



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
County of Fairfax
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SUITE 530
12000 GOVERNMENT CENTER PKWY
FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22035-0071

TELEPHONE: 703/324-2321
FAX: 703/324-3955
TTY: 711

chairman@fairfaxcounty.gov

SHARON BULOVA
CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2011

To the citizens of Fairfax County:

I am pleased to present to you the Fiscal Year 2012 Adopted Budget Plan. Over the last several years, our country has endured the failure of financial and lending institutions, plummeting property values, rising foreclosures and unemployment. These factors resulted in shrinking County revenues. Over the past two years, our Board has closed revenue shortfalls by freezing compensation and reducing spending by \$180 million. This budget includes approximately \$20 million in additional reductions.

Our Board has addressed these challenges by engaging our community and our workforce in the implementation of reorganization changes, efficiencies and reductions that have allowed us to right-size the cost of services to a vastly reduced revenue stream while maintaining the quality of life we value.

While we are not yet out of the woods, Fairfax County is beginning to see property values improve and our Board has encouraged economic development as a means of jump starting our economy. Our success is evidenced by the 3.73% increase this year in commercial property values and various companies choosing to make Fairfax County their home.

As with budgets of the past, this year's budget has its own distinct personality. When thinking of a theme to this year's budget, I was reminded of a photo that appeared in the news in January 2009 when a plane made an emergency landing in the Hudson River right off the shore of Manhattan. What could have been a catastrophic disaster was avoided by a cool-headed pilot (Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger) and his crew who assisted passengers out of the plane and onto the wings where they waited in an orderly line for lifeboats to arrive.

While comparing Fairfax County's response to this decade's economic downturn to the Hudson River landing may be a stretch, we have averted what could easily have been a severe economic downspin and have benefitted by some remarkable cool-headed individuals who have worked with this Board and with our community to bring us in for a steady landing as we are beginning to see some evidence of recovery.

In February, County Executive Tony Griffin presented the Advertised Budget to our Board based on a Real Estate tax rate of \$1.09 per \$100 of assessed value, which would leave an available balance of \$30 million.

After receiving a substantial amount of public feedback from the community our Board adopted the FY 2012 Budget which reduced the Real Estate tax rate by two cents to \$1.07. This reduction keeps the average tax bill in Fairfax County essentially flat.

This budget reduces the personal property tax rate to \$0.01 per \$100 of assessed value for one vehicle for a fully disabled veteran and exempts fully disabled veterans and their spouses from payment of Real Estate taxes as required by Virginia law. The cost of both these reductions is \$3.6 million.

To remain prepared for potential State and Federal reductions our Board put aside a reserve of \$2.3 million.

The School Transfer is maintained at the FY 2011 level with a few exceptions. Consistent with widespread community input the Board strongly supports the School Board's implementation of the full phase in of Full Day Kindergarten. Our Board identified savings of \$500,000 in the SACC program, \$641,904 of additional cable funding and greater flexibility in the \$1.9 million in funding for the School Nurse Health Program to assist the schools with funding the final phase in of Full Day Kindergarten.

Employee salaries have been frozen for the last two fiscal years. In this package, our Board directed the County Executive to analyze the County's fiscal condition at the end of FY 2011 and based on this review to identify funding to provide County employees with a market-rate adjustment of 1.12% based on the inflation-based formula advocated for by the EAC and employee unions. This increase would be effective in mid-October.

Our Board has maintained our commitment to human services and public safety programs. We adopted an increase of \$1.3 million for supportive programs for high school graduates with Intellectual Disabilities, as well as the Medical Detoxification and the Diversion to Detoxification programs. Additionally \$1.5 million is included for the Fire and Rescue Department to support an Advanced Life Support Incumbent Training School. This is necessary to provide adequate levels of certified personnel to support minimum staffing requirements.

While planning for the last few budgets has been difficult for our residents and our Board, we have worked to keep taxes affordable for our residents while maintaining our exceptional quality of life in Fairfax County.

Sincerely,



Sharon Bulova