



Courier

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Fiscal Year 2010 Begins July 1, 2009

The Proposed FY 2010 Budget: Information and Resources

By the Department of Management
and Budget

County Executive **Anthony H. Griffin** presented his proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 Budget to the Board of Supervisors on Feb. 23. The FY 2010 Budget is effective July 1, 2009.

“The FY 2010 Budget focuses on the county’s core services and programs. It preserves those services fundamental to our mission – the protection and enrichment of the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County,” stated Griffin.

The national economy is experiencing a significant and extended downturn. Evidence of this crisis is seen in all aspects of Fairfax County’s economy.

Beginning in 2007, the county began to experience the effects of the failing housing market, depressed job growth, lower credit and constrained consumer spending. However, the magnitude of the problem has eclipsed even the most pessimistic projections, according to Griffin.

“In response to the situation and to address the projected \$650 million



shortfall, I focused on three strategies:

- ▶ Eliminate non-contractual or non-legally obligated growth in the budget that would have provided for inflationary increases, salary adjustments and increasing workloads.
- ▶ Reduce, re-engineer, reorganize, redesign and eliminate various county lines of business.
- ▶ Include revenue enhancements to keep the same relative tax burden on the residential homeowner and increase user fees to recover an equitable return of county costs.

“I believe these proposed strategies provide a balanced approach to our budget challenges,” stated Griffin.

He added that this approach “was validated time and again during our community dialogues and employee brown-bags on the budget this fall. All areas of the county’s budget will be affected. Schools, public safety and human services comprise approximately

75 percent of the budget. All of these areas will be significantly impacted by my FY 2010 recommendation, since it would not be possible to balance the budget without adjustments to these areas while maintaining an acceptable and sustainable level of services.”

The county executive’s proposed budget includes expenditure reductions totaling \$106.4 million and eliminates 524 regular positions. In addition, it includes elimination of county employee compensation increases. Some of these reductions take advantage of cost-saving

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Proposed Budget Impact on Employees (More information on page 7)

- ▶ Eliminates 524 regular merit positions, including approximately 400 filled positions.
- ▶ Eliminates pay increases during FY 2010.
- ▶ Significant reduction in funding for limited-term salaries.

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From the Department of Human Resources

FY 2010 Budget – Questions and Answers

The following questions and answers were developed assuming approval of the county executive's advertised budget as proposed. Should changes occur as part of the Board of Supervisors' approval process, updated information will be provided.

Q: Many positions will be abolished if this budget is approved by the Board of Supervisors. When will an employee be notified that his/her position is going to be abolished?

A: The Board of Supervisors is scheduled to approve the final FY 2010 Budget on April 27. Immediately following that decision, the Department of Human Resources (DHR) will work with the Department of Management and Budget to finalize the list of positions to be abolished.

In the middle of May, the county executive will declare the Reduction in Force (RIF) and specify the job classes countywide that are affected. Shortly thereafter, affected employees will begin receiving their RIF notices.

► More information about the RIF procedure may be found at <http://infoweb/RIF>.

Q: What resources will be offered to employees affected by the RIF to assist them in finding other employment?

A: The county is partnering with SkillSource to provide services such as job preparation workshops, including:

- Resume writing assistance.
- Individualized employment/career counseling.
- Information about job-related training and education.

► The DHR Employment Division will be starting a Job Seekers Network Group to support employees looking for other employment. Look for more information

as it is available in NewsLink and Courier, or through your agency's internal communications.

Q: What is SkillSource?

A: The Self-Sufficiency Division of the Department of Family Services manages and delivers employment and training services through one-stop employment centers known as SkillSource.

SkillSource is a combination of public agencies and community-based organizations that provide clients access to a wide variety of employment and support services.

Q: Will employees receive pay increases in FY 2010?

A: No. The county executive's proposed budget does not include funding for a market rate adjustment, step increases for public safety employees or pay for performance increases.

Q: If I get promoted, will I receive a prorated pay for performance increase at the time of my promotion? Will I get the 10 percent or 15 percent pay increase that usually goes with a promotion?

A: Employees will receive the appropriate pay increase (10 percent for promotion of one or two grades or 15 percent for promotions of three or more grades) upon promotion. However, employees will not receive a prorated pay for performance increase as those are suspended along with the annual pay for performance increases for FY 2010.

Q: In the early 1990s when pay was frozen, a provision was made to make appropriate adjustments when affected employees retired to offset the impact of the pay freeze. Will the county do that again?

