

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 6, 2007

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 5 : BUDGET QUESTIONS & ANSWERS #1-3

In an effort to more respond more timely and efficiently to Council requests for FY 2008 budget information, OMB will utilize a Questions & Answers format for questions that can be adequately answered with short responses. This will hopefully speed up responses by requiring less administrative time for each response. An indexed list of Council questions and answers will be maintained on the OMB website. Council members will receive email notification each time it is updated, and Council members who wish to receive paper copies will be provided print outs of each update.

OMB will continue to provide formal budget memos for complex issues that require substantial amounts of information and discussion, or have charts and graphs that are more difficult to transmit in a Questions and Answers format.

OMB will also continue to bring hard copies of all budget memos and the Questions & Answers document to all Council budget work sessions.

Please find attached the March 6, 2007 version of the Questions & Answer list.

Attachment: FY 2008 Budget Questions & Answers

FY 2008 Proposed Budget Questions & Answers

Q&A #1: The Citizen Corps Council has identified the distribution of Be Ready plans to every Alexandria household as a key initiative. Can staff comment on the cost to complete such a project and potential grant or private money to support such an effort?

The Citizens Corps Council (CCC) launched the "Be Ready, Alexandria" campaign in September 2005, with the goal of educating residents and businesses in emergency preparedness. Volunteers were to distribute literature to Alexandria's 65,000 households and 8,000 businesses. The program was funded over a three-year period (FY 2005-FY 2007) at approximately \$25,000 per year. Initial fund-raising efforts to offset the cost were not successful, so the City paid for the cost of literature and materials. To date, approximately 20,000 packets have been distributed. Due to difficulty in sustaining volunteer support for the actual distribution, the CCC is proposing to examine the method of distribution and develop a new plan, while they continue to explore other sources of funding. The FY 2008 proposed budget includes \$31,640, of which \$5,000 is an adjustment to maintain current services in FY 2008 to make up for a reduction in federal funding. The budget includes operating supplies and materials for emergency preparedness outreach, which staff believes is sufficient to continue distributing packets in for FY 2008.

Q&A #2: How does the current budget respond to the concerns raised by East Linden and many other Alexandria residents that have experienced dramatic flooding and wish to see improvements to our storm water management system? What options do we have to speed this process up?

The proposed budget includes \$750,000 each year from FY 2008 through FY 2011 to perform a city-wide storm sewer analysis to determine capacities in the existing storm sewer systems. This funding is in response to concerns raised by the residents of East Linden and other residents who experienced flooding during the severe rain events in 2003 and 2006. The analysis will be prioritized based on areas of known flooding, such as East Linden. The analysis will require modeling of the entire sewer system and will take at least a year of work before the first areas have been analyzed. The funding does not include any improvements to areas determined to be under-capacity. As the analyses are completed, staff will be identifying areas that need to be improved and will request funding for these improvements through future CIP budget requests. A stormwater utility, if implemented, could provide major funding for these yet-to-be identified improvements that could be relatively costly.

There is no way to speed up this capacity analysis process because of the extensive data collection and modeling required to complete the study. If all of the money were approved in the same year (instead of over four years), more of the City could be analyzed at one time, but do not have staff resources to manage the entire \$3 million

project at one time. There would not be a three year gain in time if the funding were not phased. However, the studies will be done in geographic phases so projects can be identified and funded from Phase I before Phases II or III are complete.

Q&A #3 - Residents of Alexandria have expressed a strong desire to see our City address environmental concerns. Can staff please comment on the costs associated with completing phase two and three of the Environmental Action Plan?

Phase I of the development of the Environmental Action Plan was funded from the FY 2007 Council contingent reserve account in an amount not to exceed \$15,000. A preliminary estimate developed in January for Phases II and III was \$46,000, with an additional \$10,000 to \$15,000 to fund the actual summit itself. There have been no subsequent changes to those estimates. The FY 2008 Proposed Budget includes \$375,000 in undesignated Contingent Reserves for City-wide needs. Council could consider designating \$61,000 in Contingent Reserves for FY 2008 to fund Phases II and III. The following is a description of each phase of the project.

