



General Membership Meeting Via Zoom
Tuesday, November 13, 2024 at 7 pm

Summary

The Federation received reports from Supervisor Storck and Linwood Gorham as well as representatives for Delegates Kathy Tran and Laura Jane Cohen. Supervisor Storck was frank in discussions of the budget and the development process for Overlook Ridge Park. The Land Use Committee has many presentations as the year wraps up and new businesses are opening or signing leases. The Transportation Committee is working on pedestrian access ways and dealing with traffic backups at the Amtrak Auto Train station. The Public Safety Committee discussed possible budget cuts in the new year that may see less services in certain areas, but the same level of coverage by emergency services.

Call to Order- Mr. Nick Firth, Vice President

Mr. Firth called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm and noted the absence of President Wendy Henley this evening, promising her return in December. He also stated the October minutes will be ready for the December meeting.

Treasurer Report- Mr. Jim Fenton

Mr. Fenton presented the treasurer's report, indicating a healthy balance in the checking and money market accounts.

Truist Checking	\$1,380.26
Expenditure	\$209.19
CD	\$5,064.88
Total	\$6,235.95

Fairfax County Park Authority Update- Mr. Linwood Gorham

Mr. Gorham discussed the upcoming ribbon cutting for the Woodlawn Little League snack stand/ bathroom. There are significant problems with gang graffiti, drug paraphernalia, and cut fencing at the Laurel Hill Equestrian Center near the old dairy facility. The Park Authority is looking to demolish the dairy facility and welcome community input before they act, including walking the site. He also discussed a possible restaurant use PPEA proposal for the Grist Mill Barn on Mount Vernon Memorial Highway.

Comment from Nick Firth, likes the bragging board at Fountainhead Park, but the chips they gave out were expired. **Answer**, he'll look into it as that park is outside his district.

Question from Dale Rumberger, noted proposed fees increase at the parks, most being nominal but the skate rink is going from \$65 to \$90, why so high? **Answer**, skate rental fee is wrapped into the entrance fee, and there's a change to the fee for those under six. He was against the fee change, but it passed anyway.



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Question from Larry Clark, asked about what PPEA means and is that the same as Bunnyman at the Workhouse. He also asked for clarification on the graffiti location. **Answer**, he wasn't sure of the full term, but it is the same as Bunnyman.

Question from Marty Schirmacher, offered to visit the old dairy barn with Mr. Gorham, asked if they will have a police escort? **Answer**, would be during the day. **Follow up**, Mr. Shirmacher prefers not to visit County Parks without protection since he can't bring his firearm, might bring his dogs. When will it be? **Answer**, Mr. Gorham will contact him to set up a time.

Question from Keith F. Shovlin, following up on last month's discussion of Laurel Hill Golf Course and GMU? **Answer**, information sent to Ms. Henley, Mr. Firth, and Mr. Clark. **Follow up**, anything on the missile site being turned into tennis/pickle ball courts? **Answer**, nothing since last meeting but will have something next month.

Mount Vernon District Supervisor Report- Supervisor Dan Storck

Supervisor Storck followed up Mr. Gorham's update and defined PPEA as Public Private Educational Act, the originating legislation, proposed by former delegate Dave Albo and used to fund South County High School, but does not apply to Bunnyman. That is licensed use of the property, but basically the same thing.

He gave an update on Overlook Ridge Park, as Waste Management is very close to completing the access agreement, which will allow them to move on to DEQ approval. On the adjoining property that was for sale, the asking price is too high for the County to acquire, basically \$1 million per acre.

On Lorton Road at Silverbrook Road, nothing new to report. On Mason Neck Trail, meeting was held on October 23rd, process moving very slowly. Schedule is currently five years for completion. He's hoping it will happen more quickly. Key issue is the cost, as it is quite expensive. Second is land acquisition, which adds to cost. Continuing to seek parity in education funding with surrounding counties from the State.

Question from Larry Clark, asked for clarification on the Waste Management property and follow up on Overlook Ridge, why DEQ approval could not have begun while the access agreement was being worked out? **Answer**, he reiterated the amount quoted. On the park approval, he stated that it is the way the process goes. **Follow up**, the opening date has slipped to August 20th 2026. **Answer**, I don't really care. Just want the agreement done so they can move on in the process and the park will be open when it's open. We just need to keep pressure on those that need to finish the process.

Question from Keith F. Shovlin, has Alpine-X approached the County on extending the exclusive agreement that ends December 31st? **Answer**, they know it. We know it. They want to extend and it is up to the Board of Supervisors whether to do that. There has to be more than interest, but actual concrete progress to report. I'm still hopeful, but it's not very hopeful at this point in time.

