

AHS NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2017

FY 2018 BUDGET PREPARATION

On November 22, 2016, at a joint meeting of the Board of Supervisors and the School Board, County Executive Edward Long presented a County Budget Forecast for FY 2018. Mr. Long identified continuing fiscal challenges facing the County. Among them:

- In FY 2018 total General Fund revenues are predicted to increase by only 1.6% (\$74 million).
- Residential real estate values are projected to increase only .4% in FY 2018.
- Office vacancy rates remain at historically elevated levels, and nonresidential real estate values are projected to increase only 1.25% in FY 2018.

The County Executive said, as he did last year, that he anticipates restrained revenue growth for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, while it is safe to predict that the County will be coping with changes on the national level, the nature of these developments and their effect on the local level is still unknown. Some of these potential issues are:

- There is general uncertainty about the impact of the new administration on the local economy and on local programs and services.
- There is uncertainty about interest rates and Federal policy.
- Potential changes to the Affordable Care Act may have a major impact on County residents and health care providers.
- Looming sequestration cuts are scheduled to resume in Fall, 2017, unless Congress acts.

Because of necessary disbursements and reserves, including prior Board commitments, Mr. Long is predicting a FY 2018 budget shortfall of \$14.28 million. This shortfall, however, does not include funding for other important Board priorities, including a market rate adjustment of 1.65% for employee salaries, the Special Ed graduates, Diversion First, and the implementation of the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Police Commission. If the funding for these additional priorities were included, the total would bring the projected shortfall for FY 2018 to \$55.10 million.

Human services advocates, therefore, should be prepared to oppose cuts in human services funding, to support proposed increased funding, and to promote the discussion of continuing and unmet needs.

For more information, go to the County website, www.fairfaxcounty.gov, and click on "Budget."

DUES ARE DUE

If an Alliance membership form is included with your newsletter, then, according to our records, you have not yet renewed your membership for 2016-17. Please use this form to renew as soon as possible. As you know, the Alliance depends entirely on dues and donations to fund its work. We need your support and your voice. If we have made an error, and you have already renewed, we apologize. Please let us know by contacting Treasurer Roxanne Rice at rrice1@cox.net.

FY 2018 BUDGET SCHEDULE AND IMPORTANT DATES

Tues. Feb.14: County Executive presents his Proposed FY 2018 Budget to the Board & community. Board Auditorium, Fairfax County Government Center.

Thurs., March 2, 7:30 pm: Pat Harrison, Deputy County Executive, will present a FY 2018 Budget Briefing at a special Alliance for Human Services meeting. More details, including the location, will follow in another mailing.

Tues., March 7, 7:30 pm: Human Services Council Budget Community Dialogue.
Location:TBD

Thurs., March 9, 7:30 pm: Human Services Council Budget Community Dialogue.
Conference Rooms 2/3, Fairfax County Government Center.

April 4, 5, 6: FY 2018 Budget Hearings, Board Auditorium, Fairfax County Government Center

Tues., April 25: FY 2018 Budget Markup

Tues., May 2: Budget Adoption

KEEPING TRACK OF THE FY 2018 BUDGET AND ADVOCATING FOR HUMAN SERVICES

The best way to keep track of the FY 2018 Budget will be to go to the County website, www.fairfaxcounty.gov. Once the Budget has been released on February 14, it will be given prominence on the Home Page. You can also go directly to the Department of Management and Budget at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb. The Budget Timeline, along with other meetings yet to be scheduled (e.g., Board Budget Committee meetings, Board members' Town Hall budget meetings), will also be posted. Reference copies of the Budget will be available at Fairfax County Public Libraries. AHS will do its best to send you timely information about the FY 2018 Budget and advocacy opportunities. Please check the AHS website for updated materials: www.fairfaxalliance.org.

Communicating with Board members is very effective advocacy. To find contact information for each member of the Board, go to the County website Home Page and click on "Board of Supervisors."

ALLIANCE FOR HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

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FAIRFAX COUNTY DELEGATION PRE-2017 SESSION HEARING

On Saturday, January 7, 2017, at 9 am, the Fairfax County General Assembly Delegation will hold a public hearing in the Board Auditorium at the Fairfax County Government Center. Each speaker will be allotted 3 minutes to address the delegation. Only Fairfax County residents or individuals speaking on behalf of a Fairfax County organization may register to speak. Those wishing to speak should contact the Clerk to the Board by noon on January 6 at 703-324-3151.

DAY FOR ALL PEOPLE 2017

The Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy's annual Day for All People will be held on Wednesday, January 25, 2017, 8 am – 4 pm, at Centenary United Methodist Church, 411 East Grace St, Richmond (a short walk from Capitol Square). You are invited to join people from around the Commonwealth for a day of advocacy at the General Assembly. For more information, and to register for the event, please go to www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org.

GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED BIENNIAL BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Virginia has a biennial budget system. The biennial budget is enacted into law in even-numbered years, and amendments to it are enacted in odd-numbered years (like 2017). On December 16, 2016, Governor Terry McAuliffe presented his proposed amendments to the Biennial Budget for FY 2016-2018 to a joint meeting of the Senate Finance, House Finance and House Appropriations Committees. The Governor has proposed a number of items that will interest human services advocates.

For more details and for the complete budget, go to the website of the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget at www.dpb.virginia.gov, or to the Budget Portal (see below). Action now moves to the General Assembly.

HOW TO GET LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION AND CONTACT VA ELECTED OFFICIALS

The 2017 General Assembly (GA) will convene on January 11 and adjourn on February 25. Following are several useful websites for monitoring the General Assembly and tracking legislation and budget amendments:

GENERAL ASSEMBLY HOME PAGE:

<http://viriniageneralassembly.gov>

Provides links to the Governor's proposed Budget amendments and to GA amendments. Includes session and committee schedules and calendars, GA members' phone numbers and email addresses. Bills can be tracked from this site.

LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION SYSTEM:

<http://lis.virginia.gov>

Lists bills by sponsors and subject; has other legislative information.

VIRGINIA BUDGET PORTAL:

<http://budget.lis.virginia.gov>

Complete information on the Budget, proposed amendments, and committee reports

OFFICIAL VIRGINIA HOME PAGE:

www.virginia.gov

Information on all state agencies, all branches of government, links to the Governor and to local and federal websites and agencies.

CONTACT LEGISLATORS

During the GA session, the mailing address for all state senators is: Senate of Virginia, P.O. Box 396, Richmond, VA 23218. The address for all delegates is: General Assembly Building, P.O. Box 406, Richmond, VA 23218. Email addresses and telephone numbers are listed on the GA website (see above). Another way to send emails to legislators is to follow directions for the "Who's My Legislator" function on the General Assembly Home Page.

CONTACT THE GOVERNOR

Governor Terry McAuliffe

Office of the Governor

Patrick Henry Building, 3rd Floor

1111 East Broad Street

Richmond, VA 23219 Phone: 804-786-2211; Fax: 804-371-6351; TTY/TDD: 1-800-828-1120

You can also email the Governor by going to www.governor.virginia.gov. Follow the directions for sending an email message.