A: No. The proposed budget does not provide funding for that provision. A

survey of other jurisdictions indicated that such offsets are not typically provided.

Q: I am a public safety employee and am eligible to receive my 20-year longevity increase in FY 2010. Will I still receive it?

A: No. All longevity increases are frozen for FY 2010 along with the other pay increases.

Q: Is the employee awards program being eliminated?

A: No, the employee awards program will continue. However, most cash awards associated with the awards program, as well as the gift selection for the Length of Service Award program, were suspended last month and that suspension will continue through FY 2010. Employees will still receive a day off, certificate and special hat or mug at the employee award ceremonies held at the Government Center. The Suggestion Award program will continue to provide cash awards for money-saving ideas, and the Onthank Award program will continue, but on a reduced basis.

Q: I saw in the proposed FY 2010 budget information that the county will no longer be mailing pay advices to employees' homes. Is this true?

A: Yes. If approved, effective in FY 2010, electronic pay advices will become mandatory for all employees. DHR will work with departments to identify those employees or situations where an electronic pay advice will not work. It is anticipated that the number of such exceptions will be minimal.

► For more information on the electronic pay advice, go to <http://infoweb/hr/payroll/onlinepayadvice.htm>.

Q: Will I be able to get tuition assistance in FY 2010?

A: No. The proposed budget, if approved, will suspend funding in FY 2010 for the Tuition Assistance Program and the Language Tuition Assistance Program.

Q: I currently receive the language stipend for using Spanish while performing my job. Will I still be able to receive that stipend?

A: Yes. Funding for the language stipend program is included in the budget for FY 2010. There were no changes to the funding of pay supplements for county employees.

Q: I've heard that all training is eliminated. Is that true?

A: No, that is not accurate. Last October, the county executive directed that all non-essential and non-certification travel and training be cancelled. However, essential and certification-related travel and training will continue.

In addition, the countywide Employee Development and Learning Program coordinated by the Organizational Development and Training Division will continue.

▶ For information on development and

training opportunities, go to the Employee University at <http://infoweb/employeeu>.

Q: I currently job share and work 20 hours per week. I understand that I will have to pay more for my health and dental insurance. How will the proposed change to health and dental insurance benefits for part-time employees affect me?

A: Most jurisdictions prorate benefits for part-time employees based on scheduled hours. While the county prorates holiday and annual/sick leave entitlement, health insurance or dental benefits have not been prorated in the past.

Beginning Jan. 1, 2010, it is proposed that employees scheduled to work 30 hours or less per week will pay a greater share of the health and dental insurance premiums. To ease the transition, this change will be phased in over two years.

▶ For more information, go to <http://infoweb/hr/benefits/healthptbenefits.htm> or call HR Central at 703-324-3311, TTY 703-222-7314.

Q: Where can I get help if I am feeling anxious and under a lot of stress because of the proposed budget reductions and possible layoffs?

A: The county contracts with the Inova Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to

provide free confidential counseling to all part-time and full-time merit employees and their immediate household members. Additionally, the county has extended this benefit to limited-term employees until Aug. 31 to assist these employees during these challenging times.

▶ To contact the Inova EAP, call 800-346-0110, TTY 877-845-6465, or go to www.inovaeap.com. A user ID (Fairfax) and password (County1) is required to access the online service. Click on Mental Health under the Emotional Well Being heading on the left side of the screen.

County health plans also offer free self-help stress management tools:

▶ CareFirst: <http://carefirst.staywellsolutionsonline.com/Wellness/Stress>.

▶ Cigna: www.cigna.com/healthinfo/rlxsk.html.

▶ Kaiser: <https://members.kaiserpermanente.org/kpweb/entryPage.do?cfe=286>.

▶ Employees can find additional resources at <http://infoweb/LiveWell>.

▶ **Information on Employee Q&A meetings with the county executive and senior managers can be found on page 6.** ■

Employee Budget and Lines of Business Resources

FY 2010 Budget and Lines of Business:

<http://infoweb/opa/budget>

County Executive E-Mails

<http://infoweb/CEX/messages>

Reduction in Force (RIF)

RIF Reference Guide <http://infoweb/RIF>, or go to <http://infoweb/hr/chapter9.pdf> or <http://infoweb/hr/rifsummary.pdf>.

E-mail questions to HRExpress@fairfaxcounty.gov.

