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[00:00:02] All right. Good morning. We are going to get started with our Health and Human Services Committee meeting. We are starting a few minutes late, so I'm going to move quickly into our discussion. But first of all, I just want to make sure everyone's aware we're doing Early Childhood and Equity Implementation Plan for the Park Authority.

[00:00:21] And before we get started, I'm going to turn it over to our Deputy County Executive, Chris Arnold. Thank you. Arnold. Chris Arnold? Leonard. Wow. So I'm going to deploy the police today out to Thank you supervisor project before we get started. I just wanted to I know it's on everybody's mind I know my phone has been buzzing all morning And and around the potential the federal pause in the grants coming forward Obviously that's gonna have an impact to us

[00:00:58] We did I'll remind the board that from a human services standpoint. We did set up a ready team for this exact purpose so we were able to react very quickly so I've got directors and staff working on that as we speak to try to do a decent analysis and get you information so you're aware of how this is going to impact us so just one of the elephant in the room I wanted to address it right off the bat for today's presentation we're excited to be able to be for you today we have two presentations that we view this is one Fairfax in action this This is all about increasing our residents' access to opportunities to be able to attend

[00:01:38] our very valuable programs that we have here in the county. So we're excited by that. I also want to just point out, while she's not at the table, Katie Horstman is in the back and I am going to give her a shout out because she's sitting in the seat that I normally see it sit in.

[00:01:54] She's the deputy director for the budget office, but she is very involved in both of these efforts and I call her out primarily because she is kind of she was kind of the architect behind what we did around the SAC program to make that more accessible with regards to an accessible and fair sliding fee scale so that that and that's been really really well received and it's done what what we wanted to do so she's here if we have any questions around that as well but But we'll get started here.

[00:02:27] The first presentation is early childhood, a little bit of school readiness. This is, just as a reminder, this is one of five skipped initiatives. Supervisor Lusk and Supervisor Palczyk are your representatives to the successful children and youth policy team.

[00:02:43] As a reminder, that is equal split into thirds. One-third community members, one-third school staff, one-third county staff, and we work together around policies that directly impact kids. This is our ongoing commitment to make sure that the board is updated on our skipped initiatives. Last year, we updated you on My Brother's Keeper, community schools, youth behavioral health. Those are three of the five.

[00:03:09] Today, we're going to update you on the early childhood efforts. So with that said, we have partners from the school and from our county government here, and I'll let them introduce themselves. I can interrupt for one second. I apologize. Now seeing that we've got the full slate, I skipped over the review of the minutes from last time you have them here. Just want to make sure, see if there are any issues. All good. So thank you. Let me send it back to you and your team. Good morning to the board this morning. My name is Keisha Dotson. I'm Deputy Director at

[00:03:45] Neighborhood and Community Services. And today I'm joined by my Fairfax County Public Schools colleague Lisa Pilsen who is the director of early childhood grants and curriculum today we want to provide the board with an update of our early childhood initiatives so we're going to walk through a few of our initiatives that we have going on and also we have Lisa here in partnership to highlight the work that we've been doing across the system so I want to go ahead and turn it

[00:04:23] over to Lisa today. For our topics today, we're going to talk about the system itself, Ready Regions, Capital Area, and Early Childhood Program and Supply for Fairfax County, and then some things that we're looking ahead to. Lisa. Thank you, Keisha. Good morning, everyone.

[00:04:43] So, I'm going to forward to the next slide. Thank you. FCPS and ECPS align in our commitment. What do you need? Oh, did you give me the clicker? I'm sorry. Thank you so much.

[00:05:01] align in our commitment to fostering strong foundations and early learning, prioritizing the success of every child through collaborative framework. We work together to coordinate services, programs, and resources, ensuring that our youngest and most vulnerable and valuable residents, our children, have access to early childhood programs that effectively address their family's needs.

[00:05:31] So as you see, we have our centers, family care homes, and our family care providers and in-homes. There are various experiences and program opportunities throughout the county for our Fairfax County families to choose from.

[00:05:51] There are over 400 community care centers, 132 classes in FCPS schools, and over 1,200 regulated family care homes in Fairfax County. Other opportunities that are not as formal, more informal for early childhood opportunities that are based on parental preference include family literacy and early literacy, healthy families, home instruction for parents of young preschoolers, library programs, nurse family partnerships, we play groups, and all ages read together.

[00:06:30] Currently in the county, we are serving over 9,000 children in publicly funded early childhood programming. As we talk about expanding access and looking at opportunities in the county, over the past year we've done some significant expansion with child care subsidy as well as our grant disbursement,

[00:07:03] In addition to the expansion of Fairfax County Public Schools expanding classrooms for pre-K to serve 300 children, and also we have been able to increase the amount of subsidy through our child care assistance and referral program.

[00:07:22] And these are just a few of the highlights that you'll see on the slide here to highlight some of the things that we've been able to do while expanding the access. I wanted to take this opportunity to talk a little bit about Ready Regions. When we've previously presented information on Ready Regions, we were in the earlier part of this.

[00:07:43] Fairfax County is the lead organization in the state for the capital area, which is inclusive of Fairfax County, Arlington, Alexandria, and the cities of Falls Church in Fairfax.

[00:07:59] This unified early childhood system is a network to ensure that all equitable opportunities for family and young children are there for them to thrive. With our region, we are in the Region 7 area.

[00:08:15] We are kind of the smallest on the map when you look at the Commonwealth. However, we are the most diverse, and we have most numbers within our region. One of the things that I like to highlight about the work of this region is not only are we uniquely positioned because of our previous experience in early childhood efforts in the state, we are able to serve in this role.

[00:08:40] And we were just recently re-awarded the grant for the next cycle, which I wanted to highlight. But one of the things that makes us stand out amongst the state, other partners in the state, we're the only government entity that has taken on this leadership role. And with that, we are leading the way in ensuring collaboration, not only within our partners within the state, but in the region as well.

[00:09:04] Right now, the four core areas that are included for Ready Regions, we're focused on the strengthening quality. So when you hear us talk about class observations, that's looking to measure the interactions between teacher and child interactions.

[00:09:21] And that's where we're focused right now. This past fiscal year, for both spring and fall, we have completed 4,707 observations and 794 programs are included in that.

[00:09:37] So as we look forward to moving forward with this in our next grant cycle, we will be improving upon the numbers and the things that we've already done in this cycle, and also it's important to note that now one of the more recent parts of this is we have published profiles. So all of the entities that are receiving public funding must participate in the Virginia VQP,

[00:10:07] excuse me, VQP5, sorry. That is the Virginia Quality Birth to 5. So with this, all of the Publicly funded entities are enrolled in this area and in this program, and they are able to see their profiles.

[00:10:26] This is helpful for families as they choose what option works best for their family for early childhood experiences. Their profiles are available online. It's yet another tool to allow family choice to determine how they'd like to move forward. One of the other initiatives that has come out of this is the Recognize B5.

[00:10:47] direct financial incentives have been made to retain child care providers in both center-based programs and family child homes. So that's one of the things that has been working to work on the retention issue that sometimes comes up in the early childhood arena.

[00:11:06] This chart you may have seen before, but I want to highlight today, if you look at this number, we're looking at, it's been decreased since we were last in front of you all, but you'll notice that 71,511 is the number of all the children in Fairfax County that are under age five.

[00:11:30] If you look down, you'll see the different breakouts for the poverty levels. At the last completion of the Equitable School Readiness Strategic Plan, we were able to implement an increase of the federal poverty level to 350% to serve more families.

[00:11:49] And I know that one of the things that we've been paying attention for several of the initiatives that are going on in the health and human services system is looking at our Alice population, the asset-limited, income-constrained, and employed families that are here in the county with a minimal income level of approximately $150,000.

[00:12:10] You'll notice that these families in this Alice population are, in fact, eligible for assistance and subsidy with this breakout. So I wanted to point that out as we move through these numbers.

