



COA Contact Us: Duncan Library Hours

william.euille, frank.fannon, kerry.donley,
Allan Abramson to: alicia.hughes, council, delpepper, paulcsmedberg,
rose.boyd, jackie.henderson, elaine.scott,
rob.krupicka

03/11/2010 06:41 PM

Please respond to Allan Abramson

2
3-10-10

Time: [Thu Mar 11, 2010 18:41:27] Message ID: [19994]

Issue Type: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members
First Name: Allan
Last Name: Abramson
Street Address: 405 Underhill Place
City: Alexandria
State: VA
Zip: 22305
Phone: 703-684-7676
Email Address: allanlists@igc.org
Subject: Duncan Library Hours

I note that the proposed city budget will cut Duncan Library's hours, as well as other Library hours. While I recognize the need for cuts, reducing the hours on Mon-Thu to close at 7 pm instead of 9 pm would be self-defeating. Many city residents work or otherwise are busy during the day. We need evening hours to provide access to the collections. I urge you to reconsider these cuts. Note that I do not oppose opening one hour later on Fri and Sat, so some savings would be retained.

Many thanks
for your consideration.

Allan Abramson

#28
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3-10-10

March 10, 2010

Joseph Judson Smith, III
401 Wilkes Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Over the last 10 years rapidly rising assessments fueled by a real estate bubble created a flow of money that our city government found myriad ways to spend.

Our population increased 12% from the year 2000 to 2009. Population growth can serve as a rough benchmark for growth in city services, income, and expenses.

After adjusting for inflation, here is what I found

- General property taxes are up 45% about 4 times faster than population growth.
- City expenditures are up 54%, almost five times faster than population growth.
- Education expenses are up 50%, more than 4 times population growth, and yet serving slightly fewer students.

When all is said and done, are we four times better off as a city than in the year 2000? I don't think so. Certainly we are better off, but not four times better off.

So what happened along the way?

We need to take a macro view of our financial situation. Where does the eye wander first? To the biggest item in the budget.

That's staffing.

Here are some of the facts I found.

For every 1000 residents of the city, we have over 30 city employees. The ratio for the Virginia State government is 14 employees per 1000 residents. Nationwide it is about 17 per 1000. I got my numbers from the City of Alexandria 2009 Financial Report,ⁱ the State of Virginia 2009 Auditor of Public Accounts,ⁱⁱ and the US Census Bureau.ⁱⁱⁱ

If our payroll were to be in the same relationship to revenues as Fairfax and Arlington Counties, we would save \$85,000,000, over twice the projected budget deficit. I conclude we are way overstaffed.

Being overstaffed also contributes to a long-range challenge that is truly frightening: unfunded pension liabilities, which was a key ingredient in sinking General Motors.

According to the City Annual Financial Report, our unfunded pension liability for year ending June 2008 is almost one-half of the city government's assets and almost one-quarter of the city's revenue.^{iv} These numbers are dangerously high and do not take into the account the market decline of 2008 into 2009. In the year 2000 the unfunded liabilities for both assets and revenues were in the 5% range.

What can be done about the revenue side? In the year 2000 the ratio of residential assessments to commercial assessments was about 50/50. Now it is 56% residential and 44% commercial. Commercial square footage and residential units have increased about the same, 18% and 15% respectively since the year 2000.^v It is important for the city to become far more business friendly to grow the commercial sector. Going forward the commercial sector will require fewer services than growth in the residential sector.

The last point I want to make is to my fellow citizens whether you agree with my analysis and conclusions or not. In these difficult times please rise above any narrow, parochial, or special interests you may be here tonight to advocate or support. The amalgamation of all special interests create their own litmus tests for the members of the city council and box them into making decisions that are not in our long-term best interests.

ⁱ Page 128 and 133 of CAFR

ⁱⁱ Exhibit I, Comparative Report of Local Government Revenues and Expenditures

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www2.census.gov/govs/apes/08stva.txt>

^{iv} Pages 103, 118, and 122 of CAFR.

^v Page 137 CAFR and Vice Mayor's Office

**Joseph Judson Smith, III
401 Wilkes Street
Alexandria, VA 22314**

January 25, 2010

To Members of City Council, Mayor, and City Manager:

I have lived in Alexandria for 25 years and paid casual attention to the city's governance and management - until now. Upon hearing of our city's concern over a \$40,000,000 potential deficit, I became curious as to how such a prosperous community could find itself in such straits and decided to do some research.

I studied the city's annual report, the report of the State of Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts, reports from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and from the Securities and Exchange Commission. What I found was an astonishing lack of management, leadership, and governance in our city.

And here is why.

Growth of the population serves as a solid benchmark against which to compare growth in our government. Our population grew 11.6% between 2000 and 2009. How does an 11.6% growth in population manifest itself in growth of services and expenditures? One would assume they would be roughly in line, but not necessarily a direct correlation. After adjusting for inflation, here is what I found:

Per capita personal income up	17%	Great!
Total assessed property value up	106%	Great!
General property tax up	45%	Four times faster than population growth.
General property tax as percent of city revenue up	54%	Up 6.9 percentage points from 2000. Our city is more dependent on general property tax.
City payroll up	41%	Up 16% faster than revenues and hogs 68.1% of revenues.
Average city salary up	36%	The average city employee makes almost 10% more than the average citizen.
Total city expenditures up	54%	Up five times faster than population growth.
Expenditures per government employee up	49%	Easy to spend money that 's not yours. Four times the rate of population increase. Is the quality of life in the city four times better than in 2000?
City spending per citizen up	38%	Up from \$3,450 per citizen to \$4,775.
Education expenses up	50%	Four times faster than population growth and with a slightly smaller student population. Are our children four times more prepared or educated?
Expenditures per student up	47%	And one of the highest in the nation. Results?

This looks like a pretty dismal record of milking a cash cow rather than conserving resources.

And just what may be the root causes of this?

