

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 18, 2007

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: PROPOSED REAL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX RATES ORDINANCE AND PROPOSED EFFECTIVE TAX RATE INCREASE FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2007 (FISCAL YEAR 2008)

ISSUE: Proposed real and personal property tax rates

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council: (1) hold the public hearings on the "effective tax rate increase," as well as the public hearings on the ordinances which will set the 2007 real estate tax rate, as well as the 2007 personal property tax rates, and (2) hold the second reading and final passage on Monday, May 7, 2007, in conjunction with the adoption of the FY 2008 budget.

DISCUSSION: Under the requirements of the Virginia Code, City Council must annually establish a real property tax rate and personal property tax rates for each calendar year. The Virginia Code also establishes certain advertising and public hearing requirements prior to the adoption of these property tax rates. One of these State law requirements is that the rates that Council chooses to advertise are the highest rates Council can consider adopting.

Given these advertising and public hearing requirements of the State Code, the following is the schedule for calendar year 2007 (FY 2008):

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
April 10:	Introduction of tax ordinances (held)
April 13:	Advertisement of public hearings on effective tax rate increase and property tax rates ordinances (done)
April 24:	Public hearing on the effective property tax rate increase and property tax rate ordinances
May 7:	Final adoption of the budget and tax ordinances

It should be noted, as further discussed below, that the State Code requires a separate public hearing (i.e., separate from the budget hearing) on the real property tax rate if the taxes levied for the year in which the proposed tax rate applies would increase by more than one percent (after the value of new construction has been deducted). This would be the case in CY 2007 because of the increased value of commercial properties.

Also, State law requires, in the circumstance of an increase in taxes levied in excess of 1%, to maintain or increase the current real property tax rate, that a special “notice of proposed real property tax increase” be placed in a local newspaper of general circulation. That separate hearing on the real property tax increase is planned to be held on April 24, with a special notice of the hearing date placed in the *Washington Times* on April 13 and the *Alexandria Gazette Packet* on April 19. (See Attachment I)

The total value of taxable real property within the City for 2007 has been assessed at \$34.2 billion including non-locally assessed properties. This reflects a 4.43% increase in total assessments. This increase was driven by a 13.3% increase in the value of commercial assessments plus an increase of 2.1% from new construction. This growth was tempered by a 2.9% drop in the average residential assessment. At the current tax rate of 81.5 cents, this would result in a drop in the average residential tax bill of \$124. At the advertised (i.e., maximum) tax rate of 83.5 cents, the average residential bill would drop \$22.

The FY 2008 Proposed Operating Budget, which was prepared under the 2.25% budget increase target set by Council, reflected no change to the real property tax rate of \$0.815 per \$100 of assessed value. The proposed budget and the proposed ordinance assumed the continuation of the dedication of 1 cent of the real estate tax rate for affordable housing, as well as one percent real estate tax revenues for open space.

The FY 2008 Proposed Operating budget also reflected no change to the various personal property tax rates (\$4.75 per \$100 of assessed value for tangible personal property, \$3.55 per \$100 of assessed value for vehicles with specially designed equipment for use by the physically disabled, \$4.50 per \$100 of assessed value for machinery and tools used in mining and manufacturing businesses, and \$0.01 per \$100 of assessed value for privately owned boats and watercraft that are used for recreational purposes only). The attached ordinance also assumes that the personal property rates for machinery and tools, specially equipped vehicles for the disabled, and boats would not change for 2007. If Council wished to establish a lower personal property tax rate for clean special fuel vehicles, it could choose to do so as part of the add/delete process and then take action officially creating that new tax classification on May 7 when all the property tax rates are set.

In order to determine real estate tax rate alternatives that Council could consider, the following chart has been prepared which shows four alternative rates and what the revenue impact would be of those rates. Based on the advertised rate, Council may consider any rate at 83.5 cents or below in increments of no smaller than 0.1 cent per increment.