[00:12:26] So when we talk about publicly funded programs, we're looking at our child care subsidy, our mixed delivery, our Virginia preschool initiative, commonly referred to as just VPI, in addition to Head Start and Early Head Start.

[00:12:41] I'd like to talk a little bit about what is part of these programs. So when we are looking at the childcare subsidy, that's Fairfax County, Fairfax City, and Falls Church with both state funding and some local funds, we currently have 6,529 children receiving supports through the subsidy.

[00:13:05] And that's combined with both local and state funding. When we look at our mixed delivery program, this is one of our newer state fundings that comes as being a part of the ready regions initiative and with that we've been able to increase to a hundred and ten slots and when I want to just make sure that I'm clear on this this is for our region because this is part of our role is the ready regions lead and with that there are 34 additional slots specifically to Fairfax County just for reference we've been able to increase that through that grant and then looking at the Virginia preschool initiative

[00:13:44] With Fairfax County public schools and community slots, we are at approximately 2,631, and that means 92 percent of those slots are filled as of our late enrollment.

[00:13:59] So that is with our VPI. And then last but not least is our Head Start, Early Head Start, and we're looking at a total of 2,780 slots there that are a combination of FCPS, community-based, and family child care homes to get to that number.

[00:14:27] And looking ahead, the early childhood capital improvement projects, I know that this board has had a commitment that as we move forward and we're looking for increased child care opportunities as we move forward with any types of construction, there are several that are coming online, and I just

wanted to take a moment to talk about those. You'll see Kingstown Complex, that is the next up to be delivered. We're anticipating a child capacity there of 78.

[00:14:56] Our original Mount Vernon High School Early Childhood Development Center, 172. And the Willard Sherwood Health and Community Center, in conjunction with the city, is 124. And And Haibla Valley, I can't speak today, forgive me, 86 lots we're anticipating there.

[00:15:23] So as we are looking at these coming on, these are opportunities for us to be creative, to make sure that we're centering family and providers and finding out what it is that the community needs to best deliver these services.

[00:15:39] And one of those initiatives that's going to help us to get to that has been the ongoing work with our strategic plan. So the early childhood strategic plan is in the last leg of work that's being done. Our partners at Fairfax County Public Schools has also been at the table in addition to the early childhood system as a whole.

[00:16:01] As we talked about this earlier, the system is not just who's providing the child care. It's health, it's the schools, it's the county, it's mental health. It's all of our partners together that serve families with young children. And we have a good representation in our early childhood strategic plan.

[00:16:20] And last but not least, I wanted to highlight that we are working in the collaborative fashion cross systems, sharing ideas with our partners at Fairfax County Public Schools on the 26 bond as well for next steps and looking to maximize some opportunities that are slated to come down the pike.

[00:16:39] I'm just trying to really be creative to figure out how to increase those numbers of those being served. And I'll stop there for questions. First of all, let me thank you so much, Keisha, Ms. Dodson, and Ms. Pilsen. I think I got your last names right this time.

[00:16:57] I really appreciate the work and especially the collaboration. They're all of our kids. They're our county kids. And the more we are able to coordinate, collaborate, and tap into braided funding and opportunities, both for space and for programming, those are the two big things that have really come out, and for the workforce support in our skipped meetings.

[00:17:20] I have a couple of questions, and then I'll turn it over to the chairman and my colleagues. And my first one is going back to, I guess, slide seven, where we're looking at the numbers. And I appreciate the breakdown because I think that's why I and we, what keeps us up at night is where are those gaps, right?

[00:17:36] And how do we keep moving in the right direction? So I think my first question would be, so we're looking at, let's say, children under 350%. That would be probably our ALICE population if you take away that bottom row, correct?

[00:17:55] Because that's inclusive of that bottom row? Yes. Do we have a sense, and I heard 6529, I also heard 9,000 with subsidy. Do we have a sense of where those are coming from, which areas, and I think geographic areas you might need to follow up with, where we are seeing those 6529 fit into the different categories so we know where the biggest gaps still remain?

[00:18:21] Sure, you're asking for the financial categories, what? Yeah, and if you need to follow up with that. Yes, we can follow up with that. Okay, I know we have some mapping for geographic areas because as

the state talks about deserts, we know that here we're a large county and having access to accessible, affordable, whatever we want to call it, child care across the county for families in need.

[00:18:47] We have more and more data, I believe, that helps us see where our deserts are where families are not able to access affordable, quality child care. Is that something we could follow up with? We can certainly follow up. And I'd also just like to add that that is part of what we're looking at for these new CIP opportunities and making sure that we're addressing the need where it stands in that mapped area so that we can have those.

[00:19:10] And that would be super helpful. Sorry, my daughter says super a lot. And I'm thinking as those of us see applications for land use come before us, it would also be really helpful to have that map so we can say we know that this is an area where the community really needs child care, and let's go ahead and try to get it built where it's needed.

[00:19:32] Thank you. And then my final question is the next slide, slide 8. It's a very complex system we have, right? And I don't need you to break down all four systems. I think we mostly understand VPI and Head Start, early Head Start, the more traditional state and federally funded programs, subsidized programs.

[00:19:53] If you could tell us a little bit specifically, I believe mixed delivery is the new one, and I don't know that we have a formal mixed delivery one yet, and sort of what we're looking at strategically, seeing where state, federal might be a little harder, funding may or may not be going, so that we know where we should be strategically trying to invest our funds as well.

[00:20:17] The mixed delivery grant, as I mentioned, is due to the Ready Regions placement. So we have a little bit of say-so on kind of how those get delivered out to us. So the highlighted ones that I wanted to talk about, the 34 slots that we just got, came in November, and those were just allotted to us.

[00:20:40] Where we're looking at the mixed delivery, it's coming through the grant, but it's also well aligned with our VPI program. So making sure that we're serving the three- and four-year-old children and those align. But I hear your question about where else can we advocate where we don't have those.

[00:21:00] We're looking to increase those numbers, but of course that's through the state. So it doesn't have to be a separate mixed delivery. We can braid it into our existing programming, is that what you're saying? There are some pieces of it that can be braided in. Okay. Well, clearly a program that I think we need to learn more about because it seems the state's really moving in that direction.

[00:21:19] Thank you. All right, let me turn it over to the chairman, and I think I'll start on that end and move forward. Thank you very much. A ton of progress made here first, so thank you for that. I do have a couple of questions because since slide, if we can take slide seven again, And I'm a little confused with the numbers because I know the under and above 350 numbers add up to all children, the 71, 511.

[00:21:47] But I don't understand the three numbers at the bottom because all five of these numbers don't add up to 71, 511, only the two that are under and above. But the under numbers, the 6,000, 13,000, 21,000, don't add up to 25,000.

[00:22:06] So something, I'm missing something here. We can't have 25,033 kids under 350. And then when you add up the 100, 200, and 300, that number is much larger than the under 350 number.

[00:22:22] So what am I missing? I'll need to go back to double check this, but the initial reason for using this was just to kind of delineate the 350. So those top three, those top three do show.

[00:22:40] Let me jump in real quick because this comes up every time. The bottom, the $25,000 is inclusive of all of them. So if you think of it in terms of ranges, the $13,000 is inclusive of the $5,800. The $21,000 is inclusive of the $5,800. So that's a cumulative growing number.

[00:22:56] And then the $21,000. So if you look at $21,000, $25,000, between $300 and $350, there's roughly $4,000 that would be at $325, right? $4,000 between $300 and $350. Right. So it's kind of gradation. All right. Well, that – with that explanation makes a lot more sense because, I mean, obviously we're all, you know, struggling with the same challenges.

[00:23:17] What are the real numbers and what are they in the categories? So, as Supervisor Palczyk just mentioned, it would be really great to see – I have those numbers you mentioned on slide eight, but I have no idea what categories those fall into. And once they fall into those categories, what does that number come down to so we know what we're solving for?

