

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 12, 2006
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 118 : FUNDING FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT, TEENSWORK!

This memorandum is in response to Councilman Gaines' request for information on funding for Youth Employment, otherwise known as Teenswork!

Teenswork! is a six week summer work experience for 120 "at risk" youth in jobs in public and private non-profit agencies. Most youth are 14-15 years old and qualify for the school free lunch program or are economically disadvantaged. Youth work in jobs such as recreational aides and office assistants. They are paid minimum wage (\$5.15/hour) for 20-30 hours/week and are placed at City work sites such as Libraries, Recreation Centers, the Print Shop, and the Health Department. Private non-profit work sites include Inova Alexandria Hospital, the United Way, and the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA).

A special program for youth with disabilities has been developed with the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) to assist 10 youth with on-the-job training. DRS supports the costs of individual job coach counselors for these clients while Teenswork! covers the wages for the youth and other program costs.

The funding to maintain the FY 2007 Summer Youth Program at the FY 2006 service level is \$155,000 and is included in the City Manager's Proposed Budget. Program funds include \$86,700 to subsidize the wages of the youth; \$50,000 to support five seasonal Youth Advisor staff positions; \$11,300 for supportive services such as clothing and transportation assistance for youth and \$7,000 for operational costs such as materials/supplies. The seasonal Youth Advisors are employed for 16-27 weeks and handle case management and develop jobs in the private sector to provide an additional 150 youth with employment. The private sector jobs for youth are full or part-time jobs and include positions such as sales associates, food servers, office assistants, and computer/fiber optic specialists. The jobs pay from \$5.15/hour on up with last summer's average wage at \$7.35/hour. The youth in these private sector jobs are 16-21 years old and meet income guidelines. Local businesses pay the wages of the youth hired while City program funds support case management and operational costs for them. Local employers include Hecht's, Holiday Inn, Jimmy John's, and Dimensions International Inc., as previous business partners.