When looking at the breakdown by general departments, some areas of concentration stand out and point to areas needing thorough investigation by the city administration:

Department	Size in Millions	Percent Growth From 2000
Education	\$165.7	Is it top-heavy with administration? There has been virtually no student growth yet school payroll is up 41.1%
Public Safety	91.8	Up four times population growth? Are we four times safer than in 2000? Anecdotally I do not notice much difference.
General Government	77.6	This looks like general overhead to me. Should not have grown four times as fast as the population growth.

And where might be the best areas to look for savings? Payroll stands out. The city has increased payroll at 3.5 times the rate of increase in our population.

If our payroll in proportion to revenue were the same as ...	Savings to the city would be:
All Virginia Independent Cities	\$24,000,000
All Virginia Municipalities	\$9,500,000
Fairfax and Arlington Counties	\$85,000,000
Goldman Sachs	\$97,000,000

It appears that at a minimum no increase in compensation at any level of the government is justified and actually some tough decisions need to be made to get the payroll back in line with a minimum target of no more than 60% of revenues. If there is attrition as a result, so be it. We are in a tough economy with unemployment in Alexandria at 4.6% (U-3) and a projected U-6 rate of almost 8%. That compares to 6.2% and 10.6%, respectively, in the Metropolitan area. There are plenty of qualified people looking for jobs. It is time for the city employees to tighten their belts like the rest of us.

Raising taxes is an unacceptable solution. The job of the city government and leadership is to be faithful stewards of the resources of the city and its citizens. Constant vigilance to prevent the squandering of our resources and reducing costs must always be high on our leadership's agenda.

The city payroll is the largest target and opportunity. Where the rest comes from is a challenge and charge to the city government and leadership from the citizens of Alexandria.

We are in this boat together. To make sure my observations have the widest possible circulations for examination, criticism, and amplification, I shall share this letter with several local publications.

If you wish for me to share my spreadsheet analysis with you, I shall be glad to do so. Please email me at jossmith@mba1962.hbs.edu.

Sincerely,

J.J. Smith

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3-10-10

**Alexandria Commission on Aging
Testimony to the Budget Public Hearing on March 10, 2010**

Mr. Mayor and Members of City Council:

My name is Bill Harris. I chair the Commission on Aging, and speak today on its behalf. Council has supported our older Alexandrians for many, many years. You've made lives better for countless individuals. For this we thank you.

I call your attention to the budget for the Office on Aging and Adult Services. We have studied it carefully and, while we don't like the proposed cuts, we believe they have been fairly applied. We're aware of the difficulties you face again this year, however we ask that you do everything possible to preserve services to our most vulnerable older citizens.

We're grateful that a vacant bus driver position is being saved, even though it's not funded. Transportation is crucial to the well being of older adults, and its prudent to maintain this position and fill it when you can.

Our particular concern today is the "Companion Services" program. Most senior adults want to live in their own homes as long as possible. This is no less true for those who may be poor and/or frail. This care services program is vital in helping them do so, and the Commission supports our seniors in this desire.

The proposed budget has cut these care services by \$120,000. We all know the number of elderly people is rapidly increasing. Their need for care services will only go up, not down. In this time of increasing needs, further cuts to Companion Services could be very harmful. Please, don't cut this program any further.

We thank you for your past support, and we urge you to keep the well-being of our older adults paramount in your budget deliberations.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

William P. Harris

Testimony of Brooksie Koopman

Although I am Chairman of the Library Board, I speak as an individual today as the Board has not voted on the green roof issue.

I speak this afternoon about the tremendous cuts the library system has taken in the 2009 and 2010 budgets and the proposed cuts for 2011 which bring us to more than a 13% reduction from the 2009 budget. To absorb these cuts, the library system eliminated almost 36% of its materials budget, maintained 25 staff vacancies, reduced one branch to an operation of three days per week and one Saturday a month, and canceled cleaning and security contracts. In July, every library will cut its hours by opening later and closing earlier. At the same time, library usage has increased more than 15% from two years ago.

The City administration explains that there is not enough budget money and that all groups must bear their share of cuts in this difficult economic environment. The library system has been a team player by reducing almost \$1 million from its budget since 2009.

The Library Board was surprised to find out that the City did, however, authorize \$172,000 from the 2010 capital budget to match a federal grant to put a new green roof on the Burke Library across from Hammond Middle School. This is even more extraordinary considering that the roof is only 13 years old, has never leaked, and has a useful life of 20 to 25 years.

The green roof proposal is ill-conceived. The project is driven by the availability of matching federal funds (a 55/45 match) and the laudable desire to enhance the City's reputation as a green community. The current roof structure is insufficient to support the additional weight of a green roof and the load-bearing capacity of the roof support system must be doubled to support the new roof. The library will be closed "perhaps" (according to TS & E staff) for three weeks while beams are installed.

I know the green roof funds come from the capital budget and the library desperately needs operating funds. I also know that it is rare to redeploy funds between capital and operational budgets and across years. Council approved the grant proposal last fall, but it is not clear that all parties were aware of the tremendous cost, understood that a perfectly good roof would be demolished, and that major structural work would be required. Specifically, the library staff and the Library Board were never consulted before the proposal was approved by Council.

I have a straightforward request. Transfer the capital budget funds for the green roof to the library's operating budget. This will allow the library system to provide services to the people of Alexandria--our fundamental mission. If our system were to receive \$173,000, it would allow all of our libraries to retain their current schedules for FY

2011. We recognize that a budget transfer of this type is unusual, but these are unusual times in which the library system has absorbed unusually large cuts.

The library system serves almost a million visitors per year and circulates in excess of 1.3 million items per year. The Burke Library roof does not need to be replaced at this time. Please transfer the roof funds to the library system's operating budget and consider other ways to supplement the library's 2011 budget so that we can continue to serve the citizens of Alexandria.

I am glad to answer any questions about my testimony. I can be reached at 703-549-3169, 703-615-2295 (cell) or at mreaton@comcast.net.

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3-10-10

Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Donley, and Members of the City Council:

I am Fran Becker, the Executive Director of Carpenter's Homeless Shelter for the last twelve years.