[00:23:36] And this becomes really important to my last question, which is pertinent to slide nine. So I appreciate you mentioning for the FY26 bond that we're working with FCPS on trying to come up with strategic ways to do more joint use opportunities.

[00:23:54] But when I look at the four upcoming ones that are looking ahead, all four of those really are, we're talking about county facilities and collaboration with other county agencies. And so are we putting that same effort in looking at the FY26 bond into our own county facilities, planning for the future as well, in addition to FCPS, so that we can make sure if there's more opportunities like this to include in the FY26 bond, that it's not limited to a joint partnership with FCPS, but that we're scrubbing all of the county projects for those opportunities, too?

[00:24:33] Yes, that's accurate. Okay. And then lastly... Let me add to that. I think it's not just county and schools, it's also our community groups because we have so many community groups blessed to be able to have some capital resources. So the extent that we can braid community resources with our resources, it helps the entire effort.

[00:24:51] MR. Yeah, absolutely. And I know we've all collectively, as the Board said, the more joint opportunities, we can take advantage of the better. And clearly, all of the ones on here demonstrate that. These are all happening because other projects are the drivers and these are opportunities within those projects to take advantage of space.

[00:25:09] And my last question is, the early childhood bond that's set for FY26, if my memory is correct, we did one in '22 and '24. And so are all the funds associated with early childcare that were in those two bond tranches already allocated and used?

[00:25:28] And how are we determining what the amount will be for FY26? So the original intent, this is where COVID, This is the first impact of COVID. The original intent was to do that. Once COVID hit, all the early childhood came out. So this 26 bond will actually be the first bond that we've done that has the early childhood standalone the way that we intended it back in 2020 before COVID came out.

[00:25:54] I believe we've combined it, right? So now it's 50 instead of 225? Right. So we're working on trying to put together the amount of money that would be in line with when we need the money, right? So

we were talking about 50, but we're also looking at how does that get spread.

[00:26:14] So you'll learn more about that on February 18 when Brian releases the budget in CIP. But yeah, this would be the first standalone effort. But you're right. We did intend for it to be in there. And actually, it made it into the original budget. And then the secondary budget actually removed it.

[00:26:32] Okay. And I thought the larger goal we had, and I don't know if this is still the number we're working off of. Certainly, the timeframe would be different. But I think the original goal we had was $25 million every other year for a total of $100 million. And so, I don't know if that's still what the goal we're shooting for is.

[00:26:52] Or based on these numbers and the progress we're making, that goal could potentially be modified? Before my boss has a heart attack, we have adjusted those numbers in accordance with current fiscal realities. So Brian will present that on February 18th for you to see what that bond program looks like so it's in alignment with the current economic realities.

[00:27:18] Okay. Okay. All right. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's a lot of questions we all have around where the budget stands on this as well. Let me go ahead and turn it over to Supervisor Bierman, and then we'll work this way. Yeah, I have some of the same questions we all have about, you know, what's the actual dollar figure that we need to get to to reach.

[00:27:42] I think as a general goal, for instance, and this goes back to what Supervisor Palachuk was saying, that 350% FPL, 25,000 number. Right now, I think you said we had 9,000 children, and we'd like to be up in publicly funded early childhood.

[00:28:00] We'd like to be up closer to 25,000, and we'll obviously have to talk about that in terms of money. My question is, there are two issues, obviously. There's the subsidy issue and the money to – the operational issue and the capital issue.

[00:28:17] We could have all the operational money in the world and not actually have the capital locations or the slots. And it looks like we've got $460 in the pipeline on slide nine. Do we have any idea – and I know this is – I know part of this involves utilizing a subsidy in private early childhood areas.

[00:28:40] Do we have any idea what our current capacity would be if we had unlimited operational dollars? And then do we have any idea sort of what – yeah, that's, I guess, the question. Not off the top of my head, but we could certainly pull something up to give you a model to further answer that a little bit better.

[00:29:04] Yeah, and I think that – sorry. No, I just wanted to make sure I understood. Yeah. Yeah, we can pull that up. I think that goes back to a great point that I think Supervisor Pouchek made earlier about mapping this and trying to figure out where in the county we have locations that we need more facilities like the early childhood capital improvement projects we already have in the pipeline.

[00:29:24] Okay, thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Rahim. Can I just jump in real quick just because I've been through this many years. That 25,000 number, I'd be remiss if I didn't say that. There's no way of knowing exactly how many of the 25,000 actually want an early childhood program.

[00:29:41] So we work with our school partners to try to figure out what is a good way of measuring that because there's a lot of families that, even if it was accessible, even if it was right down the street, would prefer another option for their child. So there's no way of knowing that, but we'll do our best to try to

figure out what that capacity would look like. To be very clear, that was shooting for the moon. I mean, that was not, you know, this is Fairfax County. We think big here, you know, but that was shooting for the moon. I understand that the number is not exactly that. I was just trying to figure out where we're

[00:30:16] at. Thanks. If I could, because I know we have a lot of questions about this one. Can you clarify for us? Because there are a lot of stakeholders and a lot of planning and funding and capacity needs that need to be sort of addressed, right, long term. Is this something that's coming through the strategic plan process? Or is there a time when you're planning to come back to really show us that sort of map and where we're headed and where the needs are and how we move in that direction. Absolutely. I would love to come back at the conclusion of the, I know that we'll be presenting it at SCIPS as well, but the conclusion of our strategic planning efforts to give you a

[00:30:53] better view of kind of where some of these specifics are that you asked. We would have that at that time as well. In addition, I'd also just like to plug our current map that we use that's available on our county's website that shows our gaps in access that we are using as a foundation now to identify where child care programs are. So I know that we've used the word deserts, but looking at areas for opportunity to expand, and that's also inclusive of our FCPS programming as well. But we can certainly compile all of that. Yeah, that's why I didn't share that out.

[00:31:25] Absolutely. And I think because this is so joint, I know it skipped, we get to see leadership from both the county and the schools and our partners, but maybe when we come back together, let's think about timing, and we can really bring, we love having Lisa, but I think making sure we have the leadership on both sides here to talk about that. Thank you. All right, Supervisor Jimenez.

[00:31:48] Thank you very much, and thank you for the presentation. I just have two quick questions on page four. You discuss family child care educator permits. How many has the county issued when it comes to these permits.

[00:32:03] So it's that middle part where it says county permitters, state licensed family child care educators. Yes, we have approximately 1,200 permitted child care homes in Fairfax County, which is the most in the state. And we also have the county ordinance requires that caring for foreign related children requires a permit.

[00:32:24] Beyond that, it goes through the state for a license. You said it's the most in the state. Is that by like a large margin? Yes. Yes. Thank you. And just one final question on page five, you highlighted that 4,707 observations have been completed.

[00:32:41] Can you explain to me what those observations are? Sure, absolutely. Sorry. The Ready Regions, back to Ready Regions topic, but the piece that we're focused on now is looking at those, increasing the quality.

[00:32:57] So those are coming in with specialists to observe the interactions between the teachers and the children in care to ensure that there are quality observations or quality interactions. And that's that number there. All of the programming that gets public funds are required to go through.

[00:33:16] That's part of the state law. So that's what the number is. Super helpful. Thank you so much. Thank you. And actually, that's a great reminder. Those of you who haven't had a chance, let's go ahead and share that out as well if we can. uh to our our colleagues you can look up every daycare i looked at mine um in the county and see um what the observation was the first observation turned out the vast majority

are meeting those standards it's a combination of both curriculum use and those classroom observations i think our schools were at the top and all of theirs and a few of others uh in your districts that scored

[00:33:51] very very well there were only a few i believe less than a handful that needed additional support But as we talk about, I'm glad you brought that up, those 1,200 really plus home daycares, child daycare centers that are not in our official sites, we now have the ability, and it's really twice a year that there are observations and there are reports so that we know as we continue to find braided funding that there is not one model fits all, right?

