Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board
before the
Human Services Council

March 10, 2016

Good evening. I'm Gary Ambrose, Chairman of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board.

We appreciate the county's ongoing support for the services we provide to some of our community's most vulnerable residents. In 2015, the CSB provided almost 230,000 face-to-face services to nearly 22,000 people. We simply could not produce that level of effort without the county's support. And we're making progress.

Here are some examples:

- We have partnered with Public Safety and many others on Diversion First, and preliminary results are promising. During the two months of full operation of the Merrifield Crisis Response Center (the MCRC), our Emergency Services personnel served 709 people, 216 of whom were transported to the MCRC by law enforcement. Seventy six of those 216 individuals, most of whom could have been charged with a crime, were diverted to treatment in lieu of arrest. We continue to develop diversion opportunities with the court system and to build supports as people re-enter life in the community across all five intercepts in the evidence-based Sequential Intercept Model.
- In January of this year, the CSB re-implemented services with the mobile detoxification diversion team. This new team has been cross trained to divert individuals that have substance abuse, as well as mental health issues. During its first month of operation, 35 individuals received detox diversion services.
- We've begun our talent search to stand up a second Mobile Crisis Unit—a much needed enhancement to our crisis response services. The CSB anticipates being able to begin partial operations with the second mobile crisis unit in early April.
- The CSB was able to locate community placements for 79 individuals who were residing at the Northern Virginia Training Center (NVTC) since the Settlement Agreement commenced in 2012.
- And, we are continuing integration of primary and behavioral health care with primary care partners and a new $1.6 million grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). This will expand our partnerships and collaboration with the health department and our community health care providers.

While we're making progress, there are challenges as well. Some examples:

- The cost of living in Fairfax County and the highly specialized skillset needed to serve vulnerable individuals and adults pose hiring and retention challenges, which we're experiencing across several strategic areas for the agency. This includes our emergency and mobile crisis staff, ID support coordinators, and youth behavioral healthcare. These challenges are complicated by projections that 26% of CSB's workforce will be retirement-eligible by the year 2020.
- The cost of living situation will also impact the quantity and types of services we'll be able to offer. For example, the people who have left the NVTC as a result of the Department of Justice (DOJ) Settlement must receive the same level of services in the community that they received at the NVTC. However, the waivers that pay for those services only fund about two-thirds of their cost. This will have a direct impact upon the CSB, as well as our community partners that provide services to the IDD population.
- Finally, our Infant and Toddler Connection program which provides critical early intervention services continues to grow and tax the resources available to meet demand.

In this context, our key resource needs include:

- The ability to grow CSB services that will support people who are diverted from jail. With $7.5 million in the proposed budget for the Ad Hoc Police Commission recommendations including Diversion First, we need to make sure we include community-based treatment supports to meet the anticipated growing demand. To continue our efforts, we estimate the CSB will need at least $1.7 million of next year's budget to begin to expand diversion-focused treatment and supports.
- We need 26 support coordinators for people with intellectual and developmental disability (the advertised budget includes 4). This estimate will meet the CSB's need to implement community care coordination requirements.
- The CSB is absorbing a salary increase of $1.9 million dollars that will help us retain and recruit psychiatrists and emergency services workers. The County Executive included some of this cost in his FY2018 budget, but without full funding possible reductions in this or other areas may need to occur in FY2018.
- Finally, the CSB must continue to offer life-saving intervention and treatment for the heroin and opioid epidemic we are experiencing. Additional resources are needed to expand Medication Assisted Treatment and other community based treatment interventions for youth and adults.

Again, we appreciate your support which has made possible our many important programs. Thank you for this opportunity to share our perspective as we move through the budget process and into the future.