.

[08:14:31] That's why I'm here. I'm here in Kings Park, Virginia. been here about 30 years. I'm just wondering if my house is still kind of built the way it was built, gosh, 65 years ago with single pane homes. I wonder if it's being assessed equally next to homes that are torn down and many mansions are built that are being sold for north of 1.2 million

[08:15:04] sometimes in my neighborhood and around Fairfax County and I'm not I don't feel like the assessment is fair on me I don't know what I can do to um communicate with you guys or to get um some

sort of um assessment that is fair um and I don't want to move I don't even know where I would go which would be a different state um i love this house i love my neighborhood and i just want you

[08:15:44] to think about what happens when um we're playing we're paying our mortgages but our taxes and insurance are increasing a lot like a really lot year to year five years ago you know and now and then it keeps going up and this is tough it's tough there's a there's a reason why people consider leaving the state of virginia as they grow older and now i'm feeling it and i understand

[08:16:19] it and i implore you guys to you know think about that and what happens to us that have these old houses they're in great shape but they're being torn you know many mansions are being built next them when you're assessing in the same way and what can you you know just consider that because i i won't have a choice in a few years it can't keep going up like this is this property insurance it cannot keep going up like this or we will all move you know what can we do and that that's my

[08:16:58] that's my ending thank thank you very much uh mr morrell um let me ask if we have any of the other callers there on page 8. Okay, so let's go to the video for speaker number 72 and the video for speaker number 73, if we can. Good evening, Chairman McKay and esteemed members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. My name is Lula Bauer. I'm the Fairfax County Athletic Council Chairwoman. I'm here today representing the Fairfax County Athletic Council and addressing

[08:17:34] the FY 2025 budget proposal. The Fairfax County Athletic Council appreciates the opportunity to share our perspective on behalf of the athletic community here in Fairfax County. First, I'd like to express our concern regarding the proposed increase in fees. While we understand the economic considerations behind this decision, we're not happy with the prospect of increasing athletic user fees. However, we are unanimously supportive of the proposed increase provided that they do not lead to any further escalation in fees or cuts in services that would adversely impact

[08:18:12] athletic users. In particular, we are encouraged by the proposed change to remove the fees from the general fund and instead reallocate them to the athletic programming. Should there be any reconsideration of moving these funds back into the general fund, we respectfully request a dialogue to explore the implications and alternatives. Additionally, we fully endorse the necessary increase in the scholarship fund to ensure accessibility for all members of our community to participate in athletic programs.

[08:18:44] We also acknowledge the pressing need for funding to address several critical areas, such as the deficit and turf replacement funds, increased school custodial fees, and downing field maintenance costs. These are essential for maintaining the quality and safety of our athletic facilities.

[08:19:05] However, there is one major issue that our community athletes, families, and user groups are facing, And that is the unprecedented number of school, gym, and field cancellations. These cancellations are occurring well after community user permits have been allocated, fields have been scheduled, referees and umpires assigned, resulting in a large financial loss.

[08:19:31] With that said, the Athletic Council would like to express our sincere gratitude to Chairman McKay for putting together a focus group to help mitigate these disruptions. In conclusion, as stewards of the Fairfax County athletic community, we stand behind to collaborate with you in navigating these budgetary challenges.

[08:19:50] Together, we can ensure that our athletic facilities remain accessible, safe, and vibrant spaces that enrich the lives of all Fairfax County residents. Thank you, Chairman McKay and members of the Board of Supervisors, for your attention and commitment to our athletic community's well-being.

[08:20:06] Thank you, Ms. Bauer. And we have video for Speaker 73. My name is Laura Nessmiller, and I urge you to say no to a tax increase. I am a single mom, and several years ago, I was able to escape a toxic and dangerous situation, and through great sacrifice, I was able to buy a modest home here in Fairfax for myself and two of my children.

[08:20:34] It isn't easy as prices of everything are going up, but I factored taxes into my budget. And now what I'm hearing is that you want to take more of my hard-earned money in taxes.