Carpenter's mission is to end and prevent homelessness in the City. We believe that all City citizens are entitled to safe, affordable housing. We fully support Goal Seven of the Council's proposed strategic plan which calls for Alexandria being that *Caring Community that is Affordable and Diverse With a Rich History and Culture.*

The need for more affordable housing in our City is a long standing concern that has gained much attention. I remember testifying in the early 2000s about dire need for MORE affordable housing units, I remember when the penny fund was truly a penny and was going to help create new units and not servicing debt only.

While the issue has been given much attention and discussion, in this decade, Alexandria has been losing ground maintaining the existing stock of affordable housing. There has been indeed a "net" loss noted last year by the Council appointed Affordable Housing Work Group.

In its interim recommendations to City Council in April 2008, the Group stated, “The loss of affordable housing that has occurred in the last decade is a clear and present threat to the City’s economic and racial/ethnic diversity.

Between 2000 and 2008, the City lost more than **10,000 nonsubsidized affordable rental housing units** because of increases in rents. The Group further predicted that over the next five years, another 1,000 non-Resolution 830 publicly-assisted units face potential loss of subsidy. No wonder emergency shelters, like Carpenter’s, are full.

I ask you, where is the Alexandria that is Affordable and Diverse???

The proposed cuts to housing funds in the FY11 budget will only increase this “clear and present threat to the City’s economic racial/ethnic diversity.” The proposed \$686,849 cut in housing funds is an almost a 30 percent reduction relative to FY10. The largest item proposed for reduction is the \$502,060 of the real estate tax dedicated for affordable housing initiatives.

I applaud the initiation of the City's Housing Master Plan process and its efforts to address current affordable housing in Alexandria. The proposed cuts, however, will further reduce affordable housing options that might be identified in this Master Plan.

Herb is right - these proposed cuts will, for all practical purposes, stop the conversation before it begins.

Council members, please restore the half a million dollars taken from the real estate tax revenue and put it back for affordable housing initiatives and not merely debt service.

Make Alexandria that rich, diverse, affordable and caring community that we all talk about, at least on paper. We can't afford to lose any more affordable housing...or we need to start thinking about building more emergency shelters.

Thank you.



Northern Virginia
Family Service

Mary B. Agee, ACSW
President and CEO

**Administrative Office
Oakton**

10455 White Granite Drive
Suite 100
Oakton, VA 22124
703.385.3267
703.385.5176 FAX

Alexandria
5249 Duke Street
Suite 308
Alexandria, VA 22304
703.370.3223
703.751.5197 FAX

Arlington
3401 Columbia Pike
Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22204
703.892.1153
703.892.0895 FAX

Loudoun
2 Pidgeon Hill Drive
Suite 430
Sterling, VA 20165
703.404.2021
703.404.2415 FAX

Manassas
9842 Business Way
Manassas, VA 20110
703.392.4901
703.392.0052 FAX

Woodbridge
2200 Opitz Boulevard
Suite 100
Woodbridge, VA 22191
703.490.3646
703.490.4954 FAX

Online
www.nvfs.org



**Alexandria City Budget Hearing
March 10, 2010**

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3-10-10

Good afternoon, Mayor Euille and members of the city council.

Someone once said, *"Cherishing children is a mark of a civilized society."*

My name is Christine Brown and I stand before you today as a citizen, a volunteer and as mother who cherishes the children of our great city very much. I know that you, Members of the City Council, also cherish the children of Alexandria, as evidenced by your continued support for programs devoted to their health and well-being. As a member of the advisory council for Healthy Families Alexandria, a program of Northern Virginia Family Service that is dedicated to serving vulnerable families with young children, I am grateful that, in these challenging economic times, the city council's proposed budget designates level funding for the Alexandria Fund for Human Services for children and youths in 2011.

Your continued support for AFHS-funded programs like Healthy Families can make all the difference in the world to a child – the difference between enjoying a healthy childhood and becoming a child abuse statistic. Take for example, a child like Carmen. In her case, all the risk factors for child abuse were evident. Her mother Lidia was a first-time single parent with no family or friends nearby. When Carmen was born, Lidia did not know the first thing about how to hold her, diaper her or feed her. She had difficulty bonding with Carmen and was becoming increasingly frustrated with her endless crying. Lidia herself had been raised by an abusive aunt in her home country after her parents moved to the United States to look for work. With no positive parenting role model, Lidia did not know how to be a parent to Carmen though she very much wanted to learn. During weekly home visits with her Healthy Families Support Worker, Lidia soon learned the basics of infant care, how to read Carmen's cues, and, most importantly for her, how to comfort and console her daughter. As multiple studies clearly indicate, a loving attachment between parent and child is the fundamental building block for a happy and healthy childhood and, ultimately, society. In spite of her many challenges, Lidia was able to break the cycle of violence that marked her own childhood and provide Carmen with a loving and healthy start to life. Healthy Families Alexandria helps parents at risk for child abuse and neglect overcome the odds stacked against them to become the best possible parents they can be. Moreover, Harvard's Universal Scientific Council on the Developing Child reports unequivocally that these investments in early childhood pay for themselves many times over in higher academic achievement, lower rates of grade retention, remedial services, school failure, criminal behavior and welfare dependence.

I ask you, the members of City Council, to please hold to the proposed budget and keep level funding for the Children's, Youth and Community Partnership funds. Let us continue to cherish Alexandria's children. Thank you.

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3-10-10

Alexandria Budget Public Hearing – March 10, 2010

Good afternoon Mr. Mayor, Mr. Vice Mayor, Members of City Council and Mr. City Manager. I'm Diane Charles and I am speaking today, wearing 3 hats. One, as Executive Director of SCAN, a child abuse prevention nonprofit organization that provides valuable services to children and families in Alexandria; two, as a member of the Alexandria Council of Human Service Organizations (ACHSO) and Chair of our Education & Advocacy Committee and three; as a 28 year resident of Alexandria.