Question from Dale Rumberger, any interest in the County making that site available for data centers? **Answer**, we're encouraging any interested parties with data centers to look at any of our I-5, I-6. Those are almost no brainers to do. Most of them aren't anywhere close to our residential, and I think they could work. The landfill is an opportunity, but the feedback is there are too many challenges. One issue is our high real estate tax, and budget discussions are underway for budget starting July 1, 2025. The teachers association has negotiated a contract with the schools that includes a 7% increase in the first year, with subsequent 3% to 4% increases. That will require a significant increase in their budget. They asked for 12% last year and we rejected it, ending up with a 7% increase. The County Executive has asked County offices to identify 10% in cuts. He suggests the school board should do the same to



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accommodate the raise in teacher pay. **Follow up**, asked about the traffic study for the intersection of Silverbrook and Southrun roads. **Answer**, wrote it down to follow up later. **Dale Rumberger then thanked** Supervisor Storck publishing the new parking regulations including the ability for individual citizens to report commercial vehicle parking in their neighborhoods. Storck thanked his staff, specifically Peyton and Diego for their work on this.

Question from Larry Clark, asking about School Board's authority to sign advance contracts with the teachers' union. **Answer**, they are an independent body. They get to decide what they get to decide, but we sure better have a way of paying for it. If the funding isn't there, the School Board will have to make cuts elsewhere. Reminder to state legislators about funding imbalance. They should have the same clause in their agreements that the Board of Supervisors has. If the funds aren't there, we don't have to honor that agreement.

Legislative Updates

Congressman Gerry Connolly was unable to attend Mr. Firth made note of the Congressman's announcement of his cancer diagnosis. He offered thoughts and prayers on behalf of the Federation to the Congressman.

Kathy Tran- 18th District, Virginia State Delegate, represented by Ben Hermerding, Chief of Staff

First, it's time of year where we are preparing for the legislative session in January. Getting their bills ready, getting them in for drafting. They are waiting for a draft budget from the Governor, which they should receive on December 18th. This next session will make amendments to the budget passed last year. We have a surplus, but most of the surplus has already been committed. He wouldn't expect anything groundbreaking in this budget. Delegate Tran has been traveling, attending a border workforce development meeting, a State Water Commission meeting, a joint subcommittee to evaluate tax preferences meeting. Also the Commission on the Potomac River Basin meeting, which was in Pennsylvania. So she's been doing a fair amount of traveling. Will also be attending a meeting on school funding, as Supervisor Storck mentioned.

Second provided updates on issues from last month. For the light at Silverbrook and South Run, they requested that from VDOT. They said that they were taking a look at the former study, and they were looking into if they could do a study, which would take up to 90 days to complete. On an expansion of Silverbrook, they looked into that. It looks like there has not been any plans put forward. In September, Mr. Firth had brought up traffic light timing on Lorton Road. VDOT is in the process of checking them and found a broken sensor at the intersection of Gunston Cove Road and Lorton Road. It has been fixed. VDOT is now doing advanced monitoring on the lights and will send the report to Tran's office when it is complete.

Question from Nick Firth, asked about light timing and whether it has to always go in a certain sequence and whether there can be exceptions. **Answer**, Mr. Hermerding said he would ask VDOT about that, as he's not a traffic engineer.

Question from Keith Showlin, asked to send thanks to VDOT for the new signs throughout the area including a crosswalk on Southrun Road, VRE signs on Pohick and Lorton roads, and a new Exit sign on I-95 Southbound offramp. Also asked about a request for a four-way stop at Southrun Rd and Newington Commons Rd/Southrun Ct. **Answer**, he said he would follow up with VDOT as Southrun Road is maintained by them.



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Laura Jane Cohen - 15th District, Virginia State Delegate, represented by Dalton Bisson, Chief of Staff

Mr. Bisson emphasized the importance of constituents actively participating in the upcoming legislative session by sharing their ideas with Delegate Cohen. He encouraged community members to voice their thoughts and suggestions, which could play a crucial role in shaping local initiatives. Additionally, he highlighted the valuable opportunity for students by reminding parents that there is a need for interns. He urged eligible children to consider applying, as this experience could provide them with essential skills and insights into the legislative process.

Question from Nick Firth, about age minimum for interns. **Answer**, it's college age during the legislative session. They can do virtual internships for those that can't be in Richmond. At least 16 as they have had high school interns in the past. Entering another election season as well so looking for campaign staff as well.

Committee Reports

Land Use Committee, Co-Chairs Nick Firth and Keith F. Shovlin

Local updates from Mr. Shovlin Still awaiting news on Yafa Grill at Liberty. Wingstop next to Panera is now hiring. Thanked Mount Vernon on the Move for news on new restaurants at Gunston Plaza, Naz's Halal Food and Nash & Smash, Nashville-style sandwich shop. Mr. Shovlin forgot the names at first and **Erika Christ responded on video and in the chat**. A climbing center has begun the process to lease the dining hall at Liberty, but they asked that the name not be public until approvals are complete.

Mr. Firth discussed the recent committee meeting where a standalone bank pad at Shoppes of Lorton Valley on Ox Road was presented. The biggest issue is the ingress and egress from the shopping center. Second was the Newington Costco on Fullerton Road, where they are adding a gas station and expanding the warehouse to offer sushi. We asked for some changes to the parking lot.

This month's meeting will include a presentation from the Noman Cole Water Treatment Facility.

Dale Rumberger brought up a visit that he and Mr. Firth did to Pohick Estates to take a look at the site of a proposed development. There's been no application filed yet but that is expected.