Phase I a: Development an inventory of existing programs and policies

Phase I b: Collect information on relevant plans, model programs and practices from other jurisdictions that may be applicable in the City

Phase II: Prepare a Draft Environmental Action Plan for the City

Phase III: Design a community outreach plan and Facilitate an Eco-City Community Summit

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 7, 2007

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 6 : METHOD AND TIMING OF REQUESTING ADDS OF MORE THAN \$50,000

Budget Resolution 2205 establishes the procedures for this Council to use in adopting the Operating Budget and the Capital Improvement Program. This memorandum describes more specifically how to submit "adds" to the City Manager's budget of more than \$50,000. The definition of "adds" includes all potential additions to any element of the City's FY 2008 proposed budget, including the City's operating, budget, City and School COLA, City transfer to the School's operating budget, and City and School capital improvement projects.

Background:

One of the provisions of Resolution 2205, newly adopted by this Council, is the requirement in section (c)(4) that:

"It shall not be in order for any member of the Alexandria City Council to initiate any amendment to the proposed budget of the City of Alexandria which would increase any specific budget outlay by more than \$50,000, unless written public notice of the member's intent to offer such an amendment, and a general description of the proposed amendment, is given to the City Manager and City Clerk at least one week prior to the spring budget public hearing."

Section (c)(4)(a) provides that:

"The provisions of this paragraph may be waived if the proposed amendment is raised by a member of the public at the spring budget public hearing (but not an amendment raised at the separate public hearing on the effective real estate tax) and at least three members of the Alexandria City Council formally request a budget memorandum from staff in regard to such proposed amendment within 3 days of the public hearing."

Suggested Methods and Timing for Submitting “Adds” of More than \$50,000:

This year the budget public hearing is scheduled for April 9, 2007. Therefore, Council members must submit notice of intent to request an amendment adding \$50,000 or more to the proposed budget by April 2, 2007.

One way for a member to submit such a notice is to ask a budget memo question to Bruce Johnson, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in the customary fashion via e-mail, memorandum or orally before the April 2nd deadline.

- The question could be more one of an informational nature -- "I am notifying you of my intent to request an add of \$___ for "_____(describing a project or activity)".
- Or it could be provisional, such as "I am notifying you of my provisional intent to request an add of \$_____ for "_____", pending receipt of any additional information, advice or comment City staff may wish to provide on this subject."
- Or it could simply say "I am considering asking for an add of \$_____".

A budget memo request, similarly could be submitted within the 3 day window by April 12, 2007, (three days after the budget public hearing) for "adds" to be submitted by 3 or more members that address a matter raised by a member of the public at the public hearing.

Because the requirement in Resolution 2205 is that “public notice” be given to the City Manager and City Clerk, a budget memo request is but one way that could be done. (If a budget memo request is sent to me or my staff, I will immediately forward it to the City Clerk as well. The City Clerk will immediately share any notice that office receives directly with me and my staff. You need not copy both of us.)

Whatever way we receive notice, City staff will post it by close of that business day on the OMB webpage in a special listing that identifies it as "Notifications Received from Council Members regarding requests for additional funds of \$50,000 or more for the FY 2008 Budget". City Council members will be noticed via e-mail of such a posting. A link to this posting will be shown on the City's main web page beginning on April 3, 2007, along with information on the upcoming public hearing on April 9, 2007.

Finally, any budget “adds” under \$50,000 can be requested by a member of Council by Wednesday, April 25, 2007. This will allow OMB time to list all such proposed “adds” (and corresponding “deletes”) in a summary budget memorandum for distribution to City Council on Friday, April 27, 2007, in preparation for the preliminary add-delete work session on Monday, April 30, 2007.

If you have any questions on these procedures, please contact Bruce Johnson at 703-838-4780.