[00:34:21] that there really are so many ways, especially those who maybe are fearsome of coming or it's too far away to come to a larger center or a public center, that there are more and more homes where we can ensure quality for those families. And I know, and ours I saw, they adapted a new curriculum and different kinds of programming thanks to that.

[00:34:42] So it really is very helpful to have that led by the county. So thank you. Thank you. Supervisor Lusk. Thank you very much. I'll say as a member of SKIPT, really excited to see this coming to the board and having this presentation. So important for us to have that nexus between the work there and the work here at this board.

[00:35:01] I'll say excited that we're making a lot of progress and specifically will note I appreciate that at our last SKIPT median, the previous one, we had a pretty in-depth discussion about early childhood education. And I think the idea around how do we kind of increase the capacity for those who are providing, as Supervisor Palchek mentioned, the in-home provision of care and

[00:35:35] helping to train up those individuals and helping them develop more academic curricula-based instruction. I think that is where we really need to kind of be going, and I see the opportunity for us to think about ways to support those providers, that is helping them get certifications and helping them maybe even go through an apprenticeship program if we can get to that place at some point in the future. So I just think that there's a lot that's obviously happening

[00:36:12] with the work that we're doing, but there's a lot that's going to be done to support those who are providing the care today and elevating them to get to a kind of a more specific place as it relates to the curriculum and the instruction. So additionally, I'd like to maybe ask two quick questions.

[00:36:33] On page five, and I was really kind of taken by this, I appreciate in that graph it says 71% of the CCAR families sampled 42% maintained or increased their income. Do you, and you may not have it here, but I'd just be curious to see on the increased income side, what that percent was of that 42%, just out of curiosity. And then if you have any data in terms of kind of how they

[00:37:06] made that increase? What facilitated that accretion of income? And then I don't know if you want to answer that now or if you want to give it to me later. Yes, I'd like to provide that to you later. Okay, perfect. And then second, I wanted to just highlight and I think to the chairman I'll give points as it relates to the Kingstown facility, including the child care component there, Hyba Valley as well. My pleasure to work on that and just happy to see that we're

[00:37:40] able to add these facilities here in the county. Just maybe for people who don't know, how do we determine the participants and ability to come into these programs? And then if there's a need for transportation, how is that handled as well? And Mr. Supervisor Lesk, if you have another question? That's

it. Perfect. Thank you. Go ahead. So parent choice and family choice is central to all of our programs. So it's ensuring that they have an opportunity to choose what's best for

[00:38:15] their family. Chris talked a little bit earlier about, you know, we're looking at the delta between the numbers and what people are choosing, what's best for them and the different types. This aligns with that as to where they choose to go. So for that piece, we will have the information available through our division within NCS, through our early childhood programs and services, and helping families to sort and navigate and use the tools that we have there, depending on what it is that they're looking for.

[00:38:45] If they're looking for a center-based experience, a school-based experience, or a community setting, and outlining all of the opportunities there. So right now, the only place where we're really doing transportation would be through our Head Start programs at Gum Springs and the Glen, or I'm sorry, at Gum Springs Head start. So there's not a transportation component that is automatically tied to the new sites that are coming on. What we do in order of assessing the needs of the community is when new things are coming out, we're surveying our families to find out what's important to them, what it is that they're looking for, and what's going to help make the choices

[00:39:24] that's going to fit best. And it's another reason why we're looking at some of our non-traditional opportunities that could come with some of these future planning events to figure out what does that look like for a family that may work shift work or weekends or have a desire for something outside of what is considered the norm. So we do help to kind of work through that when they call our office. We have a team there that's ready to help through that. So that's kind of where we are right now with transportation, that it would never happen in the future. We're looking at every opportunity to make sure that families have what they need where we can.

[00:40:02] Okay. No, appreciate it. Thank you very much. Thank you very much. And I want to make sure we have enough time for the park conversation. If Supervisor Stork and Herity want to share comments and questions, and then we'll have staff respond after you've both spoken. Thank you. Yeah, my question has to do with, I looked at the presentation that was done in July of 2022, And then obviously compared to today, and the numbers are pretty different.

[00:40:28] And so I know there's reductions. We know that the school or preschool age kids are, I think, declining. I don't know how much in our area could be different. But in particular, I was surprised because the universe in 2022 was 76,600 kids compared to 71,511, about 7%.

[00:40:50] But the reduction in the different poverty tiers, if you will, or the different income tiers was about 20%. So are we making progress or what should we take from that difference? And does it mean that, you know, we will see, obviously, I think we all are concerned that we'll see some more reductions because the birth rates are falling, et cetera.

[00:41:14] What's your take on all that and how we should respond? Let us take Supervisor Herity's question or comment first, and then we'll wrap it up. Did you have something as well? Yeah, I had a comment or two and then a question or two. Yeah, go ahead. I want to make sure we have time for parts.

[00:41:29] I mean, it's clear, reliable, affordable health care is the key to economic success, so I'm not surprised we saw that number. What did you say? Child care. Child care. Sorry, child care. The question most in the state, I'd like to see that on a per capita basis, if I could, Because I know, obviously, we'd have the most.

[00:41:52] We're by far the largest jurisdiction in the state. But I wouldn't be too surprised because we need so many two-wage earner families here in order to afford to live here. So that would be question number one. Question number two is what are the measures of success for the program that you're tracking?

[00:42:13] And is closing the achievement gap part of that? And can you make it part of that? Because I think that's our number one goal here is to close that achievement gap. It hasn't gone anywhere in a lot of years. And generally, as a comment, I know I've spoken to some of my colleagues about removing some of the burdens that our land use process puts in front of starting affordable, I mean, affordable home care, child care.

[00:42:40] So those would be the kind of the two questions and the two comments. Thank you, Supervisor Herdy. Go ahead, Ms. Dotson. Okay, let me make sure I get these in order and the definitely we can try to give that information back to you and per capita We'll bring that back And with the closing the achievement gap We're looking both at the early childhood most of this update is focused specifically on the early childhood But it's all related and as we look for the kindergarten readiness We're looking at our tools that we have right now that we're able to track with our head start

[00:43:17] families where they are because of the system. We're able to see achievement by third grade level. We're able to capture that information, and we can expand a little bit more on that to show you those that we were able to track through. One of the things I think from the earlier question, are we doing better or not because things have changed? One of the things that we're also working with, there are our colleagues over in looking at a way to identify a way to measure and project what we're expecting for early childhood numbers because we did

[00:43:55] go down significantly since we last reported on this. Families have moved away. This is a transient area. There's lots of different things, but also the birth rate decline has been one of the measures. So, we are working with that team to try and figure out a better way to capture to tell that story because it can't be told just by the numbers alone to show you whether or not, you know, why the numbers are going down and then also expanding the opportunities for subsidy and placement as we move forward.

[00:44:28] And if I may add, I think to the questions that came forward, and there's a state early childhood commission, it's bipartisan led by Delegate Koiner, it's sort of pretty much the researchers out there that quality, child care and quality, early experiences definitely have a longitudinal effect, especially on students who are at risk, students who are English language learners, and students who...

[00:44:50] I understand that. I've spent... I'm telling, yeah, no, to supervisor Herity's question about measure of the achievement gaps. I understand that as well. That piece of it is pretty unequivocal. We can definitely bring that research, and that's why I think the quality measures now really uh virginia is ahead i believe pretty much every state in this in this measure but i think to your point there's a lot in the presentation the 20 percent in two years is that's that's huge so i'm just wondering the other thing i was going to say sorry but one of the other measures that's not here is that we're seeing the whole number of children under five so perhaps a breakdown

[00:45:26] as well because we are there are differences between zero to three and then four and five year old how they're educated what the requirements are and also to understand though I'm just using what they present us two years ago I think there's more information and some kind of understanding of that difference would be helpful thank you yes I think what we can do is we can include that in the memo that

we'll be sending back out that captures all of this to highlight that that that reduction in numbers of kids if you and I know you all have looked at the population of our elementary school age I know we're talking about early

[00:46:01] how to, if you look at our population, by far the most diverse populations within Fairfax County. So those are challenges throughout, so we're trying to make adjustments kind of on the fly when we talk about maybe reductions in the total number of kids, but the economic diversities are...