FY 2009 Budget:

<http://infoweb/opa/budget/fy09.htm>

Budget Rumor Buster Column Archive

<http://infoweb/opa/budget>

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

www.inovaeap.com

The EAP provides assistance with stress, legal, financial and family concerns. To access, log in with user name: FAIRFAX and password: County1

NOTE: Now through Aug. 31, this service also is available to exempt limited-term and exempt part-time employees because a number of them will be impacted by the budget reductions.

strategies; however, many reduce or eliminate services residents use and enjoy.

The reduction alternatives include modification in county service hours and service levels, staffing decreases and program eliminations. Funding reductions were made in every county agency and every county employee will be impacted by these actions.

Equally, county residents also will be impacted by this budget proposal.

“While I recognize that our residents also are struggling with the impacts of the dramatic economic downturn, I believe that level tax payments are a reasonable response to our declining revenue base,” stated Griffin.

“Throughout the community dialogue sessions, county residents endorsed the principles of maintaining our current quality of life in Fairfax County. They understood that programmatic reductions would be necessary and called upon us to protect the vulnerable constituencies in our community. Understandably, there were differing perspectives and competing priorities and demands voiced during the public process, but the consensus supported county leaders making decisions based on compassion, equity and fiscal accountability.”

Real Estate Taxes

The county executive recommended an increase in the real estate tax rate, which will hold average taxes paid by residential property owners relatively flat with their FY 2009 payment level. At the proposed Real Estate Tax rate of \$1.04 per \$100 of assessed value, along with the newly proposed Stormwater Service District rate of \$0.015 per \$100 of assessed value, the taxes paid by the average residential taxpayer will be \$14 more than their FY 2009 tax bill.

General Fund Revenue

Prior to any recommendations for rate changes, the FY 2010 General Fund

revenue estimate is \$3.017 billion, a decrease of \$303.7 million from the FY 2009 Adopted Budget Plan estimates and \$265.2 million or 8.1 percent from the FY 2009 Revised Budget Plan level.

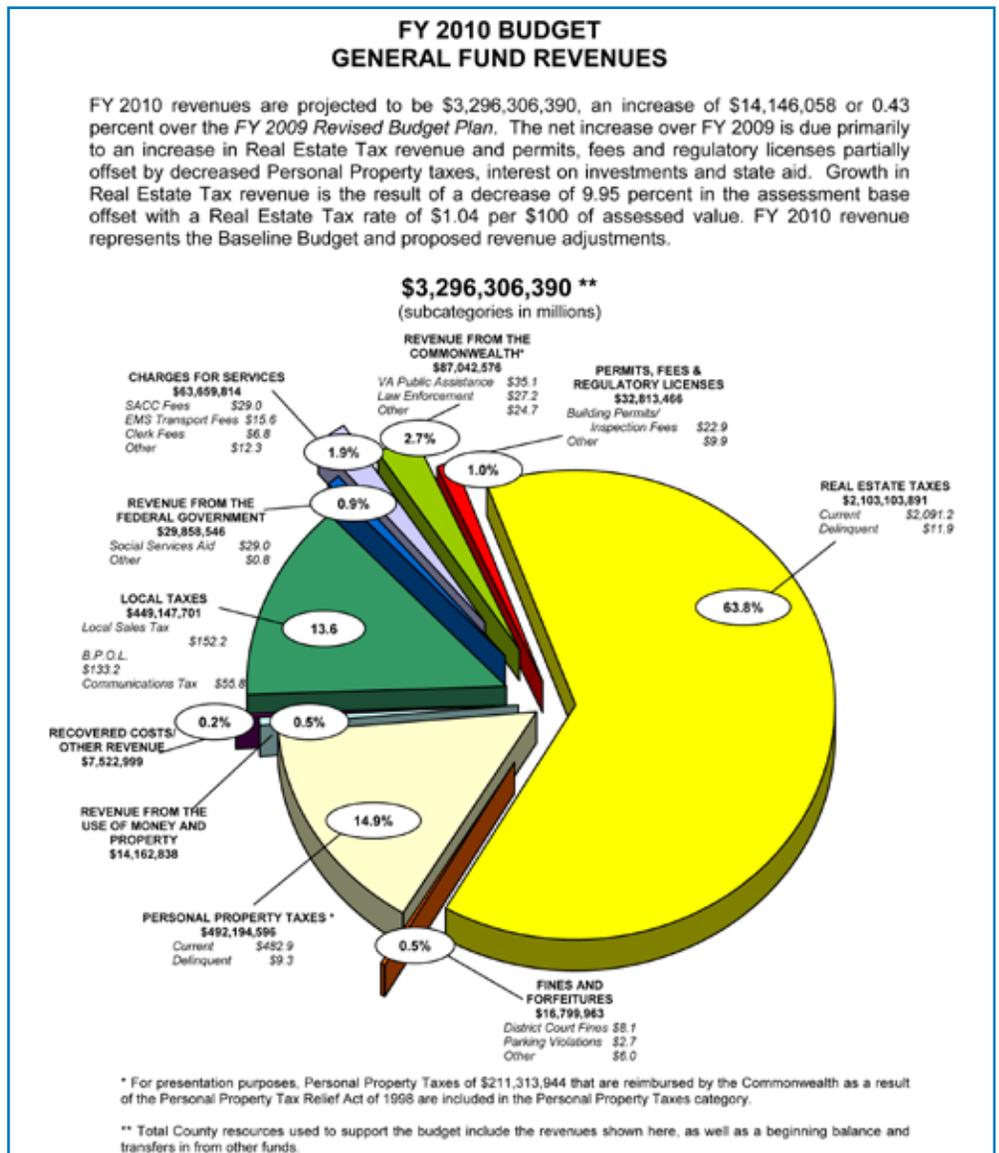
This baseline revenue estimate is based on a decrease of \$208.2 million as a result of the 9.95 percent average decrease in real estate property assessed values and a net reduction of \$57.1 million, or 4.6 percent, in all other revenue categories. With the proposed General Fund Real Estate Tax rate increase and other revenue enhancements noted below, total General Fund revenue is anticipated to be \$3.296 billion, an increase of 0.4 percent over the FY 2009 Revised Budget Plan level.

