Budget Guidance for FY 2016 and FY 2017 – April 21, 2015

At a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County, Virginia, held in the Board Auditorium of the Fairfax County Government Center on Tuesday, April 21, 2015, the Board approved the following Budget Guidance for FY 2016 and FY 2017:

Fairfax County Public Schools Operating Support

The Board recognizes the fiscal pressure that rapidly increasing enrollment and rising compensation costs are placing on the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). The reliance on one-time balances in recent years during the economic downturn has also created added challenges to meet school funding needs. County revenue growth for FY 2017 is projected to be 2.48 percent. A preliminary guideline is provided to the FCPS for an increase of 3 percent in the School Operating Transfer for the FY 2017 Advertised Budget Plan. The Board will work with the School Board to reevaluate the 3 percent guideline for the FCPS transfer prior to the release of the FY 2017 Advertised Budget. The Board of Supervisors will continue to advocate in partnership with the School Board for sufficient levels of state funding necessary to fund the County's excellent schools.

Board of Supervisors/School Board Collaboration

Recognizing the important role that the Lines of Business (LOBs) process will play over the coming years, the Board encourages FCPS to participate as a full partner in LOBs. This unique opportunity will allow both Boards to continue to work cooperatively in determining and addressing joint priorities and will build upon the positive efforts of the Joint Budget Development Committee (JBDC). By coordinating County and Schools LOBs reviews, the Boards and the community can focus more clearly on program effectiveness and identify desired outcomes with the goal of improving services in shared priority areas. The LOBs process also provides the opportunity to identify areas in which there may be duplication of efforts between County and Schools as a means of generating efficiencies and improvements in the provision of services. The Board suggests that the Schools enhance their discussion of their program budget by including metrics and performance information so that the respective Boards and the community are able to understand the importance of various programs.

Consistent with the direction from the JBDC concerning meeting joint priorities, the Board of Supervisors and School Board should also collaborate on identifying multi-year plans for closing the minority achievement gap and enhancing career and technical education programs. These plans should identify both long-term and interim goals, suggested funding allocations (within realistic fiscal guidelines), and programmatic priorities designed to reach the ultimate goals. The Board suggests the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness be used as a model for the development of these plans.

County and Schools Infrastructure Investment

The Board also directs that the County Executive include a County transfer of up to $13.1 million to the School Construction Fund as part of the *FY 2015 Carryover Review*, subject to availability of sufficient year-end balances. This increase in the transfer, which would fund Infrastructure Replacement and Upgrades projects, was originally intended to begin in FY 2016, however was deferred until FY 2017 as part of budget balancing decisions. It is expected that the $13.1 million be maintained in the County Executive's Advertised budget for FY 2017. FCPS has used an average of $13.1 million in bond funding each year for the past five years to meet what is now termed Infrastructure Replacement and Upgrades. This transfer will fund, through pay-as-you-go funding, capital replacement and upgrade requirements and will free up general obligation bond funding for large replacement or new capacity requirements.

County Employee Market Rate Adjustment

The Board recognizes the importance of fully funding the Market Rate Adjustment (MRA) as calculated by the approved formula. While the MRA is the flexible component of the newly adopted compensation plan, and as a result was not completely funded in FY 2016, maintaining the integrity of the calculation and ensuring the agreed-upon increases for County employees is a Board priority. The County Executive is directed to fully fund the MRA in his FY 2017 Advertised Budget.

Public Safety Compensation/Equipment

The Board appreciates the hard work and dedication of public safety employees and remains committed to ensuring that employees are supported in terms of adequate and safe equipment, as well as pay structures which allow for successful recruitment and retention. The Board directs staff to develop long-term plans to appropriately fund reserves for Fire and Rescue apparatus and vehicles for both career and volunteer stations and to provide necessary equipment for Police Officers. As always, the Board encourages staff to pursue federal or state funding to offset the General Fund impact of these requirements. Additionally, the Board directs staff to examine the two-year hold at Step 8 in all public safety plans to determine whether removal of the hold would allow plans to be more competitive with peer jurisdictions. Staff should also provide analysis regarding additional adjustments to the Social Security offset for Service-Connected Disability Retirements, perform further research on uniformed Sheriff employee salaries, specifically addressing questions regarding pay parity with uniformed Police employees, and look at the pay and organization structure for employees in the Animal Control Division.