[08:20:50] And if this happens, if something in my house breaks, I may not be able to fix it because instead I'm paying more to taxes. I may not be able to send my child to summer camp because the money that I had factored into my budget to send her there is now getting sent to you in taxes.

[08:21:12] I may not be able to properly maintain or upgrade my home because I'm sending more of the money that I had budgeted for those items to you in taxes. My income isn't going up at the same rate as inflation.

[08:21:31] I can't vote myself a 30% wage increase or a 20% salary increase or even a 1% salary increase. I'm lucky and hundreds of other single parents in this county are lucky if our salaries go up at the rate of inflation.

[08:21:52] So I urge you, do the right thing. Keep Fairfax a place where single moms and single dads who are desperately trying to make a home and a positive experience and survive with their children, that they can succeed, say no to a tax increase.

[08:22:17] Thank you very much. Let me ask speaker number 66, Mary Otnot, is here now. If you could come on down to testify, let me ask again, Melody Dunn, Tony Sabio, Elena Shavak, Sondra Davis.

[08:22:41] Okay. We will get to you here momentarily. This is speaker 66, Mary Otnot. Welcome. Thank you. I'm so sorry. it was a technical difficulty because they sent me 68 i even showed her uh no no worries you're here now yeah right but um so you guys are getting my testimony it's being passed around to you guys my name is mary ottenott i'm a registered nurse been a nurse for about uh 14 years or so um and i have specializations in psych substance use disabilities pediatrics geriatrics case management

[08:23:17] and some of you guys know me been around for a minute some of you guys know me at my state level policy work that i do i currently serve on the virginia behavioral health advisory council i've been doing public policy work for a long time at the local level city level state level federal level i'm from the midwest been out in virginia for the past three years and i've come to love fairfax county i've come to love virginia so you guys kind of stuck with me but um for those of you who are not familiar with my story, back in December of 2020, my children and I became

[08:23:53] victims of targeted crimes as a result of perpetrators posing as medical providers, county vendors, and government employees. After exhausting every administrative remedy in the county and at the state to report wrongdoing, I soon realized none of them worked. I ultimately had to report the criminal activity and misconduct to the federal government and to the National Human Trafficking Hotline. Oh, as well as the Department of Homeland Security. As it was a very unfortunate and

unimaginable ordeal, those circumstances propelled me into the advocacy and public policy work that I'm presently doing in Fairfax County and around the state.

[08:24:33] Undoubtedly, the county executive's budget represents the priorities of Fairfax County, and as the county is currently making necessary reforms for a comprehensive responsive system that ensures public health and safety, I wanted to make the following recommendations for needed infrastructure improvements that should take precedence for any discretionary funding.

[08:24:58] Ultimately, by making these strategic investments now, these efforts would lead to a more efficient and safe social services and mental health systems for our county. Number one, create a victim Restitution Fund to compensate the hundreds of children and residents of Fairfax County who have been subjected to fraud and abuse within our county hospitals, mental health, and child welfare systems for decades. Number two, create and fund a crisis management division within the Office of Risk Management. Task this division with the authority to implement corrective action and mitigate further

[08:25:35] harms to victims of Fairfax County employees and or vendors and grossing in engaging in gross misconduct and or crimes while acting in their capacity as an agent of the county number three create and fund an internal threat program am I going to have the chance to finish um if you can just quickly wrap up we do have your written testimony okay create and fund an internal threat program within the Office of Risk Management and task this office with training all Fairfax County employees and vendors how to report agents of the county who are engaging in criminal activity to

[08:26:13] include human trafficking, fraud, waste, and abuse within county programs, resources, and or with public funds. Ensure that this internal threat program includes protection measures for those who report from being subjected to retaliation. Allocate funding for an increase to eight and eventually scale up to 12 the number of law enforcement officers within the financial crimes division and ensure they are protected to investigate financial crimes within our county government and protect them from extra and provide them extra protection so that they won't lose their employment or seniority for doing their jobs as a result of possible retaliation. Allocate