FY 2008 PROPOSED REVENUE	SUMMARY OF REAL ESTATE TAX REVENUE OPTIONS	RATE PER \$100 ASSESSED VALUE	REVENUE IMPACT FY 2007*	REVENUE IMPACT FY 2008
\$273.0 million**	Keep the rate constant.	81.5 cents	\$0	\$0.0
	Increase the rate by 1 cent	82.5 cents	\$1.7 million	\$3.4 million
	Increase the rate by 1.5 cents	83.0 cents	\$2.6 million	\$5.1 million
	Increase the rate by 2.0 cents (advertised)	83.5 cents	\$3.4 million	\$6.8 million

*A change to the tax rate would generate additional FY 2007 revenue which would be available in the form of fund balances for possible designation. The fund balances could be designated for some or all of the following: FY 2008 operating budget, the FY 2008 CIP, for other special needs, could be left as an undesignated fund balance, or could be designated to help fund retiree health and life insurance benefits.

**Includes increase of 1.4% in FY 2008 estimated tax assessments. The FY 2008 Proposed Budget assumed no increase in tax assessments.

With the personal property tax rates advertised at the current rates, no options which would increase revenues above the proposed budget can be considered.

OTHER REVENUE ALTERNATIVES: City Council discussed other revenue alternatives at its April 10 meeting. Budget memo #14 included additional information on real estate and personal property tax rates, as well as other possible tax rate and fee changes. If Council wished to change any of these other tax or fee rates, Council was asked to direct staff to prepare any tax ordinances requiring introduction on April 24, with hearing and adoption on May 7 to finance the FY 2008 budget, which is scheduled for adoption on May 7. The only change that Council directed staff to prepare was for an increase to administrative fees on delinquent personal property tax payments. A separate docket item is being prepared for that purpose.

FISCAL IMPACT: An increase in the real estate tax rate from \$0.815 to \$0.835 on each \$100 of assessed value is expected to generate an additional \$3.4 million in FY 2007 and an additional \$6.8 million in FY 2008.

ATTACHMENT:

- (I) Effective Tax Rate Advertisement
- (II) Proposed Ordinance

STAFF:

- Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager
- Bruce Johnson, Director, Office of Management and Budget
- Laura Triggs, Acting Director, Finance
- Eric Eisinger, Budget Analyst, Office of Management and Budget



The City of Alexandria, Virginia
Notice of Proposed Budget
For the Year Ending June 30, 2008

The City Manager has recommended a General Operating budget totaling \$508.9 million and an All Funds budget totaling \$618.9 million. A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for FY 2008 to FY 2013 has been proposed which totals \$383.4 million for this six year period, including \$64.9 million in proposed funding for FY 2008. The proposed budget and CIP both address the City Council's Strategic Plan in providing to meet the goals of:

1. Quality development and redevelopment that is well planned and consistent with Alexandria's vision.
2. An integrated, multi-modal transportation system that efficiently and effectively gets people from point "A" to point "B."
3. A caring community that is diverse and affordable.
4. A strong local economy that is growing in varied small businesses and job opportunities.
5. A City that respects, protects and enhances the natural environment.
6. A City government that is financially sustainable, efficient and community oriented.
7. Public schools that are among the best in Northern Virginia (in partnership with the Alexandria Schools).
8. A safe community maintained by high quality public safety organizations and judicial administrations.

The proposed budget and CIP are available for public review in the City's libraries and online at
www.alexandriava.gov/budget.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

This notice is required by State law. The tax rate was proposed in the City Manager's budget at \$0.815 to fund the FY 2008 Proposed Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program. The City Council has authorized a proposed tax rate for advertising purposes of \$0.835. The tax rate may not exceed \$0.835, it could be less, and it will not be set until May 7, 2007.

The City of Alexandria proposes to increase the current property tax levies.

