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JEFFREY C. MCKAY
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Joint Board Matter

Chairman Bulova
Supervisor McKay

January 24, 2012

Madam Chairman—when people talk about Fairfax County’s exceptional quality of life, our county parks are always near the top of the list. Our Park Authority has been an excellent steward of our parks, all the more impressive during the severe economic downturn and budget limitations.

Recently, we were informed that the Park Authority is instituting new winter cost savings procedures for its lakefront parks. These changes will temporarily reassign park full time staff to assist with operations of the RECenters during their busy period.

We believe that for Lake Accotink Park in particular, full implementation of this policy could have significant negative consequences for both the park and the surrounding communities. These concerns have also been communicated to us by community members, the Springfield Civic Association, and the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce. Lake Accotink Park is easily accessible from many points in the community and

especially from the main roads into the park with gates that staff open and close each day corresponding to the park's hours. Without staff or a working physical barrier, the park could become an attractive nuisance with the kind of activity that can destabilize a neighborhood and potentially severely damage the park.

We understand the financial pressures that the Park Authority faces and appreciate that it has in many ways borne a large share of the County's budget cuts over the past several years. However, good stewardship requires not only cost cutting but asset protection. At a minimum, the Park Authority should 1) maintain one staff person on duty at Lake Accotink Park during normal park hours and 2) ensure that a park staff person be assigned to open and close the park gates daily.

Madam Chairman, I ask that this board unanimously endorse this request and that a letter be sent from you to John Dargle, director of the Park Authority communicating this request.