

McLean Community Center
PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY 2010 BUDGET
1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean, VA 22101
September 24, 2008

Board Present: Kevin Dent, Treasurer & Finance Chair; Jan Auerbach, Board Chair, Drew Clark, Lee DiCenso, Jenni Dunn, Sean Dunn, David Sanders, Risa Sanders, Ed Shahin

Staff Present: Julie Rasmussen, Executive Director; Clare Kiley, Deputy Director; Vivian Brown, Comptroller; Carol Pardon, Admin. Assistant

Guests Present: John B. Walsh, 8800 Prestwold Place, McLean, 22102; 703-893-3610, JBWnet@MSN.com
Anita LaSalle, 6903 Hickory Hill Ave., McLean 22101; 703-506-0463, lasall3@verizon.net
Devin Miller, 8409 Holly Leaf Drive, McLean 22102; 703-893-7587
Wes Callender, representing Supervisor John Foust's office
Mike DiCicco, The Connection newspaper
Karen DuVal, McLean Project for the Arts
John Rudzki (did not sign in)

Convened: 7:35 p.m.

- Dent explained that various committees of the Board have been meeting on the MCC budget for FY 2010. A Finance Committee working session to which the public was invited was held on September 3. On Monday, September 22 the Finance Committee met to finalize the budget recommendations which are reflected in the Fund Statement. The Committee also recommended adjusting the tax rate to 2.4 cents per \$100 of assessed real estate value. Up to then the working assumption for the budget was 2.5 cents, down from 2.6 cents in the FY 2009 budget. It will be voted on in the Board meeting following the Public Hearing.
- **John Rudzki**, who said he is a neighbor of the MCC, asked if the taxing authority of the MCC has been challenged in a court of law. Auerbach explained that the residents of Small Tax District voted in 1970 to fund the MCC with a special tax. There has never been a lawsuit. She further explained that the MCC's Governing Board makes a recommendation to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and that the MCC's budget is included in the County budget. She added that more revenue than is required to operate the MCC has been collected, and that the Board is looking at using this extra revenue to fund a satellite facility in downtown McLean.
- **Anita LaSalle** said that, while she admires what the MCC does and the way it is run, the budget reflects an imbalance between what programs costs versus what revenues are brought in. She singled out the Performing Arts budget in particular. Dent said the Board's philosophy has not been to cover costs in the Alden Theatre. Fees for classes were lowered to make them cheaper and more accessible to tax district residents, he said.

- **John Walsh** distributed a written statement. He said he has addressed the Finance Committee, and that while the recommended tax reduction is welcome, it is not enough because the revenue keeps growing. He said tax rates should be reduced as tax assessments go up. Money is being accumulated in reserves for which there is no clear purpose, he said. The Board is considering building a gym at Spring Hill and funding storm water abatement for Dead Run. Increased housing values aren't real income, he said. Although the MCC's taxes are fairly small, it is the principle of the thing. He proposed that the tax rate match the inflation rate of 3% a year, which would lead to a tax rate of 1.5 cents. An alternative would be to stop adding money to the reserves, which would lower the tax rate to 1.4 cents. A third alternative would be to give the surplus back to the taxpayers and stop collecting any taxes for four years. He also called for defining the problem of the Old Firehouse, coming up with a solution, and providing written reports to the taxpayers.

Dent responded that there have been many discussions about a downtown satellite facility with ballpark estimates of \$7-9M, not taking parking into consideration. Auerbach said that four public meetings on the proposed expansion had been held in 2006-2007. Walsh said that there was enough money in the reserves to cover the estimates. If costs turn out to be higher, then go to bond. Dunn said money is needed to replace capital items and to provide for unplanned contingencies as well. He said that over the past few years the Board has discussed building a gym, but that it can't be put on the MCC's Ingleside property or downtown.

- Rudzki said that people who use the MCC have to cross dangerous intersections and suggested that the MCC ally with others to get the intersection at Rt. 123 and Ingleside Ave. fixed. Auerbach responded that the MCC has been told it's a VDOT issue.

Adjourned: 8:05 p.m.