Know that I am empathetic about the tough decisions that must be made with regard to the budget. On behalf of the Alexandria Council of Human Service Organizations, I want to express our appreciation for the City Manager's response to requests for some alterations to the Fund for Human Services. Specifically, moving up the date of the notification a month earlier to nonprofits about the City's grant awards for needed services, now lets the organizations know by May 30th for our fiscal year that starts July 1st. This additional month enables a little more time for planning. We also appreciate your continued consideration of going back to a two-year funding cycle and look forward to discussing that in the next year's budget. I admit that I felt a sense of relief that the Fund

for Human Services did not experience another cut in funding in the proposed FY2011 budget. However, to be honest, the need for this funding for the incredibly creative, effective and cost-conscious nonprofits who provide some of the most essential and critical services to our most vulnerable residents is that it be at least restored to the level of funding it was in the FY2009 budget. Even that level of funding during this very difficult economic time, of course, isn't enough. But, the additional funds for those most in need, can go a long way.

As you all know, SCAN provides court advocacy to abused and neglected children in Alexandria through our CASA Program, which receives some funding from the Youth Fund. Last fiscal year, this program, that makes very cost effective use of extremely qualified volunteers, served 127 Alexandria children, giving them a community voice in the court system. SCAN also provides support and services to parents through our parenting classes and educational parent support groups. Through some funding from the Alexandria Community Partnership Fund and the Alexandria Children's Fund, SCAN pieces together a variety of funding to make these classes and support groups possible for any parents seeking them and/or those parents being asked or required to take them. In FY2009, SCAN served 87 Alexandria parents and their 110

children in ways that helped them to find support, skills and information to forge a non-violent, nurturing family environment. These services for families, as well as many other services provided by other Alexandria nonprofit organizations, as you can well imagine, are in more demand when families are stressed. They are more critical now than ever.

I'm a very proud resident of Alexandria, proud of our government and the balance it seeks in providing critical services. In this time of extremely high human need because of difficult financial times for many, I, speaking for myself as a resident of Alexandria, see the need for an increase in taxes to keep the balance we have so been known for. As our elected leaders, you have much to balance when it comes to this budget. I just ask that you carefully consider the diverse human needs that have so increased during this difficult time. I hope you will seriously consider what must be done in the budget now to get through this time, so that we can all look forward to the better times when the City support may not be as necessary to maintain this important balance. Thank you.

Diane Charles, Executive Director
SCAN (Stop Child Abuse Now) of Northern Virginia
1705 Fern Street, 2nd Floor, Alexandria, Virginia 22302
www.scanva.org 703-820-9001

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3-10-10
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March 10, 2010

TO:

Honorable William D. Euille, Mayor, City of Alexandria (& WMATA board member)
Vice Mayor Kerry Donley
Councilman Redella "Del" S. Pepper
Councilman Rob Krupicka
Councilman Paul Smedburg
Councilman Frank Fannon
Councilman Alicia Hughes
City Manager James K. Hartmann

Your main concerns should be with:

PEOPLE:

- Who live here;
- Who work here;
- Who visit here;

SAFETY:

- Where we live;
- Where we work;
- Where we travel;

1. SAFETY PROVIDERS -- those who protect us, rescue us should have adequate compensation (POLICE/FIRE/EMS).

They are at their best when we are at our worst -- we expect that from them. They cannot maintain that level of professionalism if they are worrying about families being provided for. They are NOT "whiners" as one person in the *Alexandria Times* newspaper suggested. They are highly trained professional people.

2. TRANSIT SERVICES:

We need ALL of our transit services.

We need SAFE EQUIPMENT -- safe trains and safe buses (replaced or refurbished).

We need to KNOW that the equipment is SAFE.

We need FAIR FARES for every rider, no matter their income level.

We need BUSES running at NIGHT to get us to our NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY ZONE (where we feel safe to walk).

We need for buses and trains to be OPERATED in a SAFE MANNER. Operators need to be trained in safety.

We need DASH drivers to be adequately compensated -- they have to put up with us and our various transit/life woes and still be polite, professional -- for Driving us Alexandrians Safely to and from Home and wherever else we need to go.

ALEXANDRIA is SUPPOSED TO BE an ECO-CITY.

HOW ECO-FRIENDLY IS KILLING OUR BUS SERVICE?

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS?? (OVER)

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:

1. \$10 (cost of \$5 + fare value of \$5) City *Smartrip* cards (with Alexandria landmarks) for tourists to be sold at Visitors Center, Lyceum, Torpedo Factory, etc. (proceeds to go to transit);
2. \$3.50? BUS/RAIL Day Pass (like fare card from machine) good on all systems (Baltimore has this);
3. \$12 Metrobus weekly pass (instead of \$15) for lower-income riders;
4. Personal Income tax for single-unattached people who make over \$60,000 a year (property taxes hit families hardest, this is for people who have no family responsibilities) to help provide for those who don't have and need (rent, food, medical, transit subsidies for work, job interviews, medical, etc.);
5. If you must take the AT4, then substitute the Loop going down Slaters Lane instead of Pendleton (which already has service).
6. 9A stops (north and southbound) at Powhatan and Barnard for residents of Mason Hall, et al. and the little shopping center at Potomac Greens.

FROM:

Linda D. Lee
1420 W. Abingdon Dr. # 243
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703-549-2258)



Northern Virginia
Family Service

Mary B. Agee, ACSW
President and CEO

**Administrative Office
Oakton**

10455 White Granite Drive
Suite 100
Oakton, VA 22124
703.385.3267
703.385.5176 FAX

Alexandria

5249 Duke Street
Suite 308
Alexandria, VA 22304
703.370.3223
703.751.5197 FAX

Arlington

3401 Columbia Pike
Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22204
703.892.1153
703.892.0895 FAX

Loudoun

2 Pidgeon Hill Drive
Suite 430
Sterling, VA 20165
703.404.2021
703.404.2415 FAX

Manassas

9842 Business Way
Manassas, VA 20110
703.392.4901
703.392.0052 FAX

Woodbridge

2200 Opitz Boulevard
Suite 100
Woodbridge, VA 22191
703.490.3646
703.490.4954 FAX

Online

www.nvfs.org



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I ask you, the members of City Council, to please hold to the proposed budget and keep level funding for the Children's, Youth and Community Partnership funds. Let us continue to cherish Alexandria's children. Thank you.