1. **Assessment Increase:** Total assessed value of real property, excluding additional assessments for new construction, or improvement to property, exceeds last year's total assessed value of real property by 2.07 percent.
2. **Lowered Rate Necessary to Offset Increased Assessment:** The tax rate which would levy the same amount of real estate tax as last year, when multiplied by the new total assessed value of real estate with the exclusions mentioned above, would be \$0.798 per \$100 of assessed value. This rate will be known as the "lowered tax rate."
3. **Effective Rate Increase:** The City of Alexandria proposes to advertise a tax rate of \$0.835 per \$100 of assessed value. The difference between the lowered tax rate and the advertised tax rate would be \$0.037 per \$100, or a 4.6 percent increase. This difference will be known as the "effective tax rate increase." Individual property taxes may, however, increase at a percentage greater than or less than the above percentage.

4. **Proposed Total Budget Increase:** Based on the advertised real property tax rate and changes in other revenues, the total budget of the City of Alexandria (including the General Fund and all Special Revenue grant funds and other sources) will exceed last year's by 2.2 percent.
5. **Impact of Tax Exempt Properties:** For 2007, the total estimated value of taxable and non-taxable locally and non-locally assessed real property within the City is \$38.8 billion, with \$1.1 billion as the estimate of the value of non-governmental tax exempt property, \$3.5 billion as the estimate of the value of governmental tax exempt property, and \$34.2 billion as the value of taxable property. The estimated amount of forgone annual real estate taxes from non-governmental tax exempt property is \$8.9 million at the proposed tax rate of \$0.835.

A public hearing on the increase will be held on Tuesday, April 24, 2007, at 7:00 p.m., at the City Council Chamber of City Hall, 301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia. The hearing shall be open to the public. The governing body shall provide persons desiring to be heard an opportunity to present oral testimony within such reasonable time limits as shall be determined by the governing body.

All persons wishing to speak to this issue may contact the City Clerk and Clerk of Council located on the second floor, Room 2300, City Hall, or may appear and be heard after completing a Speakers form before Council.

Persons with disabilities who wish to request accommodation for this public hearing should contact the Office of the City Clerk and Clerk of Council at 838-4550 (TTY/TDD 838-5056) prior to Thursday, April 19, 2007, if possible.

Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements, or who require language translation services to participate in the City Council meeting may call the City Clerk and Clerk of Council's Office at 838-4500. We request that you provide a 48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made.

19
4-24-07 ~~116~~
~~4-10-07~~

Introduction and first reading:
Public hearing:
Second reading and enactment:

4/10/07
4/24/07
5/7/07

INFORMATION ON PROPOSED ORDINANCE

Title

AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain Section 3-2-181 (LEVIED; AMOUNT) of Division 1 (REAL ESTATE), and Section 3-2-221 (LEVIED ON TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY OTHER THAN MOBILE HOMES, AUTOMOBILES, TRUCKS, ANTIQUE MOTOR VEHICLES, TAXICABS, MOTOR VEHICLES WITH SPECIALLY DESIGNED EQUIPMENT FOR USE BY THE HANDICAPPED, MOTORCYCLES, CAMPERS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, BOATS AND TRAILERS; AMOUNT), Section 3-2-222 (LEVIED ON MACHINERY AND TOOLS USED IN MINING OR MANUFACTURING BUSINESS; AMOUNT), Section 3-2-223 (LEVIED ON MOBILE HOMES; AMOUNT) and Section 3-2-224 (LEVIED ON AUTOMOBILES, TRUCKS, TRAILERS, SEMI-TRAILERS, ANTIQUE MOTOR VEHICLES, TAXICABS, MOTORCYCLES, CAMPERS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, BOATS AND TRAILERS; AMOUNT) of Division 3 (TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY AND MACHINERY AND TOOLS), all of Article M (LEVY AND COLLECTION OF PROPERTY TAXES), Chapter 2 (TAXATION), Title 3 (FINANCE, TAXATION AND PROCUREMENT) of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981.

Summary

The proposed ordinance sets the city's 2007 tax rates for real property and tangible personal property. The proposed ordinance sets the 2007 real property tax rate at \$0.____ on each \$100 of assessed value, compared with the 2006 rate of \$0.815. Personal property tax rates are unchanged from 2006, except for the rates for motor vehicles and business tangible personal property where a 2007 rate of \$____ is proposed compared with the 2006 rate of \$4.75. After the first reading and public hearing, City Council has the authority to lower the tax rates set forth in the proposed ordinance, but not to set higher rates.