[08:26:50] funding for the creation of an online portal on the Department of Cable and Consumer Services web page in collaboration with the Office of procurement and material management to start the county's first ever consumer-driven do-not-hire or contract list where citizens can publicly post county vendors who are providing unsafe or fraudulent services. Thank you very much, Mary. And we have point six and seven in writing here, so we have those. I want to respect everyone's time. We appreciate your testimony, and we have the remaining two points that you have on here. There are two points, but I think that they're

[08:27:25] so important for the citizens of Fairfax County to know that I would like to get the Department of Social Services person removed the the director he needs to be replaced he's not providing safe care and also to make our procurement office restructure that so that we are no longer having vendors who are able to do fraud in our county thank you Mary that was my recommendations but thank you guys thank you very much mary thank you very much uh let me double check uh melody dunn

[08:27:59] tony sabio uh elena shavak sandra davis if you could come on down uh we are on speaker number 75 sandra davis welcome thank you and uh as an at-large candidate in the most recent school board elections i encountered each of you within your own districts and what i did not realized what

happened was that I would fall in love with Fairfax County each of your districts have a different vibe very particular and very different I enjoyed learning about that and the people within your districts thank you

[08:28:38] for serving the most important thing I learned was that your election to the seat you occupied is not a mandate for your policies or support for how you spend our tax money it became obvious to me that the average citizen does not inform themselves to the degree it would take to separate and disconnect with national political concerns and separate that from local issues that affect their daily lives and their wallet. The county's stellar reputation in relation to the once grand public school system which takes up most of the tax revenues has expired and you all bear part of the responsibility for

[08:29:16] that. Where were your voices when FCPS shut down the school system for far too long? Can you not see that the parents and grandparents whom you are trying to ever increase property taxes on have no more to spend because they had to pay for alternative school opportunities, tutors, and college prep due to the closures.

[08:29:35] Do you approve the massive $1.5 billion public school budget without demanding an independent audit? Don't fall prey to the idea that Richmond is to blame for underfunding our school system without taking measure of what's happening with our elected school board and their poor decision-making.

[08:29:53] The rest of the state doesn't want to pay for FCPS's bloated operating costs, And the state government wants this board, this board of supervisors, to force them to exercise some kind of fiscal restraint. Instead, you've allowed FCPS to inflate its budget until it surpasses the GDPs of 46 countries.

[08:30:15] Why? Because all 12 of the school board members, the superintendent, all 10 of you with the exception of Supervisor Herity, are Democrats and there is no diversity of thought. I think you're afraid you will be canceled by your own party if you dare to suggest an independent audit.

[08:30:33] Is there no hero among you to challenge Carl Frisch's narrative about underfunding of our schools? Where's the differential pay for challenging positions like special education teachers and aides, bus drivers, those who teach computer science and other hard-to-fill positions?

[08:30:50] The Capital Improvement Program, which covers school construction and remodeling, is in shambles even after the latest school bond passed. And who will ensure it's spent properly because where's the high school in the western part of the county that was promised when the last bond passed?

[08:31:06] And who will speak up about the ever-increasing legal fees that FCPS spends to defend the indefensible? Right now, FCPS has 10,000 more seats than it does students, with elementary school enrollment declining. But FCPS is barreling along. It's your duty to hold FCPS fiscally accountable.

[08:31:26] Thank you. Do we have Speaker 76, Lisa Zargarpur? You are here, and Speaker 77, Katie Curry. How about Speaker 79, Courtney Massey? Okay, if you could come on down closer.

[08:31:43] Ms. Zargarpur, welcome. Thank you. Thank you, Chairman McKay. Supervisors, my name is Lisa Zargarpur. I am a Fairfax County public school teacher. I am an elementary teacher. I love my job. I've been working here for 13 years. And I see great things in this school system. I love my colleagues.

[08:31:59] I love my students. I've been in three different schools in this county, in three different areas, and each of them different in their populations, different things that the kids need, and I've loved every single one of them. And I tell you that because I love this career, and you have heard several people speak

about how great our schools are. I want to also mention that I'm not a resident of Fairfax County. I live in a neighboring county, and I know your social services, the services you provide for your community, your students, your families, are very, very good. So I come to you tonight, you have an unenviable task, it appears by all the testimony I've heard, of your budget.

