

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Hearings

Alyssa Keefe, FCPF Board of Directors

April 16, 2026

Good afternoon, Chairman McKay and Members of the Board of Supervisors. My name is Alyssa Keefe, and I am honored to serve on the Board of the Fairfax County Park Foundation.

First, I want to thank Laura Eakin Erlacher for her leadership. Over the past year—and throughout her tenure as Chair—she, along with a deeply committed Foundation staff and Executive Committee, has guided the Foundation through a challenging time with clarity, transparency, and an unwavering commitment to partnership. That leadership has positioned the Foundation for what comes next.

Last year, we came before you during a period of real uncertainty.

Through the dedication and perseverance of our staff and commitment of this community—we found a path forward. And as you just heard, the Foundation not only met that moment—we delivered.

That matters because it reinforces something fundamental: the public private partnership model works.

For more than two decades, the Foundation has brought additional resources into the park system. Donors give because they trust that their contributions go directly to impact and align with County and Park Authority priorities.

That trust is an asset—and one we must continue to build on.

But we are also at an inflection point.

The priorities you've heard this week—maintaining an aging system and expanding equitable access—are growing. At the same time, the Foundation is entering a period of leadership transition and evolution.

If we want to grow and meet this moment, we must ensure the Foundation is strategically aligned with the Board and Park Authority's vision and priorities, that our infrastructure is strong, and that we are planning not just year to year, but with a three- to five-year horizon for sustainability.

That starts with a seamless transition to new leadership. It also requires an infrastructure investment that supports growing our fundraising efforts so that we deliver on the commitments we make together to this community.

Philanthropy is built on trust—but it is sustained by consistent, reliable execution.

This is where the public-private partnership becomes essential.

Earlier this week, you heard from Mike Reynolds, Tim Hackman, and Bill Bouie, who laid out both the challenges and opportunities facing our park system. I also want to recognize Deputy Director Nigel Fields for his leadership and partnership.

There is significant work ahead this year, and together we are positioned for success. The role of the Foundation is clear: to bring private dollars to public priorities, expand access where fees cannot, and help accelerate and enhance the investments you are making.

As you make decisions about the FY2027 budget and beyond, I want to reaffirm that the Foundation stands ready to be a disciplined, accountable partner—one that builds on your investments and helps extend their reach.

I am excited about what comes next. The Foundation Board of exceptional community leaders is committed to strengthening this partnership, expanding philanthropic support, and helping ensure that Fairfax County's park system remains accessible, resilient, and reflective of the full community we serve.

We are ready to do that work with you.

Thank you for your time and consideration.