Question from Jonathan Kiell, is the Noman Cole presentation a land use issue? **Answer**, it is a construction project.

Question from Linwood Gorham, asked about the Home Depot planned for North Woodbridge near the Occoquan. **Answer**, there was a public hearing a couple months ago and it made it through the Prince William County Planning Commission. He didn't know anything beyond that. It would be near the shopping center with Regent's Furniture and Aldi.

Question from Andy Normand, first thanked Nick and Dale for coming out to his community, asked about the ingress and egress from the proposed development as they said they haven't done traffic study. He also followed up on the need for a walkway along Pohick Road. **Answer**, a comprehensive plan amendment will be needed for the proposed development as well as rezoning, so this will be a drawn out process. **Follow up**, asked for guidance on what his community can do while they wait for it to be filed. **Answer**, he advised them to take it to the community and establish their position, write it down and present it as a packet. See if the conversations are worth continuing. They may not even apply, and if they do, we'll deal with them.

Mr. Shovlin added, Noman Cole will be hosting an open house on Saturday, December 7th.



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Mr. Firth noted, the Lorton Community Action Center is holding their annual drive, seeking holiday food donations, at the Lorton Community Center.

Environmental and Parks Committee, Co-Chairs Larry Clark and Dale Rumberger

Mr. Clark noted that Supervisor Storck covered the topics they wanted to discuss.

Keith Shovlin brought up the pumpkin disposal at the I-95 landfill complex on Furnace Road through November 15th.

Transportation Committee, Co-Chairs Peter Weyland and Dale Rumberger

Mr. Weyland shared updates, first on the Pohick Road Walkway, rescoping was sent to the Transportation Design Division in April. They are coordinating with VDOT to establish a project administration agreement. The document includes a schedule estimate with the draft submitted in May, still awaiting approval.

On the Gunston Road Walkway, Supervisor Storck touched on that. It is five years out from completion. It will complete the walkway from the Indian Springs Development to the golf course.

Mr. Rumberger brought up slugging, as the new Springfield parking garage is now open so the slugging program is back up and running, across from the Giant and Container Store shopping center.

Second, the commercial parking violations previously discussed with Supervisor Storck. Rumberger asked that they be reprinted in the Supervisor's weekly emails for the next couple of weeks. He described the reporting process, using a simple form to submit pictures of commercial trucks parked illegally.

Third, he and Mr. Weyland will be reaching out to AMTRAK once again as there have been several complaints of cars backing up on Lorton Road going south. The station staff have a plan but it did not work the past few days.

Jonathan Kiell added that he saw the cars lining up outside the gate at 1:15 pm as the train was late. There was an AMTRAK police officer preventing cars from entering from the west side turning left. The traffic backup reached all the way to Gunston Plaza. He surmised that since the train was late, the station staff were busy unloading, which led to the backup of arrivals. Mr. Rumberger agreed, noting this only tends to be an issue twice a year, the holiday season being one of them.

Public Safety Committee, Chair Jonathan Kiell

Mr. Kiell discussed several issues, starting with Gunston Fire Station 20, which is planned to be replaced with a new fire station right next door. Construction has begun though it isn't visible as they are currently working on the septic system. Visible progress is forthcoming shortly.

Supervisor Storck noted that the County Executive has directed the various agencies to look at a 10% cut and what that would mean. The fire department is considering reducing costs by cutting back on overtime for paramedics that are understaffed. A solution is to consolidate ambulance placement throughout the county without reducing effectiveness. The most likely stations to lose ambulance service are remote stations such as Gunston and Crosspointe Station 41. These are early proposals and still just under consideration.

Education Committee, Chair Wendy Henley



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James Fenton spoke on Education in Ms. Henley's absence. There are two meetings scheduled for the school boundary review. For Region 4, it will be December 3rd at Lake Braddock Secondary School. For Region 3, it will be December 9th at Mount Vernon High School.

Final Matters

Keith F. Shovlin noted that the Mount Vernon Holiday Open House will be on Wednesday, December 4th at the Mount Vernon Government Center from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

He also offered congratulations to the SoCo Colts 14 under girls softball team from the South County Athletic Association won the USSSA Military Appreciation Tournament last week, going undefeated against other teams from Northern Virginia.

Meeting adjourned

Vice President Firth adjourned the meeting at 8:24 pm. The next scheduled meeting is on December 10th.

Action Items

- Mr. Linwood Gorham will check on the freshness of the chips at Fountainhead Park
- Mr. Gorham will have an update on the discussion of possible recreational facilities on the former Nike Missile Site in Laurel Hill Park.
- Supervisor Dan Storck will follow up on the traffic study for Silverbrook Road at Southrun Road.
- Mr. Ben Hermerding will update the Federation on the traffic light monitoring on Lorton Road.
- Mr. Hermerding will check with VDOT about a proposed four-way stop at Southrun Road at Newington Commons Road/Southrun Court.
- Mr. Nick Firth will get an update on the Home Depot being built in North Woodbridge.
- Dale Rumberger and Peter Weyland will follow up with AMTRAK about the cars backing up from the Auto train once again.