Sponsor

Staff

Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager
Laura Triggs, Acting Director of Finance
Bruce Johnson, Director of Management and Budget
Eric Eisinger, Budget Analyst
Roderick B. Williams, Assistant City Attorney

Authority

Article X, § 4, Virginia Constitution
§§ 2.02(a)(1), 6.15 Alexandria City Charter

Estimated Costs of Implementation

None

Attachments in Addition to Proposed Ordinance and its Attachments (if any)

None

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain Section 3-2-181 (LEVIED; AMOUNT) of Division 1 (REAL ESTATE), and Section 3-2-221 (LEVIED ON TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY OTHER THAN MOBILE HOMES, AUTOMOBILES, TRUCKS, ANTIQUE MOTOR VEHICLES, TAXICABS, MOTOR VEHICLES WITH SPECIALLY DESIGNED EQUIPMENT FOR USE BY THE HANDICAPPED, MOTORCYCLES, CAMPERS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, BOATS AND TRAILERS; AMOUNT), Section 3-2-222 (LEVIED ON MACHINERY AND TOOLS USED IN MINING OR MANUFACTURING BUSINESS; AMOUNT), Section 3-2-223 (LEVIED ON MOBILE HOMES; AMOUNT) and Section 3-2-224 (LEVIED ON AUTOMOBILES, TRUCKS, TRAILERS, SEMI-TRAILERS, ANTIQUE MOTOR VEHICLES, TAXICABS, MOTORCYCLES, CAMPERS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, BOATS AND TRAILERS; AMOUNT) of Division 3 (TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY AND MACHINERY AND TOOLS), all of Article M (LEVY AND COLLECTION OF PROPERTY TAXES), Chapter 2 (TAXATION), Title 3 (FINANCE, TAXATION AND PROCUREMENT) of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981.

THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

Section 1. That Section 3-2-181 of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended, be, and the same hereby is, amended and reordained to read as follows:

Sec. 3-2-181 Levied; amount.

There shall be levied and collected for the calendar year ~~2006~~ 2007 on all real estate located within the territorial boundaries of the city and subject to taxation for city purposes under the constitution and laws of this state and city, a tax of ~~\$.815~~ \$ on each \$100 of the assessed value thereof, for the support of the city government, for the payment of principal and interest of the city debt and for other municipal expenses and purposes.

Section 2. That Section 3-2-221 of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended, be, and the same hereby is, amended and reordained to read as follows:

Sec. 3-2-221 Levied on tangible personal property other than mobile homes, automobiles, trucks, antique motor vehicles, taxicabs, motor vehicles with specially designed equipment for use by the handicapped, motorcycles, campers and other recreational vehicles, boats and boat trailers; amount.

There shall be levied and collected for the calendar year ~~2006~~ 2007 on all tangible personal property, other than mobile homes, automobiles, trucks, antique motor vehicles, taxicabs, motor vehicles with specially designed equipment for use by the handicapped, motorcycles, campers and other recreational vehicles, boats and trailers, owned or held by residents or citizens of the city or located within the territorial boundaries of the city or otherwise having a situs within the city and subject to taxation for city purposes under the constitution and laws of this state and city, a tax of ~~\$4.75~~ \$ on every \$100 of assessed value thereof, for the support of the city

1 government, for the payment of principal and interest of the city debt and for other municipal
2 expenses and purposes.

3
4 Section 3. That Section 3-2-222 of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia,
5 1981, as amended, be, and the same hereby is, amended and reordained to read as follows:

6
7 Sec. 3-2-222 Levied on machinery and tools used in mining or manufacturing business;
8 amount.

9
10 There shall be levied and collected for the calendar year ~~2006~~ 2007 on all machinery and
11 tools used in a mining or manufacturing business taxable on capital and subject to taxation for
12 city purposes under the constitution and laws of this state and city, a tax of \$4.50 on each \$100 of
13 assessed value thereof, for the support of the city government, for the payment of principal and
14 interest of the city debt and for other municipal expenses and purposes.