[00:46:22] That's what's so ironic, is 7% reduction overall and a 20% reduction in the neediest kids, that's the part that doesn't make sense to me. I would expect it to go a higher percentage, not a lower percentage. I completely understand. That's why I think it's better if we get it down in writing.

[00:46:38] Yeah, I appreciate that. Yeah, very much. Thank you. And I think some questions were brought up about land user understanding what's happening. I mean, I think we've all seen D.C. region had the highest percent increase in rents in the whole country. And so this is also very much tied, as we know.

[00:46:53] With our Alice population, cost of housing is number one, and that hasn't gone down. And then child care is the number two expense. So I think the child care piece is a big, big piece, right, making sure we have those centers. But, yeah, I think we need to understand, yeah, why those numbers have gone down if we can.

[00:47:13] Thank you. Good questions. Great conversation. Thank you all very much. And I believe now we will turn over to our equity implementation plan. We should still have ample time for the conversation.

[00:47:32] We, I will wait while our Park Authority team comes over. We have Jay Cole, the Executive Director of the Park Authority, Sarah Baldwin, the Deputy Director, and Josh Coleman, the Division Director. I also believe I saw the Chair of the Park Authority.

[00:47:49] I don't know if he would also like to join us at the table. He's more than welcome to as well. And with that, I will go ahead and let them give their presentation and make sure that we have enough time for conversation, especially those of you who were kind enough to share your time in the first presentation.

[00:48:06] I'll make sure you have priority this time around. Good morning. For the record, Jay Cole. I'm the Executive Director of the Park Authority Board. With me, I have Sarah Baldwin, who's the Deputy Director of Operations for the Park Authority Board, and our Chairman, Kyle Stone.

[00:48:26] In the audience, I also have Dejia Grayson, Amy Vosper, Torsha Bhattacharya, and Mike Peters. That kind of creates the equity team that we have been working on this for quite some time. Josh Coleman was supposed to be here. He and his family are ill. It's the only thing that would have prevented him from being here. Before I start, I also wanted to thank Chris Leonard, Deputy County Executive, who's been very entrenched in this as well. I want to thank Carla Bruce, who's no longer

[00:49:02] employed here, but she was a very big proponent for this. Katie Horstman, who's also here. This is a very by-agency, everybody effort. I don't want to make it seem in any way, shape, or form as if we are doing any of this in a vacuum. So just to reconnoiter with where we are, we created this equity initiative timeline that just talks about sort of what we have done and how we got to where we are right now.

[00:49:40] And so in 2020, FCPA created our first equity action plan. And then in May 2021, we came to the BOS to talk about our implementation of One Fairfax in the park system. The park authority was the first

to co-sign on the One Fairfax plan.

[00:50:01] In July 2022, park leadership, we came and presented the state of equity and the problems within the parks department. We'll show you that slide in a second. And then we received funding from the BOS to study it.

[00:50:18] And so in 2022, we hired HRNA to come and review our revenue fund and give us some recommendations. We presented that to you all in December 2022 in the implementation plan. and then in summer 2023 uh actually i'm going to stop because sarah will be talking about that so we're kind of into some of the slides we're going to show you at this point in time i also highlighted on the timeline a couple of other funding um moments we receive funding for the wonder wagon which has been wildly popular um and we also did an equity um initiative where we

[00:50:54] combined our rec pack with camp fairfax from ncs to make sure that there's sort of one um system for children. So this was the original slide. I will say that this has been updated with 2024 data. The one that you received was, I believe, 2021, but you see similar results. So we compare the county population on the left to our classes, summer camps, rec center memberships, and rec pack programs. You can see there the county population, for instance, is 34 percent, over

[00:51:33] 200,000, 23% under 75,000, and yet summer camps doesn't even register for people who are under 75,000. Classes are 13%, rec center memberships, 13%, compared to rec pack programs, which were 35%. And then program participation by race, ethnicity, same. The county population is majority minority at 49 and some change percent white, and yet the classes are 64 percent, summer camp 65 percent, rec center members 70 percent, compared to rec pack programs that are 38 percent.

[00:52:08] We compared our data to rec pack, even though rec pack is now combined with NCS because rec pack had a sliding fee scale, and so we had the ability to really serve more of our residents. Last time we presented, Supervisor Walkinshaw had specifically asked about comparing it to our data to kids for specific demographics.

[00:52:30] And so we're still working through that when we get to the camps. We'll have more specifics. But as you saw in the previous presentation, as Chris Leonard had said, our children population is much more diverse than the county population. I believe the estimate is about 45.6% white to the 49.5% in the general population.

[00:52:50] And so we are more diverse in our children, in our youth. The county population in families and houses with families is a little bit higher in that income level for families with children. As you would expect, it does cost a lot to live here.

[00:53:12] So if you remember this slide, this is the HRNA recommendation. I'm actually going to go back one really quickly. One of the reasons why we pick classes, summer camps, and rec center memberships is because that's sort of our core mission focus areas of allowing access to rec centers, summer camps, classes, and swim, if you separate it out, swim with classes.

[00:53:37] We've always sort of talked about those four as, if you look at this community benefits pyramid as the highest community benefit that we offer. And so here we have photos of camps, swim classes, rec center memberships, and fitness classes. And so HRNA's recommendation was a four-pronged approach. First, we had to take care of the administration and outreach, which is sort of building the house. We have to create a system that could take sliding fee scales, could take analyzation of our fees and et cetera,

[00:54:13] and then do the outreach to make sure that people knew, again, that 75 percent, $75,000 or under, it doesn't even register with camps. And so we couldn't just open up sliding fee scale and expect them to come and register. We have to let them know that these services are available to them. And then HRNA recommended a three-pronged approach for how to increase equity.

[00:54:35] The first is a sliding fee scale program. And then the second was analyzing our community benefit pyramid and lowering our fees by shifting some of the indirect costs out from the revenue fund. And then last, not last, but an additional one was flexible vouchers. Because although we're focusing on those top four, camps, classes, swimming, and rec center memberships, that doesn't mean that people who are in the lowest income bracket should never be able to rent a picnic pavilion or should never be able to, you know, play golf or visit the water mine. I will now turn it

[00:55:11] over to Sarah Baldwin. Thank you, Jay. As you may remember from our last presentation, a key in developing our implementation plan was ensuring that we engage with the community to develop a better understanding of the barriers that may impact their participation in park authority programs and services. During the summer of 2024, we conducted an extensive outreach effort to ensure that we were including multiple voices in the implementation plan. The results of those outreach efforts included data about the top barriers that impact participation in park

[00:55:46] authority programs and services. Those were cost, distance, and familiarity. Additionally, Finally, we tested the use of a sliding fee scale for the camps we operate at the Sully Community Center. The results of that pilot confirmed our assumption that cost, distance, and familiarity were significant barriers to participation.

[00:56:08] And ultimately, the use of a sliding fee scale resulted in significant need for engagement, to build awareness, assistance with the registration process, and it all resulted in a higher percentage of non-white participants compared to other FCPA programs where a sliding fee scale is not available.

[00:56:31] Oh, no. It's not good. Knowing that we can't implement a sliding fee scale for rec centers, camps, and classes all at the same time, we needed to make a decision about where we started this work. Our recommendation is to start with implementation of a sliding fee scale for rec centers.

[00:56:51] Several factors contributed to that decision. Promoting healthy lifestyles is key to the mission of rec centers. It's the area where we have the most capacity to serve new customers. In comparison to camps and classes, rec centers have far fewer price points, making implementation of a sliding fee scale less complex.

[00:57:12] Rec centers have amenities for individuals of all ages and all abilities, and 90% of residents live within at least one service area of a rec center. As you know, or have gleaned, I don't necessarily love to read off of slides.