[08:32:40] As much as I want to say, go ahead and transfer all the money that the superintendent is requesting, I understand the challenges that you have. So I would like to take an appreciative lens on this instead. Doesn't it sound like we're pitting people against each other? We don't want to raise taxes. No one does. We're all taxpayers. We all feel it. We feel the inflation. We feel the price of things going up. Instead, why don't we grow a bigger pie? Where else can we think about growing our revenues? That's not a question for me to answer, of course. It's for you, and I challenge you to think a little bit more about that. There are some things that we can partner on, though.

[08:33:21] The educators you've heard, your school board members, and you can go to the state and talk about the JLARC report. We can talk to our elected officials in Richmond and talk to them about what it costs to educate our kids up here. We can go to the federal government. As many of you know, especially those of you who have sat on a school board or if you've worked in a classroom or school before, you're aware of the fact that IDEA is an unfunded mandate. About 7% of the money that the federal government provides about here goes to fund that, and the rest is on the locality. We can go

[08:33:59] in partnership and ask for people to look at how they are currently funding, what our needs are, and what we can do together. Sounds good? Positive? Yes? Thank you for all the things that you're doing. I've heard several people make suggestions like meals tax, hotels tax. That's for you to decide, obviously. I have some friends in different places. I would love to see maybe a collaboration and local governments get together and talk about what has been working and what hasn't.

[08:34:30] Teacher appreciation is coming up. Please remember us. Thank you so much. Thank you, Lisa. We are now going to go to speaker number 79, Courtney Massey. We do have 78 on the phone.

[08:34:46] Let's take the phone real quick. We'll be right with you, Ms. Massey. Ms. Dodd-Khan? Dodd-Khan? Yes, I'm here. Okay, welcome. The floor is yours. Hi, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to talk.

[08:35:05] Hello, Board of Supervisors. Hello, Chairman McKay. My name is Maryam Dotska. I live in town of Vienna. I volunteer 2,200 hours a year to restore our forest. We don't have any wildlife management in town of Vienna.

[08:35:22] And I see in front of my eyes what is happening to our urban forest and our trees and our wild area. It came to my attention that there is an item in the budget that proposed to consolidate the wildlife management of Fairfax County under animal shelters.

[08:35:44] I would like for this proposal to be taken off the budget and done more research about it. There is a research, comprehensive research has been done in 2016 that showed the current program that we have that separates the wildlife management units from the animal shelter is the best system that we can have based on that comprehensive assessment.

[08:36:11] And consolidation does not make sense because wildlife management is a different area than animal shelter which deals with domesticated animals and the person that is running the animal shelter right now came from human society from animal welfare which is totally different concept than wildlife

management. I would like for this item from the budget to be taken out, done more studies, research, and then propose it again in the future if it's needed,

[08:36:50] or keep the system that we have, which is the gold standard. And I know many of the other counties and even other countries look into it and ask for their guidance. Thank you very much for taking your time and listening to me tonight. Thank you very much. We now will hear from Speaker 79. Courtney Massey, welcome.

[08:37:14] Hello. Is this on? No, speak. Yes, it's on. You don't need to do it. Okay. I'm here on behalf of Showing Up for Racial Justice Northern Virginia and the Defund Nova Police Coalition. And these are organizations that advocate for Northern Virginia local governments to divest from harmful policing and invest in resources like housing and health care that provide true community safety.

[08:37:39] In a year where the county has faced a potential budget shortfall, you've still chosen to increase police budgets. And Fairfax is proposing an increase of 7.15% over FY 2024's budget. This is one of the largest increases in the FY25 budget.

[08:37:56] Meanwhile, you've also proposed budget reductions for crucial community services like health care and affordable housing. And we want to say that we think these priorities are totally backwards. The Defund Nova Police Coalition and its member organizations understand that increased policing doesn't keep communities safe.