15
16 Section 4. That Section 3-2-223 of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia,
17 1981, as amended, be, and the same hereby is, amended and reordained to read as follows:

18
19 Sec. 3-2-223 Levied on mobile homes; amount.

20
21 There shall be levied and collected for the calendar year ~~2006~~ 2007 on all vehicles without
22 motor power, used or designed to be used as mobile homes as defined in section 46.2-100 of the
23 Code of Virginia, owned or held by residents or citizens of the city or located within the
24 territorial boundaries of the city or otherwise having a situs within the city and subject to taxation
25 for city purposes under the constitution and laws of this state and city, a tax of ~~\$-.815~~ \$__ on each
26 \$100 of assessed value thereof, for the support of the city government, for the payment of
27 principal and interest of the city debt and for other municipal expenses and purposes.

28
29 Section 5. That Section 3-2-224 of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia,
30 1981, as amended, be, and the same hereby is, amended and reordained to read as follows:

31
32 Sec. 3-2-224 Levied on automobiles, trucks, trailers, semi-trailers, antique motor
33 vehicles, taxicabs, motorcycles, campers and other recreational vehicles,
34 boats and trailers; amount.

35
36 (a) Except as provided in subsections (b), (c) and (d), there shall be levied and
37 collected for the calendar year ~~2006~~ 2007 on all automobiles, trucks, trailers, semi-trailers,
38 antique motor vehicles (as defined in section 46.2-100 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as
39 amended, which may be used for general transportation purposes as provided in subsection C of
40 section 46.2-730 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended), taxicabs, motorcycles, campers and
41 other recreational vehicles, boats and boat trailers owned or held by residents or citizens of the
42 city or located within the territorial boundaries of the city or otherwise having a situs for taxation
43 in the city, a tax of ~~\$4.75~~ \$__ on every \$100 of assessed value thereof, for the support of the city

1 government, for the payment of principal and interest of the city debt and for other municipal
2 expenses and purposes.

3
4 (b) There shall be levied on and collected for the calendar year ~~2006~~ 2007 on all
5 automobiles, trucks, trailers and semi-trailers with a gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or
6 more which are used to transport property for hire by a motor carrier engaged in interstate
7 commerce, and are owned or held by residents or citizens of the city, are located within the
8 territorial boundaries of the city or otherwise have a situs for taxation in the city, a tax of \$4.50
9 on every \$100 of assessed value thereof, for the support of the city government, for the payment
10 of principal and interest of the city debt and for other municipal expenses and purposes.

11
12 (c) There shall be levied on and collected for the calendar year ~~2006~~ 2007 on all
13 automobiles and trucks which are equipped with specially designed equipment for use by the
14 handicapped and are owned or held by residents or citizens of the city, are located within the
15 territorial boundaries of the city or otherwise have a situs for taxation in the city, a tax of \$3.55
16 on every \$100 of assessed value thereof, for the support of the city government, for the payment
17 of principal and interest of the city debt and for other municipal expenses and purposes.

18
19 (d) There shall be levied on and collected for the calendar year ~~2006~~ 2007 on all
20 privately owned pleasure boats and watercraft, which are used for recreational purposes only, and
21 are owned or held by residents or citizens of the city, or are located within the territorial
22 boundaries of the city or otherwise have a situs for taxation in the city, a tax of \$.01 on every
23 \$100 of assessed value thereof, for the support of the city government, for the payment of
24 principal and interest of the city debt and for other municipal expenses and purposes.

25
26 Section 6. That this ordinance shall become effective January 1, 2007, *nunc pro*
27 *tunc*.