[00:57:35] However, Josh Coleman is home right now watching, and these are the slides that he worked on, and he provided me speaking notes that I will read verbatim. As you may remember, HRNA previously presented the estimated costs associated with the four recommended areas.

[00:57:54] That amount to deliver the community benefit pyramid, sliding fee scale program, flexible vouchers, and the administration and outreach totaled $26.6 million in additional funding. As you can see in this slide, and as Sarah just discussed, FCPA is focused on the sliding fee scale program and the administration and outreach to begin, which HRNA estimated at $14.2 million. So the two circled sliding

fee scale and admin and outreach are what we're here talking about today. As FCPA worked through the implementation plan and approach, we've worked It's hard to meet the community needs and the Board's priorities related to this initiative.

[00:58:31] First, as you can see, we've developed a full sliding fee scale implementation plan at a cost of $12 million, which is $2.2 million less than HRNA initially estimated. Second, we want to acknowledge the previous investments on this initiative.

[00:58:46] Funding and work from FY23 to FY25 has previously provided for the HRNA report, the Sully pilot program, equity outreach, as well as three positions that support the project. Third, in addition to the overall reduction from $14.2 million to $12 million, we've heard from the board, specifically Supervisor Chair McKay, previously about finding ways to implement that don't hit the budget all at once.

[00:59:11] You'll see this has been developed as a five-year implementation plan from FY26 to FY30, which spreads out staffing, program costs, and sliding fee scale costs. As you can see in the timeline, we propose to go live with the sliding fee scale for rec center memberships in FY28, followed by learn to swim and rec classes in FY29, and finally camps in FY30.

[00:59:33] This approach has the added benefit of creating annual periods for evaluation and analysis of the program and how participation demographics start to shift, allowing FCPA to make modifications and adjustments to the overall approach. We know that this may end up being an aggressive timeline for implementation, understanding that with system changes and program development, timing could slip.

[00:59:54] To that point, we provide our estimates and timelines as of today, but we'll also take into account any future changes to the implementation schedule, as well as updated needs. Our funding requests will be part of the regular budget process, so we can best align the requests with the current project timeline or fiscal reality.

[01:00:11] For now, we are focused on kicking off the implementation plan phase in FY26 with a budget ask of $818,000. This will be submitted as part of the typical budget process and will allow FCPA to begin working towards the FY28 start of the sliding fee scale. Hold on, I'm lost.

[01:00:39] Thank you. And for Josh at home, I hope I did him proud. The next steps, we're going to continue to work on the registration system. As you can imagine, we have our registration system has to change and shift to be able to allow foresighting fee scale.

[01:00:55] Other things, as it does not right now, we're working with DMV on funding, continuing to work with them on the funding and being able to fit the puzzle pieces into play. We're continuing to work with NCS, DIT, and HHS on income verification strategies.

[01:01:13] As you know, we have separate strategies, and trying to pull that together into one is not only economically better, but it's also better for equity, not having people having to go to multiple places for verification. We, as always, are going to continue to analyze our outcomes against our goals.

[01:01:31] We want to pause every single time to figure out what is working, what is not working, where we have to shift resources and attention in order to get to that goal, which is that equitable service to all of our residents. We want to bring updates, regular updates to the BOS so that you can see our progress and see how well it's working and continuing to implement our equity action plan.

[01:01:55] I always like to end on this slide because this is not the only thing that we are working on here at FCPA. Our dedication to equity means that we're ensuring that the quality and quantity of parks and amenities are not predetermined by the race and income of an area. We do that through our PROSA plan and our PARE. We are continuing to make sure that FCPA's workforce represents the community that we serve, that FCPA facilities and programs are accessible and inclusive for all residents, and that we have an equitable outreach. And with that, we'll turn it back over to...

[01:02:28] Thank you very much, Jay and Sarah, and very much appreciate the presentation. I only have two brief questions, and I'll turn it over to the chairman and my colleagues. So the number one, and I completely agree that moving in the direction, at least especially in my time using the rec centers and now the area rec centers, there's definitely a need and capacity ability, I believe, to get more people there and more families, especially daytime hours. It seemed like there's a lot of capacity. Number one, I think there's an opportunity, but also a question,

[01:03:04] As we've talked about, I know the chairman has brought up having, like, the one Fairfax card, the one-stop shop, one place to do business to make it easier for residents. As we talk about IT and the registration changes, I guess I ask and I hope that there's a look into how that can integrate into our planning for improved IT and communication across all county facilities.

[01:03:30] And then I'll go ahead and ask my second question is, do we know how, I assume we've looked at how these programs compare to the way our surrounding jurisdictions are doing their rec centers or community centers and community access to those? Because I've definitely, it's hit me recently being close to some of our surrounding jurisdictions.

[01:03:48] So I'll start with, I'll start back and then I'll, not to put him on the spot, turn it over to Chris if he wanted to comment on the, no? Okay, I'll comment on the income verification. Yes, part of the benchmarking that HRNA did was looking at the surrounding jurisdictions as well as nationally to see how the models worked.

[01:04:06] Our model was an 80s model, which is sort of that make government work for you that a lot of the other, most other park systems shifted away from that we never shifted away from. The community benefits pyramid that we showed that we benchmarked was directly from Arlington.

[01:04:22] That's Arlington's community benefit pyramid. That's mostly how agencies determine what their funding scheme is. So we're very in tune with what is going on in the region and nationally to make sure that we are in line and still remain, you know, something that they strive to emulate.

[01:04:44] As far as the income verification, I think Jay touched on it a little bit, but, I mean, our desire is not to create parallel systems. We know how to do this. We've got successful programs. It is a common theme that we've heard, I've heard it throughout my entire career, throughout human services as far as having to get income verification at different levels, but certainly this is something new that we can make intentional strides to make sure that we're not creating parallel structures.

[01:05:15] So we've got Greg Scott and his team involved with our system to make sure that we're developing a system that will work for multiple programs across agencies, but then also helping us to determine how we need to adjust our internal structures to make sure that we're making the business process changes to ensure that we're not developing parallel processes.

[01:05:38] MS. I'm very happy to hear that. And Jay, for the HRNA report, you may have shared it. If we have sort of like tables or analysis, I'm just curious how the surrounding jurisdictions sort of do their rec center, community center memberships versus ours and for seniors and the general population.

[01:05:56] I can absolutely send that data to you. Thank you very much. Turn it over to the chairman, and then we'll start with Supervisor Smith. Vice Chair Smith. Yeah, I have two questions, but just a comment. First, I appreciate the timeline because, as I said before, and I appreciate that this has been accommodated, that this is going to have to be a work in, especially with the fiscal realities that we're dealing with. I guess first unrelated to the timeline, because I know we're not addressing camps, we're looking at the rec centers first, and I support that. But it jumps

[01:06:31] out to me on page six that for the highest income people, their biggest barrier was the camps are full. That tells me that there might be an opportunity to get more full paying people into camps to help subsidize the cost for families who are not in those higher income brackets.

[01:06:50] And so I hope that while we're focused on the rec centers right now, we take advantage of that barrier summary to say most people would dream of having a problem that the highest income people can't get into your programs and pay full price because we don't have the capacity for them when we have a capacity problem at the lower incomes.

[01:07:09] And so I'm hoping, you know, we take that to heart and we look at that. But on the slide eight where we talk about the sliding fee scale, I always get really concerned and I want to see how this fits into the conversation we just had about making it easy for people to get qualified and not get caught up in bureaucracy because many of these people that we're trying to serve have enough complications in life already.

[01:07:37] We know that. So what jumps out at me on slide eight that's concerning is you have $7 million for the sliding fee scale program and more than that amount in administration and outreach. And so not knowing anything about the rest of the conversation we have here, I look at that and say the administration and outreach is going to cost more than the actual subsidy.