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Alexandrian Taxpayers are now being asked to accept a substantial tax increase on devalued properties for reduced services in the midst of the worst recession in 80 years. This is what our City Manager calls a “status Quo” budget.

Regardless of one’s Party or personal ideology, we simply can’t continue down this path. It simply won’t hold up much longer.

Our schools recently ranked LAST in the country in terms of bang for the buck. Taxpayers are now paying more than \$18,000 a year for students to attend a \$100 million+ high school.

The City’s debt service to pay for the past projects cost taxpayers \$37.1 million this year alone. This debt service has grown by an astounding 322% over the last ten years. The City projects our debt service to rise to more than \$68 million within nine years-- creating additional stresses on future budgets, regardless of the state of the economy.

While private industry has taken advantage of cheaper and more efficient technologies to streamline their bureaucracies, the number of full-time employees working for the city has grown by 9.8%. This must stop. There must be real reductions in City staff, and not the Smoke & Mirror games of simply eliminating empty positions.

Spending on the Planning and Zoning Department has grown by over 203% over the last ten years. With new development at a virtual standstill in these challenging times, the time to prune this overgrown weed is now well overdue. Replacing the top leadership of this bloated department allow the City to control costs and revitalize King Street which is now increasingly populated with empty store fronts and adult specialty stores.

The City has allocated approximately \$3 million in assets towards a well meant, but poorly designed, program to assist as many as 12 “urban nomads” a year. Someday, ten City employees will be overseeing 12 troubled people. Think about that number. 10 highly paid City employees to oversee, at most, 12 people. Not exactly a model of efficiency.

To make matters worse, as of this date, this gold plated monument to waste has failed to provide our most needy citizens with a single meal, a single night’s shelter or even a blanket. Indeed, if you walk by the location today, just a few blocks up King Street, you will see an empty building plastered with expired permits and few signs of progress. This program should be eliminated and the building sold to private interests so it can generate additional tax revenue. The Community Services Board, which is in charge of this project, should also be audited, have all of its programs re-evaluated and its leadership replaced.

We must also avoid the professional politicians’ jaded trick of budget cutting where it will do the most visible damage in order to intimidate our citizens to support yet more tax increases.

Budget cuts should focus on waste, inefficiency, and nonproductive bureaucratic exercises--not the street cop, EMTs or fire fighters who put themselves at risk to protect us.

In addition to the above, we have a few proposals for you to consider. These proposals will save substantial funds while having a minimal impact on City Services.:

1. Immediate Savings: \$300,000 to \$1.45 million per year.

- a. Modest pay reductions for all City Employees earning more than \$100,000 per year.
 - i. 1 percent = \$290,000
 - ii. 3 percent = \$870,000
 - iii. 5 percent = \$1,451,000

Note: This would impact a total of 246 of the City's highest paid employees, but the average City Employee, including the cops & firefighters on the street would not be touched.

2. \$2 million

- a. Reduce the Planning & Zoning Department staffing to 2000 levels.

City Council should also immediately let the well meaning volunteers of the Alexandria Street Car Coalition know it's not going to happen. The City doesn't have hundreds of millions of dollars for their projects.

We have already sent you several other reasonable budget cuts proposals for your condition. More are on the way. We're also developing proposals for an overall reform effort to reduce the City's inefficiencies and to fundamentally change how our budgets are written.

Folks, if you think the current budget is a challenge, just wait until our debt service doubles, change course now, institute real budget cuts and right sizing of City staff while you can.

Bud Miller
Alexandria Taxpayers United
(703) 684-5312

2

3-10-10

Mr. Mayor and members of the council: Today, I want to highlight the need to provide the local Dash bus system with consistent, financial backing. Sandy Modell, as general manager of the Alexandria Transit Co., has created a top notch, qualitative organization that is readily apparent to any taxpayer who spends any real time commuting. In fact, I would like to encourage everyone here to consider using Dash more often and experience just how well a local system can function. The drivers remain courteous and helpful and grateful to have their jobs even though they have shown up for work now for over two years without a raise. They respect Ms. Modell and trust she will do the best she can for them and for the transiting public. The problem is she cannot do it alone...

As an interested citizen of my community, I have advocated for various groups over time. My background is in early childhood special education, teaching very involved kids, working with their parents and training master level teachers. And yes, often trying to do it all on a shoestring budget. The observation I have made in trying to speak on behalf of Dash is that unlike schools or senior services or healthcare systems, people by and large take the existence of public transportation for granted. In some way it's hard to put a human face on a bus system. It's as if we don't quite think about it as a vital service because it's just there and always will be. Until it isn't or effective leaders and good employees either burn out or move on to greener pastures as sometimes happens.

We know Ms. Modell is strong and maybe we rely on that fact a little too much, hoping she can work more magic. I don't begin to grasp the intricacies of budgeting and I empathize with the hard choices that have to be made to keep our city functioning during these difficult times. But why, for example, was the decision made last year to hold \$200,000 of transit money in contingent reserves for over six months and then move it back over to Dash this January? And did we just square that circle on paper or did Dash in effect lose out on \$200,000? I honestly don't know but I believe our transit system could have used that money last fall just as they will now need new, dedicated funds for 2011.