[08:38:12] We know, as one of the speakers before said, that even here in Northern Virginia, police harm and kill black and brown neighbors at disproportionate rates. We say the names of community members like Natasha McKenna, Giovanni Martinez, Timothy Johnson, and Aaron Lynch, all of them killed by policing here in Fairfax County.

[08:38:32] And we continue our work in their memories. These stories make clear that police don't keep community members safe, and instead we need to fund a lot of the resources, all the resources you've heard your constituents talk about tonight. Housing, food, health care, I'm going to go back to my other list, child care, long COVID treatment, parks, senior housing support, disability services, computer support, DV support, crisis intervention, police oversight, and actual civilian review.

[08:38:59] more addressing of homelessness, victim restitution, crisis management. There's nearly $285 million proposed in the FY25 police budget. You could take at least some of that and fund those other resources instead and be proactive in creating safety for our neighbors rather than reactive and punitive.

[08:39:19] So this is why we're demanding that Fairfax reduce the police budget and restore and increase funding to the essential community services I just mentioned, especially given the financial picture. And again, the communities you serve are demanding less spending for police and more resources for housing and other crucial social services.

[08:39:39] And I ask, are you finally ready to listen? I also want to say that Katie Curry, Speaker 77, is on her way, but I don't know if she'll make it in time. Anyway. Okay, thank you very much. This time we're going to go to Speaker No. 9, James Parmalee, who is joining us by phone.

[08:39:58] Is that right? Mr. Parmelee, welcome. Thank you. Yes, I was also speaker, supposed to be speaker number one earlier today for the effective tax rate hearing. When I signed up, I asked to be signed up for the phone speaking, and they made a mistake and put me on in person, which I did not realize until

today. So I'm going to sort of merge my two presentations. So let me start with, If you really want to make housing affordable in this county, don't subsidize it.

[08:40:29] Cut taxes on it. And that doesn't just affect homeowners, but renters as well, because rents are based on costs to property owners who pay property taxes. So when you cut tax rates, you're not just cutting tax rates for homeowners, you're cutting tax rates for renters.

[08:40:45] You're cutting the cost of housing for everyone in Fairfax County. And people can't afford higher taxes in Fairfax County anymore. We seem to be living in two different worlds, Republicans and Democrats, and independents, depending on which side they're on. Democrats keep telling us inflation is down.

[08:41:02] But why are my trips to the grocery store 40% more expensive? Why do people, including me, fill up the gas tank partway a lot of the times? Because we're trying to find a cheaper place to get gas. The Democrats tell us the economy is great, but no one seems to see it but Democratic politicians and their allies in the media.

[08:41:21] Democrats tell us crime is going down. And a lady who just spoke said that policing doesn't work. Well, I wouldn't know in Centerville because I didn't see any police. Just last weekend, someone shot up Centerville Road. So I went and looked it up on NeighborhoodScout.com, which does a lot of research into crime issues.

[08:41:40] It looks like a nonpartisan site. And looking up Centerville, evidently I face a 1 in 41 chance of being a victim of a property crime in Centerville and that we have 160 crimes per square mile in Centerville. And this is not the Centerville I moved into decades ago, but, yeah, you want me to pay more to live here in taxes.

[08:41:59] So any of the police that the previous speaker does not want in her neighborhood, please send them over to Centerville and make our area safer. High taxes make it tough to afford to live in Fairfax. Crime makes it tough to live in Fairfax. Inflation makes it tough to live in Fairfax.

[08:42:16] So please, cut taxes, don't raise them, and make this a better place to live. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Parmelee. let me ask the clerk if we have anyone else who's on the line any other callers that we've missed okay so a number of people who were going to connect by phone uh did not um let me before we wrap up here let me just make sure cheryl binkley is not here um melody dunn tony sabio katie curry

[08:42:52] uh elena shavak okay um that brings us then to the end of my speakers list today uh verify there are no more callers um if that unfortunately uh brings us to the end of our speakers list today and if no other speakers at this time are present uh to testify uh the board is um in recess until until we begin our public hearings again tomorrow, 3 p.m.



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