[01:08:00] That can't be right. So help me understand that and make sure we're not spending more on the bureaucracy of putting the program in than on the program itself. So if you turn to slide nine, one of the places where we did reduce significantly from what the HRNA report is in the administration and outreach, that $2.2 million less than the HRNA is $14.2 million comes in the administration and outreach. So if you look at that, it's actually 5.2 when you're looking at the admin and outreach, so we did reduce that significantly. The other thing is with us

[01:08:38] And I hate to do this though. I can do it and go back. I keep doing that With this is to start off that administration and outreach is for all of it So that that's the house for the citing fee scale the community benefits pyramid and the flexible voucher So when we get to the next step, there's no more admin and outreach that's needed the house is already built in the next step so that will cover all of the From here to wherever it is we want to go.

[01:09:05] The interesting thing about, not interesting thing, the thing about our program is because of the way that it works right now, which is that you pay full freight one time with a credit card, there is no army of people in registration to handle our registration, even though we register more people in a week and a half when camp's open than probably any other system in the county.

[01:09:28] There's three people sitting behind a desk because it's just questions as to what did my credit card not go through. So to create another system where that's not the case, it does take a little bit of additional resources. The outreach portion of that is extremely important, as we saw in the Sully pilot, because we have to tell people that it exists.

[01:09:48] We have to make sure that we're working with NCS and other agencies to make sure that those people know that this is available to them as well. So we did reduce those admins significantly from the report. Yeah, I mean, I'll be honest with you, I'd like to see those reduced further and looking at, you know, IT and other infrastructure we have.

[01:10:05] I mean, it's hard for me sitting here knowing that we run a really successful SAC program with a sliding fee scale and to say that, you know, we're acting like this is something new. I know it's new to the Park Authority, but it's not new to Fairfax County.

[01:10:21] And I would like to see a more in-depth report on how we're going to take advantage of the systems we already have. I mean, if you're in SAC right now and you're on a sliding fee scale, you should be automatically entered into this sliding fee scale without a whole lot of admin and other things.

[01:10:38] I mean, I thought that's where we're heading from a technology standpoint. And so we have the time here to plan on this implementation. Let's make sure that we're taking advantage of every structure that we already have in DIT with our other agencies, because not only will that save us in the administrative cost of this, but also make it easier for our people, as was acknowledged in the presentation.

[01:11:00] And so I just, in looking at the slide, it looks to me like a really heavy cost in the administration and outreach piece. And I absolutely understand the outreach is absolutely critical to making this happen. But the combination of those two things, in my mind, shouldn't cost more than the actual benefit that we're putting in place for the people who need it.

[01:11:21] And so I just think we're going to have to dig a little bit deeper on that. I'll just chime in. The point is very well taken. I know Jay and I, I love arguing with Jay because when we argue, the outcomes are always really, really top quality. When we walk out, fine. This has been a discussion since HNRNA presented this.

[01:11:42] The 12 main, I think, is the acknowledgement on the Park Authority side that that 14.2 is not something we can do. But it's also an acknowledgment that we're going to continue to work to figure out how we can drive that further down. And that's what we're talking about when we're talking about both IT and NCS.

[01:12:00] Not just NCS with the SAC program, but NCS with their inclusive community outreach efforts and their community outreach workers that have done a wonderful job in SAC going out to families and making sure they're aware of the new sliding fee scale. So we're going to be employing all of that, kind of a whole of government, whole of at least Park Authority and NCS in terms of outreach and administration to make sure that we can drive that number even further down.

[01:12:25] Yeah, I think that's really, really helpful and really important because the number gives me pause, but what gives me more pause is thinking about all the potential steps and duplication of efforts that some of the families might have to go through to take advantage of this. And we can do as much outreach as we want, But if the process is hard for people, it's great that you know about it.

[01:12:46] But if you can't access it because you've got to go fill out a whole bunch of new forms or go through a new process when we already have a lot of the data we might need to implement this, I just want to make sure we're taking advantage of county government as a whole and not, you know, saddling the responsibility for the park authority to create a separate venture to settle this issue at great cost and then great complexity later on down the road.

[01:13:11] You won't find a bigger proponent for one-stop shop because I think it's a huge issue with equity. And when we bring back the things, and this is where we just – it's the gnat swallowing the owl. I think it's the numbers that drive the cost up, not the action. And so when you look at the household amounts that come in with the park authority into the model for SAC, we dwarf SAC and NCS significantly.

[01:13:33] So it's the volume, not necessarily the act. So we can bring the numbers in regardless of where it sits of the income, but you won't find a bigger proponent for that than me. The preview of our last discussion over the last year. Good. Thank you. You'll take me to lunch later. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[01:13:50] And 100%, I think that's, to me, you know, we saw that conversation of understanding the history, right, of the park authority and neighborhood and community services and talking about One Fairfax, how they were created in two different lanes. And so whether it means systems, budget, you better have Kitty Horstman at that table when you're having those conversations because she was able to do a lot to ensure that we created that model for a SAC.

[01:14:17] And so we've got those great people there. Make sure you use them. Vice Chair Smith. Thank you. On slide six, I'm not sure I understand what the 92% and the 34% are telling me, if you could explain that.

[01:14:35] So that is the chart that we shared at the last presentation that compares the Sully Community Center sliding fee scale pilot program to all other FCPA camps where a sliding fee scale is not available.

[01:14:55] So that's what I'm not understanding. So 92% of the people that use the sliding scale were non-white? 92% of the people enrolled in the Sully camps were non-white, compared to other FCPA programs where 34% were non-white.

[01:15:14] Okay. My other question, you know, I look under rec center on slide six, and it says cost is the top issue, but we know how much distance is the issue. And so when you look at slide seven, and you're focusing on starting the sliding scale with the rec centers, and Sarah, you talked about 90% of the residents live within a service area of a rec center, but I look at where the Cub Run rec center is, and I look where my population centers

[01:15:47] are in Sully District, I'm concerned that distance is still going to be an issue. And so part of me can understand why you're starting with rec centers, because there's more services. I do have a concern that we look at this as you move forward to see how we deal with distance, because I don't know the reality of people getting there.

[01:16:09] I think we can look at that moving forward, especially the analysis that we did not do in the rec center study was distance to opportunity areas. So that might be one of the things to separate out and see when we're trying to do a sliding fee scale what that looks like. I think that would be very helpful. Thank you. Thank you.

[01:16:25] I saw Supervisor Walkinshaw, so also Chair's Environment, Supervisor Alcorn, who did not speak last time, and then I'll open it up to the others. Thank you, Madam Chair. One, on the admin, I agree with the chairman's points. I also would like to see, and maybe this is in the HRNA report and I'm forgetting it, but the breakdown between admin and outreach. Obviously, they're both necessary, but two different line items. Just on the sliding scale fee, and I've said this a few

[01:17:03] times. Obviously, theoretically, maybe more than theoretically, practically one could implement a sliding scale fee that's revenue neutral. Perhaps over time, one could implement that. You can imagine a scenario where fees increase as they typically do, only for those over a certain income level. Obviously, that's not what HRNA recommended and recognize that there

[01:17:35] downsides to that. I guess I'm curious whether they or you all modeled what that would look like. And then a related question, this sliding scale fee program, $7 million cost, obviously is not revenue neutral. So it involves the reduction in fees, as well as over time, perhaps increase in fees for higher incomes, which seems to me to overlap with the community benefit pyramid, $9.4 million, which if I'm understanding correctly, represents a reduction in fees.

[01:18:17] And I'm just wondering why not separate those two out and to what extent. Also, I think it would be useful for us to see some examples of like, what does this $7 million sliding scale fee program look like for this kind of class or this kind of program relative to the cost today to see how much the reduction is, because there's $7 million in reduced fees in the sliding scale fee program. So I guess those are my questions. One, did you look at a revenue neutral sliding scale

[01:18:55] fee program that then could at any point be paired with the community benefit period costs that represent a reduction in fees? Because you've got fee reductions in two categories here. Do you want me to – so the first question, the revenue neutral, that's $7 million for the sliding fee scale.