If we are going to make a serious attempt at meeting current and new challenges including the transit needs of the many BRAC commuters, we will want to effectively utilize the new Dash facility to create steady expansion and improve bus service: keeping buses clean and safe, increasing bus frequencies, planning some new across town routes, beefing up existing schedules. But Dash can't exist on bus fumes and inconsistent promises of support - carefully, prudently budgeting limited resources and then not knowing if or when the money will come in. I have only recently learned of the idea of a commercial add on tax for transportation projects. I don't know if this is viable and how it would impact small businesses but we need to be open to looking at new ideas. I do think it is time for Alexandria to accept transportation as a core service and for Dash to have monies it can count on. So that Dash transit growth and expansion can become a reality and not something we keep talking about while we raise fares, cut services and withhold money. Thank you.

ie, needing a dedicated funding source. (source)

Thank you city council for listening to all of us,
Meredith MacVab ☺
(703) 683-4376

2

3-10-10

Kimberley Kaplan

418 Queen Street

Alexandria, VA 22314

City Council's Budget Public Hearing – March 10, 2010

Public transportation is one of our City's core services. WMATA provides service that connects Alexandria with the region, and DASH provides complementary service that feeds into the Metro system and makes possible local mobility and connectivity.

WMATA is in crisis, but let me first say a few words about DASH. The City Manager's budget keeps funding for DASH flat. This is a big improvement from discussions just last month that DASH would be cut \$600,000. A \$600,000 cut would have eliminated all Sunday service, and resulted in severe cuts to Saturday and mid-day weekday service. But even a flat budget forces service cuts. And, as the Mayor said at the dedication of the new DASH facility in November, we built that facility because the City NEEDS more bus service.

DASH's budget was cut last year by over \$500,000. \$200,000 of that was added back in contingent reserves and used by DASH to restore some service. The City Manager's budget this year does not include that \$200,000.

To make up this budget gap, DASH riders will do their part. Fares are going up 20%, the third fare increase in three years. One of the other ways that DASH proposes to fill the gap is by eliminating all off peak service on the AT 4.

During peak hours, the AT 4 is a very productive route. It is the primary transit option for people in Potomac Greens and along Slaters Lane. Providing a base level of service on this route throughout the day is important. Commuters need to know that they can get to work after 9:30 am, and won't be stranded if they need to come home early or work late. Taking away mid-day and evening service will chip away at peak commute ridership. It will also hurt transit-dependent residents of Mason Hall and other locations along the route for whom the route is a lifeline.

I suggest that you put the money that DASH needs to continue running the AT 4 on weekdays in contingent reserves. If ridership grows, as is expected as unemployment comes down, DASH will not need the full amount. If revenues do not increase as anticipated, the portion of the money DASH needs to continue operating the service could be released mid-year. This does not save Saturday service, but I hope you will understand why this route needs to run all day during the work week.

My husband will speak about the crisis facing Metro later, but let me say that Metro, despite its problems, has been the key to our region's success. At a time when other cities were constructing highways, our region came together to create Metro. And Alexandria continues to stake its future on Metro. We need to do everything we can not only to keep the system from collapsing but to ensure it thrives. This takes money. The City must partner with riders who will be paying much higher fares next year. Do your part to give Metro the subsidy it needs to maintain current service and the system's safety and reliability. As a tax payer, I would support raising the tax rate to provide additional subsidy to Metro if that is what is needed to avoid the deep service cuts proposed.

2
3-10-10

David Kaplan

418 Queen Street

Alexandria, VA 22314

City Council's Budget Public Hearing – March 10, 2010

As my wife Kim mentioned to you earlier, Metro is in crisis. Getting the system back on solid footing needs to be one of our highest priorities in this region. To close next year's \$189 million budget gap, WMATA proposes to raise fares between 15-28% on rail, bus, and Metro Access. This is one of the highest fare increases in the system's history. After the fares are raised, Metro will still need to cut about \$32 million in service. We might say goodbye to Yellow Line trains between King Street and Fort Totten after 9pm on weekdays and all day on weekends. Headways will be increased on all other lines. At night and on weekends, Metrorail service at King Street and Braddock Road Stations would be cut by almost half. The system would open later in the morning and close three hours earlier on weekends.

The 29 Metrobus route will no longer serve most of Duke Street in Alexandria, our busiest bus corridor. And if a bus rider needs to get to Beatley Library after 7 PM because their local branch is closed, he or she could encounter a wait time for a DASH bus traveling to the library of up to 65 minutes.

After the service gets cut, there is a \$40 million figure left, which WMATA calls "money from a yet to be identified source". If this source isn't identified, then riders would likely face even higher fares and more severe service cuts.

Service cuts of this size, combined with the fare increase, could launch Metro into a "death spiral". I believe that the jurisdictions funding WMATA should partner with riders and make up the portion of the budget gap being covered by service cuts with increased subsidy. That total, along with \$40 million from the unidentified source, is \$73 million. Alexandria's share would be \$2.62 million.

I make this request very much aware of our challenging fiscal environment. But, the City has benefited substantially from Metro's presence. According to the Urban Land Institute, WMATA has added 15 billion in real estate value to the region. Had we and our neighbors reinvested that money in Metro, I doubt the system would now be in crisis. Councilman Fannon asked at the

work session on revenues where in the City residential property assessments went up. The answer: neighborhoods adjacent to Metro, and almost nowhere else. Our tax base is more stable because Metro makes this an attractive place to live and do business. And our City hopes to continue to benefiting from WMATA's presence at Potomac Yard.

That's why I'm willing to pay more in fares. And that's why I would support an increase in my property taxes to fill our portion of Metro's budget gap. Arlington County has already voted to advertise a maximum tax rate high enough to permit them to fill their share of the gap.

You vote this weekend on the maximum tax rate, yet the Council work session on transit subsidies is not until April 5th. If you don't advertise a tax rate high enough to accommodate additional subsidy for Metro, then you've essentially taken that option off the table without discussion.

The decisions made in this budget cycle will shape our efforts to promote transit-oriented development and make our City more livable for the next generation. We are depending on the City to do its fair share. I thank you.

Margaret A. Mitchell

- continue
Dash AT4

First of all, I do appreciate your calling this meeting to give everyone a chance to explain their case.

Margaret
A. Mitchell

2
3-10-10

Unfortunately, other people who would like to have come, could not. AT4 is

their means of
transportation.