28
29 WILLIAM D. EUILLE
30 Mayor

31
32 Introduction: 4/10/07
33 First Reading: 4/10/07
34 Publication:
35 Public Hearing:
36 Second Reading:
37 Final Passage:



<cbcaples@comcast.net>

04/29/2007 05:19 PM

Please respond to
<cbcaples@comcast.net>

To <alexvamayor@aol.com>, <macdonaldcouncil@msn.com>,
<timothylovain@aol.com>, <councilmangaines@aol.com>,
<council@krupicka.com>, <delpepper@aol.com>,

cc

bcc

Subject COA Contact Us: city support for the Child and Family Network
Centers

19820

4-24-07

Time: [Sun Apr 29, 2007 17:19:54] IP Address: [68.83.213.170]

Response requested:

First Name: Cynthia
Last Name: Caples
Street Address: 100 W. Uhler Terrace
City: Alexandria
State: VA
Zip: 22301
Phone: 703-519-0761
Email Address: cbcaples@comcast.net
Subject: city support for the Child and Family Network
Centers

Comments:

I strongly urge the City of Alexandria to at minimum continue and preferably to increase its support for the Child and Family Network Centers (CFNC), as a constructive way to help vulnerable members of our community develop and achieve independence, rather than being driven back on the inadequate resources of neighborhoods with some of the highest concentrations of poverty in Northern Virginia. We need to help these people help build their, and our, community. Thank you for your consideration. It's a clear-cut case of mutual interest and mutual benefit.

Sincerely,

Dr. Cynthia B. Caples



<bmason@cfnc-online.org>

04/27/2007 04:02 PM

Please respond to
<bmason@cfnc-online.org>

19:20
4-24-07

To <alexvamayor@aol.com>, <macdonaldcouncil@msn.com>, <timothylovain@aol.com>, <councilmangaines@aol.com>, <council@krupicka.com>, <delperpepper@aol.com>

cc

bcc

Subject COA Contact Us: Additional Funding for Children who are most at-risk



Time: [Fri Apr 27, 2007 16:02:50] IP Address: [68.83.213.47]

Response requested:

First Name: Barbara
Last Name: Mason
Street Address: Child and Family Network Centers
3701A Mt. Vernon Ave
City: Alexandria
State: VA
Zip: 22305
Phone: 703/836-0214
Email Address: bmason@cfnc-online.org
Subject: Additional Funding for Children who are most at-risk
Dear Mayor Euille, Vice-Mayor Macdonald and Council Members ,

Poverty is the #1 risk factor for school failure, and there are still hundreds of children living in Alexandria who enter kindergarten without the preparation they need to achieve school success.

One in four poor children in the US has at least one foreign-born parent, and two-thirds of first-generation children living in poverty are Hispanic. Research has validated the long-term benefits of a high-quality early education for poor children and also suggests that those children in greatest need (including Latinos) tend to make the greatest gains.

Early education programs have the potential to address the needs of poor Latino children, and yet white, middle-class children are far more likely to attend quality early childhood programs than their disadvantaged peers. This national trend is mirrored in the city of Alexandria where, according

to a report generated from the ACPS division of Monitoring and Evaluation Services (attached), 60% of the children who did not attend preschool before entering kindergarten in FY2005-06 spoke a language other than English at home.

ACPS has been collecting data on the preschool status of children entering kindergarten over the past few years. A Profile of the 2005-2006 Kindergarten Students with no Preschool was created in the fall of 2006 in an effort to identify which children were not attending preschool and what the contributing factors are.

Report highlights indicate a decline in the number of children who did not attend preschool prior to entering ACPS from 53% to 35% over the same period of time in which CFNC increased its enrollment by nearly 60%. The report highlights also indicated that:

- Students who did not attend preschool lived disproportionately along the western border of Alexandria, with a cluster in the north on either side of Mount Vernon Ave. and along Duke St.
- Students in Home Care settings were disproportionately Hispanic, spoke a language other than English at home and were eligible for free/reduced-price lunch by USDA standards.
- Students in Home Care were less prepared when they entered kindergarten, scored 10-26 points lower on the PALS than did children who attended preschool and were less likely to attend the ACPS Kindergarten Prep Program.
- Students who did not participate in center-based programs were more likely to be retained in kindergarten (8%) and referred for summer school (40%).