Other Revenue Enhancements

The FY 2010 Budget proposal includes a series of revenue enhancements totaling \$12.6 million. These increased fees and charges are based on actual costs of service provision; are comparable to rates in neighboring jurisdictions; and are consistent with suggestions from our residents, employees and agencies on budget alternatives.

The fee and charge increases are in addition to savings initiatives in these programs and will facilitate retaining these important programs. These enhancements include:

- ▶ \$5.5 million in Land Development Services building and inspection fees.
- ▶ \$2.0 million in zoning fees.
- ▶ \$1.5 million in penalties for late



payment of Personal Property taxes.

- ▶ \$1.3 million in School-Age Child Care fees.
- ▶ \$0.6 million in Alarm Ordinance violations.
- ▶ \$0.5 million in fire permits, overtime testing fees and faulty fire alarms.
- ▶ \$0.3 million in Health Department fees.
- ▶ \$0.2 million in library charges.
- ▶ \$0.2 million in facility rental fees.
- ▶ \$0.1 million in fees charged for field use by non-county residents.
- ▶ \$0.1 million in transportation fees for the summer Therapeutic Recreation Program.
- ▶ \$0.1 million in alarm registration fees.
- ▶ \$0.1 million in fees charged for

criminal history records.

- ▶ \$0.02 million in taxes on vehicles without a valid Virginia license plate.

General Fund Disbursements

FY 2010 General Fund Disbursements (which include the General Fund as well as the transfers to Fairfax County Public Schools, Metro, Fairfax Connector and the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board, among others) total \$3.313 billion, which is a decrease of \$127.4 million, or 3.70 percent from the FY 2009 Revised Budget Plan. Excluding adjustments in the current fiscal year of \$88.3 million, the decrease from the FY 2009 Budget is \$39.1 million or 1.17 percent.

Expenditure Reductions

The FY 2010 Budget proposal includes reductions in county spending totaling \$106.4 million. All reduction proposals were reviewed and evaluated. These proposals were put forth by county agencies after extensive analysis and professional assessment. They represented creative and innovative approaches to make service delivery more efficient and sought to preserve core county services and those services that protect the health and welfare of residents.

It is important to note that the recommended spending reductions were not made equally across county departments and programs, recognizing that some services are fundamental to the county's core mission. The reductions include:

▶ Program Eliminations

Examples include elimination of Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court's Supervised Visitation and Exchange program; the Community Services Board's hospital-based medical detoxification services; staffing for the Office of Emergency Management's Watch Center; the Seniors on the Go! taxicab voucher program; and closing the county's Gift and Publication Sales Center in the Government Center.