[01:19:16] It's not a one – it's not a one-stop. At that point, it's not one fee. It's going to take us multiple years to get to that point. And so until we understand and we get to an equal basis for what we know, sort of where SAC is right now, so what we know year over year comes in for sliding fee scale, well, we know how to balance to a revenue neutral.

[01:19:40] You can't do a revenue neutral unless you know what's coming in in the sliding fee scale, which you need to recoup in a revenue neutral. So that might be something later on that we're looking at once we have the data come in to see what that balance really looks like. We don't want to overbalance things right now or underbalance things right now.

[01:19:57] We want to go sort of in the... Okay, that's useful. Thank you. So, for example, the go-live of the rec center membership sliding fee scale in FYI, FY28, you haven't decided what those rates will be, how far the scale will slide.

[01:20:15] Those sliding fee scale rates are based on the SAC sliding fee scale that we can provide you with examples of all of our classes across everything. But you're got it. So you know what the scale will be, but it's hard to predict what the revenue implications of that scale will be.

[01:20:30] Okay. So, in theory, in FY28, 29, 30, as you're implementing scales across different activities, you could calibrate those to a revenue number or a cost number, whether that's $7 million, or if we don't have $7 million, it could be some other number.

[01:20:52] we could calculate it would be when we come back to analyze it in front it would be a balance between which one the board wants to go with if we wanted to eschew the the pyramid because that's that flies in the face of the pyramid of lowering it for everybody i think that that's a conversation but it's one of the reasons why this five-year period allows us to come back and really see what the impact was where it is and see what we can you know change moving forward so the 12 million implementation estimate really is a range. Correct. And a range that could be calibrated

[01:21:27] as you approach FY28, 29, and 30. We estimate the $12 million to be, if we had the same exact usage, I'm pointing out a SAC, and if the same amount of families come in for a sliding fee scale as they do for SAC and other programs, how much would it cost? It could be FY38 before we get to that amount, but we estimated that to be the average.

[01:21:52] All right. Thank you. Thank you. I am looking. We have two minutes and I believe four speakers. So I'm going to do the same thing we did the first round, starting with Supervisor Harity. I ask, so Supervisor Smith does not steal my lunch, that you go ahead and ask your questions and comments, and then we'll bring it back to the staff to respond.

[01:22:13] Thank you. No objection to sliding fee scales, as long as they're reasonable. I 100% agree with the chairman on the administrative costs. And my question, I know we've got, I think we have a question out. I think it was Supervisor Walkinshaw, what kind of savings would result from a parks department.

[01:22:33] But what would that $7.2 million look like if it was a park department instead of a park authority? So that's question number one. Question number two, slide six. We have, you know, we did some very active marketing into a non-white community, I assume, and we got the 92% to 34%.

[01:22:57] Do we know what kind of, what that would have looked like if we had sun the same marketing into a white community? Would that have changed? So that's question number two. Would that have changed that outlook? Because typically when you do studies like that, you do control or you do equal populations on both and get a result.

[01:23:16] Number three, have we done the same equity look with our seniors in looking at increasing senior participation, especially during the day when we have capacity? I know there are other programs that have limited-hour senior programs that work really well to increase revenues as well as increase use of the thing.

[01:23:35] Have we been to either the Hampton Aquaplex or the Rouse Swim Center to look at how they operate their rec centers and how they write a check back to the government or the county instead of the other way around?

[01:23:51] And they actually teach every individual in the fifth grade how to swim. I appreciate your concern about swimming. I've got one more because swimming is critical, and they actually do that for free. It doesn't cost the school system anything. So I would like to know whether we've done that.

[01:24:07] And I have a hard time looking at this when we're talking about cutting maintenance and closing. The number one concern I get on parks is maintenance, and we are in bad shape, and we've got a lot of work to do.

[01:24:25] Okay. I'll leave it at that. Thank you, Supervisor Herity. We'll keep going and then circle back. Some of these might be responses via e-muller follow-up. Supervisor Alcorn. Yeah. First of all, thank you,

Supervisor Smith, excuse me, for bringing up distance. I completely support distance as a consideration as you're looking at equity.

[01:24:42] Thank you. And then second, very quickly, build on the chairman's comments about NCS, HHS. I think it's more than those agencies that we're looking to do consolidated back in. It's also HCD. I know on the transit subsidy, we're looking at that.

[01:24:59] So if I could ask, is it possible to come back with an outreach plan that crosses all of those programs? So we don't see one separate from the Park Authority, one separate for HCD, one separate for SAC. So take a look at that and see if you can come back.

[01:25:17] Thank you. Thank you. Great questions. Supervisor Stork, do you have any? No, I'll take it back. Thank you. Thank you. Supervisor Lusk and then Jimenez. Yeah, I'll just say quickly, I appreciate all the work and the progress that's been made here.

[01:25:34] It's pretty exciting. I still remember that visceral response from that presentation that HR&A did back in 2022. And this is the direction we need to go, at least with regard to the sliding scale. Appreciate the graduation of it and the points that were made by the chairman and others about the cost for administration and marketing.

[01:25:53] But I'm going to ask a question about the pilot. I appreciate the work that was done specifically on that Sully pilot. And I want to ask, this might be a little specific to my district, but thinking about the feasibility of a future pilot and whether or not we could try to link the Highland Valley community to the soon-to-be-opened Mount Vernon Rec Center.

[01:26:19] because I'm just thinking out loud here that there's so many people, when you think about that facility, it is a county-wide facility who will provide access to, you know, skating rinks, getting people on the ice. I'm going to venture to guess that not many folks in the community that I represent and probably others have not had access to that.

[01:26:39] So the question is, what can we do to provide transportation and figure some way of a model that will allow the residents to get exposure, particularly who are in some of these opportunity neighborhoods, get access to these facilities. But I just want to say I'm very, very pleased with the direction this is going and just want to continue to see the next steps.

[01:27:01] Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Lusk. Supervisor Jimenez. I'll be super brief here. Great to see you, Kyle Stone. Great to see this presentation. One thing I just want you to think about as we move forward when it comes to barriers to participation, as was discussed earlier, is transportation.

[01:27:18] I think transportation, obviously, is a huge barrier. Accessibility. So if we can just kind of look at that moving forward, that's all. Thank you. Thank you very much. I'm glad you brought that up. I was going to say I counted three, now four. We talked about distance or transportation barriers, whether it's, you know, we have NCS bringing people to Chipscott Community Center, whether we're looking at transportation, as you know, in a large county has become more and more challenging.

[01:27:44] So I think whether it's the High Bluff Valley or really across the county, that seems to be a big one. And then probably a few other more specific questions if you want to look back with us. But I will let you have the closing comments. J. Cole. So thank you so much for everything with this.

[01:28:02] This is a Herculean effort. I will reiterate what we've talked about before, that this situation that we're in was not created overnight. and it's going to take a concerted effort from all of us to really see our way through. We're making a very concerted decision that we're not saying that we know the answer right now.

[01:28:22] That's one of the reasons why we're pausing at every step to really analyze and see how that's actually working and how it's not working. We would prefer, as I say all the time, I want to take two steps forward and not 17 steps in the opposite direction to make sure that we are getting it right. I was remiss at the beginning of not thanking Kyle Stone, the chairman of the Park Authority Board, and our Park Authority Board for supporting this and all of our equity endeavors significantly.

[01:28:49] I don't know if you had anything that you wanted to say as a closing. I'm totally putting him on the spot. No, it's fine putting him on the spot. I'll keep my mouth shut for right now, though. We'll talk to you guys individually. Well, thank you, Chair Stone. Thank you, Ms. Cole. You got the memo to wear purple, most of you, so good job.

[01:29:08] And really appreciate the continued partnership. And with that, we are adjourned. The next meeting will be on June 3rd at 1.30 for Health and Human Services. And next up will be land use.