There is the perception that all poor children have the opportunity to participate in early childhood programs through either the Fee Subsidy Program or Head Start. What people don't understand is that the Fee Subsidy Program is not an education program, and many children are not eligible because their parents: are not able to document their employment, cannot provide a lease with their on it, work unconventional hours, may be looking for work and/or are unable to document their child's paternity.

In FY2005 and FY2006, CFNC tried to enroll over 200 families in the Fee Subsidy Program in an effort to draw down federal dollars to help support our programs. Only 11 families in 2005 and 7 in 2006 were deemed eligible. Although I was thrilled

to hear that City Council is considering putting additional funds into the FY2008 budget for the Fee Subsidy Program, I am deeply concerned that this will not substantially impact the educational outcomes of children from immigrant families who are at serious risk of school failure.

Comments:

Most of the children that attend our programs are American citizens whose parents are unable to access early childhood programs, which are most often in institutional settings with little or no bilingual staff. CFNC's programs are all located in neighborhoods where there are high concentrations of families who are living in poverty, speak English as a second language and have few if any preschool options.

CFNC's neighborhood locations give us a very important advantage over other organizations that offer early intervention, health and family support services. We are located in communities where the children and families we are trying to reach live. Where residents are frequently distrustful of outside organizations, CFNC is viewed as an accepted member of the community.

CFNC's core expertise is two-fold:

- 1) We reach families that are most often left behind and not served by other programs.
- 2) We provide a full range of preschool, family and health services that are based on the needs of our clients, help families move toward self-sufficiency and are offered free of charge.

I hope that the members of the City Council will read the Profile of the 2005-2006 Kindergarten Students with no Preschool created by ACPS and consider the findings as you contemplate how additional dollars can best impact the educational outcomes of Alexandria's most vulnerable young citizens. "The themes observed are compelling and in many cases reinforce the conceptions of the Early Childhood Taskforce and research that has been conducted about the advantages of a quality preschool education for children, especially less advantaged children."

I hope you will also consider Virginia's Start Strong model, which requires cities/counties to "develop a plan for single point of entry for recruitment and enrollment of preschool children in a community, reducing duplication and maximizing all other public funding, including federal dollars" (Virginia Department of Education, Preschool Pilot Grants for Fiscal Year 2008,

March 2007).

Community-based outreach and preschool fairs could be conducted throughout the city, particularly in low-income neighborhoods where children who are less likely to be enrolled in center-based care live. Families could be screened by eligibility workers from DHS and then guided through their options. Head Start classrooms could be filled first, to maximize federal dollars, and families who were deemed eligible for the Fee Subsidy Program would be able to meet with representatives from a variety of Childcare Centers and choose whichever center best met their needs. Income-eligible families that were not able to meet the eligibility guidelines for either Head Start or the Fee Subsidy Program could then be referred to CFNC. However, this can only work if there are additional dollars available to help cover the costs of our program.

CFNC has steadily worked to fill the educational gaps in the city over past five years, but over the same fiscal period, CFNC has not received a corresponding increase in the level of funding from the Alexandria Children's Fund. Unfortunately, CFNC has reached a point where financial burdens are mounting. Without additional support from the city, CFNC will have to cut back on the number of children we serve.

CFNC has the vision, leadership, proven program outcomes and the opportunity to create lasting change in the lives of even more 3- and 4-year-old children living in poverty in Alexandria. However, the best package of comprehensive services in the world will not help one child succeed if CFNC does not have enough funding to sustain our efforts.