▶ Efficiencies and Restructurings

Examples include elimination of assorted management and administrative positions; outsourcing of delinquent personal property and Business Professional and Occupational Licenses (BPOL) collections; consolidation of Planning Commission support into the Department of Planning and Zoning; and revised vehicle replacement schedules.

▶ Facility Closures and Reduced Service Hours/Levels

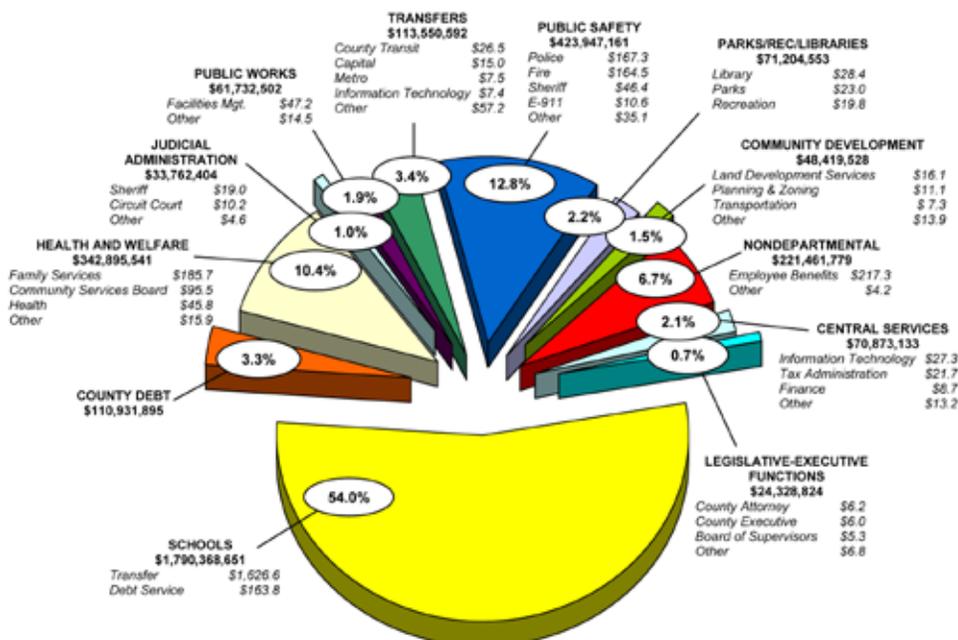
Examples include reduced library hours; and the closure of Groveton Senior Center, the David R. Pinn Community Center, and the Western Fairfax (Chantilly) Outpatient clinic site.

FY 2010 BUDGET GENERAL FUND DISBURSEMENTS

FY 2010 disbursements total \$3,313,476,563, a decrease of \$127,401,110 or 3.70 percent from the FY 2009 Revised Budget Plan amount of \$3,440,877,673. Excluding adjustments in the current year of \$88.3 million, the actual decrease from the FY 2009 level is \$39.1 million or 1.17 percent. The county General Fund transfer for school operations in FY 2010 totals \$1,626,600,722, which is equivalent to the FY 2009 Adopted Budget Plan transfer. In addition, the county's contribution to School Debt Service for FY 2010 is \$163,767,929, reflecting an increase of \$9,134,754 or 5.91 percent over the FY 2009 level.

General Fund Direct Expenditures total \$1,192,499,108 and reflect a decrease of \$112,562,971 or 8.63 percent from the FY 2009 Revised Budget Plan

\$3,313,476,563
(subcategories in millions)



CONTINUED ON PAGE 7>

Live Well Program FY 2009 Update

Last year, the county's Health Promotion and Wellness Task Force recommended the implementation of the Live Well Workforce Wellness Program to reduce the county's rising health care costs by improving employees' overall health and well-being. The program is funded with savings available in Fund 506, Health Benefits Trust Fund.

The Live Well Program provides resources and opportunities for employees to be proactive about their health. FY 2009 highlights to date include:

▶ **Subsidized membership rates at county RECenters are available to employees.** Studies indicate that employees with good exercise habits have medical costs \$400 to \$500 less than those with poor exercise habits.

During the first seven months of this benefit, 192 employees have taken



advantage of a Live Well RECenter pass. This program provides employees with convenient and safe facilities to exercise close to their worksites.

