

## **Frederick News-Post**

### **Peppe's departure**

Publish Date: 04/06/04

Ronald Peppe announced Thursday that he is resigning, effective April 30, from the Frederick County Board of Education. His principal reason for leaving the board is a personal one. Having taken a new position in Washington, he has decided to relocate to Falls Church, Va., in order to shorten his commute and give him more time with his family.

That's a perfectly reasonable decision by Mr. Peppe, as he's given a disproportionate amount of his time and energy to other people's children since 1997, when he first took a seat on the Board of Education.

At that time, we were operating on the old system in which school board members were appointed. He was also elected to the board as it moved from an appointed body to an elective one.

Mr. Peppe served as president for most of his time on the Board of Education. That position must be one of the more demanding, and often thankless, public service positions around. It required him to put in long hours, mostly in the evening, dealing with complicated budgets and school system administration.

But those may have been the easy parts of the job. The public is intensely interested in and emotional about education -- as it should be. It consumes the lion's share of local tax revenues, employs thousands of people, and is where our children spend most of their time and prepare for their futures.

During his tenure on the school board, Mr. Peppe has had to deal with heated debates on lots of emotional topics, like new school construction, teacher salaries and other contract issues, "family life" education, redistricting and charter schools. Each has required dealing with teachers, school officials, parents, county commissioners and/or other school board members who have strong feelings and are seldom in complete harmony.

Mr. Peppe says that he now feels a real need to spend time with his own children, something he's been unable to do enough of in recent years because of the crushing requirements of school board membership -- especially as president of that body.

We haven't agreed with all of Mr. Peppe's positions, but that doesn't lessen our respect for him or our appreciation for his service to Frederick County. He has shown a deep interest in his community and the education of its children -- and a willingness to personally sacrifice for them.

Mr. Peppe's departure has created some concern among our county commissioners, who are charged with naming a replacement to fill the remaining months of his term. Interest in serving on the board has declined drastically since it has become an elected body.

The position wasn't even on the primary ballot earlier this year because only three candidates filed for the three seats available on the board. We'd like to see that trend reversed, and hope that a number of individuals will express an interest in taking Mr. Peppe's seat.

Having that position filled by default would be an indictment of our community and might not produce the best results. There's no doubt, however, that it will take a highly dedicated, intelligent and knowledgeable person to fill Mr. Peppe's shoes on the Board of Education.

We wish Ron Peppe much success in his new position and new home. He deserves it. Few among us are willing or able to contribute to the common good to the extent he has. Falls Church will be getting a good man.

---

Copyright 1997-02 Randall Family, LLC. All rights reserved. Do not duplicate or redistribute in any form. Frederick News-Post Privacy Policy. Use of this site indicates your agreement to our Terms of Service.