Sincerely,

Barbara Mason

Executive Director



<peter.balas@acps.k12.va.us>

04/26/2007 06:56 PM

Please respond to
<peter.balas@acps.k12.va.us>

To <alexvamayor@aol.com>, <macdonaldcouncil@msn.com>,
<timothylovain@aol.com>, <councilmangaines@aol.com>,
<council@krupicka.com>, <delperpe@aol.com>,

cc

bcc

Subject COA Contact Us: ACPS and the Budget

19:20
4-24-07

Time: [Thu Apr 26, 2007 18:56:11] IP Address: [68.49.185.2]

Response requested:

First Name: Peter
Last Name: Balas
Street Address: 142 Bates St NW
City: Washington
State: dc
Zip: 20001
Phone: 202-257-0895
Email Address: peter.balas@acps.k12.va.us
Subject: ACPS and the Budget

Comments: Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

I am writing today as an employee of the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) and chairperson of the Teacher Advisory Council requesting that you fully fund the ACPS School Board budget. As a teacher at Minnie Howard for the past six years, I realize the importance of ACPS to remain competitive with surrounding jurisdictions. If you ask ACPS to cut more money out of its budget, the School Board will have no choice but to look to teacher salaries and benefits. The Superintendent has already made major cuts and proposed no new initiatives. Our budget cannot sustain additional cuts.

Please show your support for Alexandria's teachers and students by fully funding the proposed budget.

Thanks for your time,
Peter Balas
Minnie Howard School

19820
4-24-07



<danielle.routhouska@acps.k12.va.us>

04/26/2007 07:47 PM

Please respond to
<danielle.routhouska@acps.k12.va.us>

To <alexvamayor@aol.com>, <macdonaldcouncil@msn.com>, <timothylovain@aol.com>, <councilmangaines@aol.com>, <council@krupicka.com>, <delperpe@aol.com>

cc

bcc

Subject COA Contact Us: SUPPORT BUDGET

Time: [Thu Apr 26, 2007 19:47:10] IP Address: [69.143.59.35]

Response requested:

First Name: Danielle

Last Name: Routhouska

Street Address: 1349 N Van Dorn Street

City: Alexandria

State: VA

Zip: 22304

Phone: 703-343-5382

Email Address: danielle.routhouska@acps.k12.va.us

Subject: SUPPORT BUDGET

Comments:

Dear Mayor, Vice-Mayor and Council Members,
Good evening, I am writing to you as a resident of Alexandria City. A special education teacher and member of William Ramsay's Teacher Advisory Committee. As you know the majority of the budget is teachers' salaries and health care. Our health care has already gone up. I hope that you fully support Superintendent Perry's budget for 2007/2008 school year and not take away our well deserved salary step increase. The cost of living is expensive as you all know. Alexandria City schools are a major factor to residents and selling point to people considering moving to Alexandria. Teachers do not deserve to be penalized because City Council does not want to support Superintendent Perry's budget.

Sincerely,
Danielle Routhouska



<lesliejlong@hotmail.com>

03/26/2007 11:03 PM

Please respond to
<lesliejlong@hotmail.com>

To <alexvamayor@aol.com>, <macdonaldcouncil@msn.com>, <timothylovain@aol.com>, <councilmangaines@aol.com>, <council@krupicka.com>, <delpepper@aol.com>

cc

bcc

Subject COA Contact Us: ACPS Budget

19820
4-24-07



Time: [Mon Mar 26, 2007 22:03:08] IP Address: [72.83.181.245]

Response requested:

First Name: Leslie

Last Name: Cox

Street Address: 53 Skyhill Road, #104

City: Alexandria

State: VA

Zip: 22314

Phone: 703-739-1513

Email Address: lesliejlong@hotmail.com

Subject: ACPS Budget

Dear City Council:

I am a parent of three children who will be entering the Alexandria Public Schools over the next several years.

I am writing to ask that the Council please fully fund the ACPS budget. Alexandria has made great strides in recent years toward improving our public schools and we should continue to support that investment.

Comments:

Cuts to the school budget would likely affect teacher salaries and class size, areas that have been the cornerstones to our commitment to quality. We are a small system, and to stay competitive with Fairfax and Arlington, and to meet the needs of all our students, we cannot lapse in our support.

Strong schools positively affect all Alexandria residents, not just those currently in the system. Please honor the commitment to our schools so that Alexandria continues to be a community in which people want to live.

Thank you for your tireless work on our behalf.

Sincerely,
Leslie Cox, parent and President of Valley Drive
Preschool Board