▶ **In October, 2,300 employees received free flu shots at their worksite.** According to the Centers for Disease Control, every year in the U.S., 5 to 20 percent of the population gets the flu and 200,000 individuals are hospitalized for flu-related complications.

The Live Well free flu shot program was implemented to encourage flu vaccination among employees. The Live Well program invested \$22 for each employee flu shot to avoid costs of approximately \$66 for a sick office visit to treat flu-related illnesses and almost \$590 for every visit to an emergency

room. In addition to the monetary savings, the Live Well program objectives include a commitment to decrease exposure to the flu virus for both employees and residents at county facilities.

▶ **Since July, employees have had the opportunity to learn about important wellness topics, including exercise, nutrition and stress management.**

The Live Well program has presented workshops on 11 different topics in worksite locations around the county using the expertise of county staff, nonprofit volunteers and health plan wellness educators. The workshops have been popular with registration often filling up weeks before the event.

▶ To learn more about the Live Well program resources, go to <http://infoweb/LiveWell>.

▶ To register for a Live Well workshop, go to <http://infoweb/employeeu>. Click on "Ready to Register." ■

Employee Q&A Meetings With the County Executive

County Executive **Anthony H. Griffin** and other senior managers will meet with employees to answer questions and concerns about the proposed FY 2010 Budget. Registration is not required

▶ **Tuesday, Feb. 24**

Mason Governmental Center
6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale
Main Community Room
2-4 p.m.

▶ **Friday, March 6**

Mason Governmental Center
6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale
Main Community Room
9-11 a.m.

▶ **Tuesday, March 10**

Newington Maintenance Facility
6900 Newington Road, Lorton
1:30-3:30 p.m.

▶ **Wednesday, March 11**

Government Center
12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax
Conference Rooms 9/10
1:30-3:30 p.m.

▶ **Thursday, March 12**

South County Government Center
8350 Richmond Highway, Alexandria
Large Conference Room 221
1:30-3:30 p.m.

▶ **Friday, March 13**

Burke Station Road
4001 Burke Station Road, Fairfax
Carpenter Shop - main building
9:30-11:30 a.m.

▶ **Friday, March 13**

Massey Building
4100 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax
A-Level Conference Room
1:30-3:30 p.m.

▶ **Friday, March 20**

Government Center
12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax
Conference Rooms 9/10
9-11 a.m.

▶ **Monday, March 23**

Reston Library
11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston
Main Conference Room
9-11 a.m.

▶ **Thursday, March 26**

Massey Building
4100 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax
A-Level Conference Room
9:30-11:30 a.m. ■

► **Employee-Related Reductions**

Examples include elimination of cash awards for most employee award programs; reductions of employee training funding; elimination of the magistrate pay supplement; reduction of employer contribution to health insurance premiums for part-time employees; and elimination of the police cadet program.

► **Public/Employee Suggestions**

Examples include eliminating the printed version of the employee newsletter Courier; various energy-saving measures; and changes in the county's personal computer replacement program.

► The entire list of proposed reductions is available for review at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget.

Compensation

The FY 2010 Budget proposal eliminates pay increases for employees to include pay for performance, merit increments and longevity step increases as well as the associated fringe benefit funding for a total savings of \$19.1 million. It should be noted that the reduction in the Pay for Performance and merit increases in FY 2010 also may have an impact on employees in terms of the calculation of their retirement annuity. Funding is not included to make an adjustment to the retirement calculation to compensate for this impact.

Impact on Employees

The proposed spending reductions result in the elimination of 524 regular merit positions in Fairfax County in addition to a significant reduction in the funding available for limited-term positions. Reduction proposals did not specifically target vacant positions but a number of position cuts reflect positions that have been held vacant and are in areas where the lower level of staffing can be sustained for an extended period.

Calendar for the FY 2010 Advertised Budget Plan

Feb. 23: The county executive presented the proposed FY 2010 budget to the Board of Supervisors. The video of this presentation can be seen at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cable/channel16/vod.htm.

Feb. 24 to March 26: the county executive is hosting 10 question-and-answer sessions with employees on the FY 2010 budget. Topics addressed may include: the fiscal outlook; budget timeline; county programs and services; employee compensation; and Reduction in Force (RIF) procedures. The dates, times and locations of the sessions are listed on page 6.

March 30, 31 and April 1: Public hearings will be held in the Government Center Board Auditorium on March 30 at 7 p.m. and March 31 and April 1 at 3 p.m. To be placed on the list of speakers, contact the Office of the Clerk to the Board of Supervisors at 703-324-3151. The public hearings will be televised live on Fairfax County Government Channel 16.

