

Response to Questions on the FY 2012 Budget

Request By: Supervisor Foust

Question: Explain in detail the proposal to relocate the Human Services agencies. Was this presented to and/or approved by the Board? Who made the decision to make this relocation? What is the impact on residents who receive services at the existing location? Is \$1 million the total extra cost associated with this relocation? Has the County executed the lease for the new facilities? Why was this expenditure not part of the FY 2012 budget deliberations?

Response: Since 1990 multiple Fairfax County Human Services departments and Fairfax County Public Schools have occupied the leased facility located at 6245 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, Virginia. This location has served as one of several co-located Human Service delivery sites in Fairfax County. Over 300 County employees serve more than 4,000 clients per month at the current facility providing services and conducting programs including, Self-Sufficiency, SkillSource, Job Corner, Adult and Aging, Child Protective Services, Foster Care and Adoption services, Family Preservation Services, Healthy Families, and Child Care Assistance and Referral (CCAR) Program.

The current leased facility has several inefficiencies that include aged elevators and unreliable HVAC, electrical and plumbing systems that breakdown frequently and cause significant disruptions to County operations. Based on these building inefficiencies and the initial unwillingness of the current landlord to accommodate the County's lease term, the Facilities Management Department in collaboration with a Real Estate Advisor identified alternative leased space at Heritage II and III located at 7611 Little River Turnpike. The landlord of 7611 Little River Turnpike submitted a favorable lease term, rental rate, and tenant improvement allowance that, over the term of the lease, will achieve a lease cost savings to the county. Also, the term will enable staff to move directly to the new East County Center, which is anticipated to be operational by late 2016.

After negotiating favorable lease terms, staff recommended the relocation from 6245 Leesburg Pike to 7611 Little River Turnpike to the County Executive who approved a letter of intent to proceed with the Lease. Staff briefed the Chairman, the Chair of the Human Services Committee and Mason District Supervisor about the relocation to Heritage II and III from the Falls Church site. Lease renewal discussions with the current landlord were progressing positively when the FY 2012 budget was adopted. It was not until after the budget was adopted that staff hit an impasse with the current landlord and conducted a market search for alternative space.

Heritage II and III are located 5 miles from 6245 Leesburg Pike and are within the same Human Services catchment area. The facility is located along a well-traveled, accessible public transportation route, and many residential properties located within walking distance of the facility are occupied by individuals who utilize County Human Services. All Fairfax County Human Service agencies currently located at 6245 Leesburg Pike will be relocated to 7611 Little River Turnpike. The expected move date is anticipated to occur in May 2012.

All human services agencies recognize the importance of an effective communication plan that provides timely communication to clients and surrounding community stakeholders of the Falls Church Human Services site. Representatives from Human Services departments that will transition to the new leased facility are working on a communication and transition plan to ensure the least amount of disruption to clients and staff.

Although one-time net costs of \$1,000,000 are required to accommodate the relocation of several Human Service agencies, this cost will be offset by realized savings in lease expenses over the life of the lease. It should be noted that additional FY 2012 funding is available for furniture and fixture costs that was originally intended for replacement at the Leesburg Pike site. The \$1 million cost included in the Carryover package is required for costs associated with information technology costs such as the installation and equipment for telephones, I-Net connections and other cabling, architectural design costs associated with the new space and moving costs.