For me, the AT4 is
the way to the big
world. Using the AT4
I can get to the
Braddock Metro, and
from there--wherever
I need to go.

For instance, I can take the AT4 to the Braddock Metro and go to King St. to take the AT108 to Shoppers in the Potomac Yard. To go home, I can easily reverse the route.

So you can see, the
AT4 is my charriot.

Driven by very nice polite drivers

I also want to give
kudos for erecting the
two nice waiting
stations on Slaters
Lane. They enhance
the use of the AT4 for
all the people who
live in the many

apartment buildings
and townhouses in
the area. That
includes me, a
person who values
her independence.

2

3-10-10
1

March 10, 2010

TO:

Honorable William D. Euille, Mayor, City of Alexandria (& WMATA board member)
Vice Mayor Kerry Donley
Councilman Redella "Del" S. Pepper
Councilman Rob Krupicka
Councilman Paul Smedburg
Councilman Frank Fannon
Councilman Alicia Hughes
City Manager James K. Hartmann

Your main concerns should be with:

PEOPLE:

- Who live here;
- Who work here;
- Who visit here;

SAFETY:

- Where we live;
- Where we work;
- Where we travel;

1. SAFETY PROVIDERS -- those who protect us, rescue us should have adequate compensation (POLICE/FIRE/EMS).

They are at their best when we are at our worst -- we expect that from them. They cannot maintain that level of professionalism if they are worrying about families being provided for. They are NOT "whiners" as one person in the *Alexandria Times* newspaper suggested. They are highly trained professional people.

2. TRANSIT SERVICES:

We need ALL of our transit services.

We need SAFE EQUIPMENT -- safe trains and safe buses (replaced or refurbished).

We need to KNOW that the equipment is SAFE.

We need FAIR FARES for every rider, no matter their income level.

We need BUSES running at NIGHT to get us to our NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY ZONE (where we feel safe to walk).

We need for buses and trains to be OPERATED in a SAFE MANNER. Operators need to be trained in safety.

We need DASH drivers to be adequately compensated -- they have to put up with us and our various transit/life woes and still be polite, professional -- for Driving us Alexandrians Safely to and from Home and wherever else we need to go.

ALEXANDRIA is SUPPOSED TO BE an ECO-CITY.

HOW ECO-FRIENDLY IS KILLING OUR BUS SERVICE?

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS?? (OVER)

2
3-10-10

March 10, 2010

The Honorable William D. Euille and Members of City Council
City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3211

Dear Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Donley, and Members of the City Council:

I am writing to express the concerns of Alexandria's Homeless Services Coordinating Committee (HSCC) regarding the proposed housing funding cuts in the Fiscal Year 2011 budget. HSCC is a partnership between public agencies and non-profits to help address the housing and supportive services needs of those most vulnerable in our community. It is comprised of representatives from over 30 public and non-profit organizations and its mission is to ensure the planning, coordination and implementation of an effective continuum of care to eliminate homelessness in our City. Components in the continuum of care include prevention and intervention services to help persons avoid homelessness; outreach, assessment and supportive services to address the individual needs of persons who become homeless; emergency shelter and transitional housing; supportive services housing for homeless persons with special needs; and housing and services to help homeless persons make the transition to permanent housing and independent living.

The need for more affordable housing in our City is a long standing concern that has gained much attention. While the issue has been given much attention and discussion, we have been losing ground maintaining the existing stock of affordable housing instead of adding to the stock of affordable housing units. In its interim recommendations to City Council in April 2008, the Affordable Housing Initiatives Work Group stated, "The loss of affordable housing that has occurred in the last decade is a clear and present threat to the City's economic and racial/ethnic diversity."

Affordable housing, especially affordable rental housing, is rapidly disappearing in Alexandria. Between 2000 and 2008, we lost more than 10,000 nonsubsidized affordable rental housing units because of increases in rents. Over the next five years, 1,000 non-Resolution 830 publicly-assisted units face potential loss of subsidy.

The proposed cuts to housing funds in the Fiscal Year 2011 budget will only increase this "clear and present threat to the City's economic racial/ethnic diversity." The proposed \$686,849 cut in housing funds is an almost 30 percent reduction relative to Fiscal Year 2010. The largest item proposed for reduction is the \$502,060 of real estate tax dedicated for affordable housing initiatives.

We cannot appropriately move forward with the City's Housing Master Plan process and efforts to address affordable housing in Alexandria when City Council takes actions that

further reduce our current limited affordable housing situation. These proposed cuts will, for all practical purposes, stop the conversation before it begins. Therefore, we respectfully request that City Council not reduce housing funding in Fiscal Year 2011 or at least not reduce the funding as dramatically as proposed. While it is understood that the City cannot expand the number of affordable housing units, given the current economic climate, at the same time we should not reduce our existing housing stock. We need to stop the "one step forward, two steps back" process regarding affordable housing.

The HSCC thanks you for your attention to our concerns and we very much look forward to continually working with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kari Galloway". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Kari Galloway
Co-Chair
Alexandria Homeless Services
Coordinating Committee

cc: James K. Hartmann, City Manager

2
3-10-10

**MARCH 10, 2010 – from ANNABELLE FISHER
TO: MAYOR EUILLE & MEMBERS OF COUNCIL
RE: BUDGET ITEMS RECOMMENDATIONS & SUGGESTIONS**