Police Reorganization

With the projected growth and urbanization of Fairfax County the need for an efficient Police Department to adequately address the needs of the County residents is increasing rapidly. Due to the demographic and topographical changes to the County since the Police Department was founded 75 years ago it is necessary to reorganize the operational and administrative structure of the department in synchronization with the concepts of the Five-Year Public Safety Staffing Plan. The Board directs the County Executive and County staff to work with the Police Department and Police Employee Groups, seeking outside consultant assistance if required, to develop a plan to reorganize the operational and administrative structure of the Police Department, to include but not limited to changes to the current rank structure. Any adjustments should be made in the context of the anticipated creation of a South County Police Station as included in the County's CIP, which will require redrawing of Police District boundaries.

Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) for At-Risk Youth and Families

Under the psychiatric residential treatment benefit in Virginia, Medicaid youth with serious mental health issues who meet medical criteria may be placed directly by parents in residential treatment facilities with Medicaid as the funding source. Residential services include three service components and costs: treatment and room and board services are covered by Medicaid; there is, however, no funding source that fully covers the cost of educational costs for youth in Medicaid-funded residential treatment, which average $160 per day. Each year residential providers and parents must fund the educational cost for the more than 500 youth placed in residential facilities, of which approximately 50 annually are Fairfax residents.

A state proposal being considered to close this funding gap would require that these educational costs be funded by the CSA pooled funds on a state-local cost-sharing basis. Localities would also incur a match requirement on the otherwise Medicaid-funded portions of the placements. It is estimated that the proposal would cost Fairfax an additional $1.35 million annually - $425,000 for the required local CSA match of residential education services and $925,000 for the required local match to the Medicaid-covered services.

County staff are advocating for changes in the state proposal that would reduce or eliminate the local cost associated with this new state mandate. In the event those efforts are unsuccessful, the local cost for CSA in FY 2016 could increase as much $1.35 million. Staff will monitor the CSA expenditures and address any shortage at Third Quarter.

Service Source

The Service Source Disability Resource Center embodies a strategic direction the Human Services System is moving to in support of our nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit centers provide community-based organizations with high-quality, affordable space, increasing the capacity of people to work together. Across the County, these centers are redefining how communities use space to improve people's lives and to enhance collaboration and resource sharing among the nonprofits. For the past 4 years, Human Services has worked to encourage and find ways to support multi-tenant Nonprofit Centers in all 5 regions of the County. Nonprofit centers are buildings that house multiple organizations and provide accessible, efficient, quality, mission-enhancing workspace. In a time of constrained resources, it is difficult to identify and commit multi-year funding necessary to support the development of the Disability Resource Center with the objective of gaining space for County or County-supported organizations. However, one-time only funding may be possible should savings be identified at Carryover or at Third Quarter in the next few years.

Year-End Balances

There continues to be pressure at year-end to use available balances to address numerous priorities. By policy, the Board has directed that 60% of year-end balances not needed for critical items be allocated for capital infrastructure requirements (20%) and increased reserve requirements under the new policy (40%). In order to establish clear expectations, the Board directs the County Executive to propose guidance that clearly outlines the methodology for allocating resources available at year-end, including the definition of critical items. This proposal should be delivered to the Board no later than June so that feedback can be provided by the Board to the County Executive before the *FY 2015 Carryover Review* is released.

Future Year Investments/FY 2017 Lines of Business (LOBs) Process

Consistent with the recent adoption of the Board's economic strategy, the Board agrees with the importance of investing in Fairfax as expressed by many speakers during public testimony. This investment will take many different forms, ranging from the workforce, to traditional capital infrastructure, to technology requirements. It is important to recognize that meeting our investment goals is a multi-year process. As part of the planning for the next several budgets, the Board endorses the opportunity to comprehensively review the County's Lines of Business (LOBs). The first phase of this process will culminate in the Winter/Spring of 2016 with discussion by the Board and the community about the priorities of the County in the context of the LOBs inventory.

This discussion will focus on both providing an understanding of what the County's LOBs are and a reaffirmation of which programs should continue and which may need to be modified. The comprehensive presentation of what the County does will be critical to help evaluate where resources need to be added to ensure that the proper investments are made. The added focus on metrics to be incorporated into this LOBs exercise will be critical to provide the Board and the community with an evaluation tool as they review what the County does to determine the effectiveness, efficiency, and outcomes of our programs.

The Board directs that the County Executive provide updates on the timeline and the steps of the LOBs process early in FY 2016.

I now move the Budget Guidance that I just reviewed which will help direct the FY 2017 Budget process.