April 20: The Board of Supervisors marks up the budget, 10 a.m.

April 27: The Board of Supervisors formally adopts the budget.

Approximately 400 of the merit positions recommended for reduction are currently filled. This will require the implementation of a Reduction in Force (RIF).

The RIF process is primarily seniority based and considers total length of continuous paid merit county/schools service. A sequence of transfers and demotions will occur as RIFed employees are placed in available vacant positions or bump less senior employees.

Because agency salary budgets have experienced across-the-board reductions during the last few fiscal years, funding is not available to fill many vacant county positions, reducing the number of placement opportunities for RIFed employees. It is anticipated that a number of employees ultimately will be separated from service with the county.

The county's current severance policy provides between three to six weeks of severance pay based on years of service.

In addition, staff will be asking the Board of Supervisors to approve

funding to support the continuation of health insurance benefits for impacted employees.

Also, employees who are laid off will be eligible for unemployment compensation and the county executive's proposal includes an increase for unemployment compensation funding based on anticipated requirements. Employees who are demoted or laid off under the RIF procedure will be eligible for re-employment for two years from the date of layoff or demotion.

► Additional details on the RIF procedure are available at <http://infoweb/RIF>.

More Information/Comments

► Employees seeking additional information on the FY 2010 Advertised Budget Plan are encouraged to access <http://infoweb/opa/budget> or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget.

► In addition, employees are encouraged to share their thoughts on the budget at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget and/or the telephone hotline at 703-324-9400. ■

Admin Corner

In these challenging economic times, everyone needs a pat on the back. The Administrative Resource Team (ART) encourages employees to participate or organize a morale booster that brings co-workers together. Here are a few suggestions:

▶ **March is National Nutrition Month and National Kite Month.** Treat your co-workers to a platter of fruit – instead of baked goods. Or organize a kite flying contest at lunch or after work.

▶ **April 22 is Admin Professionals Day.** Extend kudos to support staff to let them know how much they are appreciated. The ART Conference is Friday, April 24. If you can, volunteer to help with agency phone coverage so office staff can attend this conference.

▶ **Public Service Recognition Week starts May 1.** Think how you represent your agency to the public – check your recorded phone greeting, your e-mail signature or the clutter on your desk.

▶ **June 5 is Sneakers at Work Day.** If appropriate, wear sneakers to work and take the stairs instead of the elevator or encourage your co-workers to go for a walk at lunch.

FICA and W-2s

The Department of Human Resources Payroll Division has received several calls from employees stating that “TurboTax says the county withheld too much money from my pay for FICA.”

Payroll’s review of the figures in these instances has confirmed that the FICA was correctly withheld. You may calculate the amount of FICA (Federal Insurance Contribution (tax) Act for Social Security and Medicare) that should have been withheld on your pay as follows:

▶ Multiply your Social Security wages

▶ **On July 6, celebrate Take Your Webmaster to Lunch Day.** Take your agency’s IT person to lunch and ask them about their work and professional background.

▶ **Aug. 17 is Professional Speakers Day.** Ramp up your speaking skills a notch by agreeing to give a presentation to a group or by conducting a meeting. Or, join Toastmasters – go to <http://infoweb/hr/training/toastmasters.htm>.

▶ **On Columbus Day, Oct. 12,** celebrate the famed explorer’s day by exploring the diversity of your workplace. Organize a potluck lunch with foods from around the world.

▶ **Nov. 1 is National Author’s Day.** Organize a workplace book club. Pick a book easily available in the public library, choose a comfortable time frame for participants to read the book and agree to meet again and discuss it.

▶ **Dec. 4 is Extraordinary Team Recognition Day.** Pick a holiday or year-end project to work on as a team and explore ways to bolster your team’s effectiveness. Or have the team volunteer together for a worthy cause after work or on a weekend. ■

(shown in box 3 on your W-2) by 6.2 percent. This is the amount of Social Security tax that should have been withheld, and should match the amount in box 4.

▶ Multiply your Medicare wages (box 5 on your W-2) by 1.45 percent. This is the amount of Medicare tax that should have been withheld, and should match the amount in box 6 on your W-2.

▶ If you have other questions about the information in your W-2, contact the Payroll Division at 703- 324-3412. ■



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See Courier online at
<http://infoweb/courier>.

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