- 1. SENIOR SERVICES, DIVISION ON AGING & HUMAN SERVICES need more clarity AS THERE IS TOO MUCH DUPLICATION OF SERVICES. DEBRA COLLINS, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN SERVICES MUST PROVIDE GREATER OVER-SIGHT WITHIN HER AGENCY AND DEFINE WHAT DIVISION ON AGING PERSONNEL ARE DOING AND SHOULD BE DOING THAT IS DIFFERENT FROM SENIOR SERVICES.**
- 2. SENIOR TAXI- THIS PROGRAM MUST BECOME AN INDEPENDENT GROUP WHEREIN THERE IS MORE COMPETITION FOR TAXI SERVICES FOR SENIORS. FURTHER, WHATEVER TAXI SERVICE IS SELECTED, THEY NEED TO RUN THE SHOW AND NO LONGER USE SENIOR SERVICES AS THE FIRST POINT OF CONTACT. ELIMINATE THE “MIDDLE GUY”.**
- 3. OFFICE ON WOMEN- THIS OFFICE SHOULD BE ELIMINATED. THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTER PROGRAM, WHICH IS THE ONLY PROGRAM DOING ANY WORK, SHOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO THE ALEXANDRIA POLICE DEPT., COMMONWEALTH ATTORNEY’S OFFICE OR HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE. TO DATE, OFFICE ON WOMEN DOES NOT SHOW OUTCOMES AND THERE CAN BE A SAVING OF OVER \$250,000+, AS DIRECTOR EARNS \$106,000 plus her staff. ALSO, THERE ARE SEVERAL OTHER SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMS IN ALEXANDRIA PROVIDING THE SAME SERVICE AS OFFICE ON WOMEN – CARPENTER SHELTER AND GUEST HOUSE.**
- 4. CURRENT ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL WHO CONTINUE TO WORK FOR THE CITY, BUT ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THEIR RETIREMENT, SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO TAKE THEIR RETIREMENT NOW. MANY OF THESE POSITIONS HAVE BEEN MOVED TO OTHER DEPTS. WITHIN CITY GOVERNMENT, AT A LOWER SALARY, WHICH KEEPS THEM ON THE CITIES**

Tenant Forum

Presented by the Alexandria Landlord Tenant Relations Board

Saturday, September 20, 2008

10 am to 12 noon

**William Ramsay Recreation Center
5650 Sanger Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22311**

Issues Covered

**Virginia Law and the Virginia Legislative Process
City Council Initiatives to Create and Preserve
Affordable Rental Housing
Overview of Tenant Rights and Responsibilities
Services Available for Renters in Alexandria**

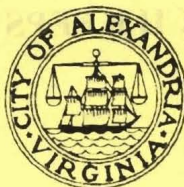
Distinguished Speakers

**State Senator Patricia S. Ticer
Councilmen Ludwig P. Gaines and Rob Krupicka, Co-Chairs of the
Affordable Housing Initiatives Work Group**

As Well as Presentations from

**The City of Alexandria Code Enforcement Bureau
Office of Housing Landlord-Tenant Relations Division
and
Legal Services of Northern Virginia**

**For More Information Contact
The Alexandria Office of Housing
Landlord Relations Division
703-838-4545**



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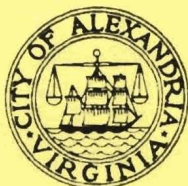
Legal Services of Northern Virginia

For More Information Contact

The Alexandria Office of Housing

Landlord Tenant Relations Division

703-838-4545



PAYROLL. CITY MANAGER NEEDS TO EVALUATE THESE ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS.

- 5. CONSULTANTS – WHY DO WE NEED SO MANY FOR VARIOUS DEPTS? DON'T WE ALREADY HAVE QUALIFIED STAFF? If current staff is not qualified, they should no longer work for city and city should contract out. Or, hire one to two experienced personnel in place of consultants, for those 2-3 departments (PLANNING/ZONING & TES) that continually hire consultants in order to eliminate the high costs of consultants. This is more cost effective and saves taxpayers money.**
- 6. ELIMINATE EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMISSION AS WELL AS THE COMMISSION ON WOMEN.**
- 7. SMALL BUSINESS GROUPS SHOULD NOW BE APPLYING FOR THE EXTRA MONIES PRESIDENT OBAMA HAS ADDED TO SBA RATHER THAN ALEXANDRIA TAXPAYERS PAYING FOR THEIR START UPS. THIS WOULD INCLUDE ACVA, AED, and other small business groups.**
- 8. There should be no salary/step increases this year. People are glad to be working and the economy does not warrant a raise next year. This includes all members of city mgr's office as well as dept. administrators. Lower level positions should not be eliminated because it looks good for budget.**
- 9. Alex. Taxpayers cannot continue to bailout non-profits and other charities. I will decide what non-profits/charities I want to give my money to and not local elective officials. It's a tax write off for you, but not me.**
- 10. Restructure Office on Housing and Citizens Assistance.**
- 11. Gang Prevention position – money for this position should come from the Northern Va. Gang Task Force grant and not City of Alexandria. In fact, there is no need for this position as it continues to be a duplication of services with other alex. Agencies, i.e. juvenile court, local mentoring groups and other soc. Service agencies. What are the outcomes from this position created several years ago that merit continuation for this position?**

2

3-10-10

**Alexandria Community Services Board Testimony
City of Alexandria Public Hearing on the FY 2011 Budget
March 10, 2010**

Speaker: Mary Anne Weber, Chair, Alexandria Community Services Board

I am Mary Anne Weber, Chair of the Alexandria Community Services Board.

I am here today to express the Board's support for the City Manager's Proposed Budget and gratitude for your assistance in advocating on our behalf regarding proposed State budget reductions.

While the Board is slated for City reductions of \$325,000 for FY 2011, this reduction is a more moderate reduction compared to FY 2010 and is similar to those found in other City agencies. The Proposed Budget also includes our plans to address a decrease of \$265,000 in State General Fund revenue, bringing the total FY 2011 reduction to \$591,000.

The Board has already increased productivity standards, eliminated non-essential positions, and reduced capacity in lower-priority and administrative programs. With \$2.15 million in reductions between FY 2008 and FY 2011, any additional reduction requires significant service reductions to Alexandria's most vulnerable residents. Like other social service agencies, we are seeing an increase in demand for services at a time when there is decreased capacity in local non-profits. Waitlists are increasing and there is reduced ability to serve Alexandria residents. Proposed House and Senate budget language would further increase these waitlists and diminish capacity.

The Board wishes to express its appreciation for your assistance in advocating for restoration of proposed cuts in the House and Senate. These cuts may result in the loss of another \$400,000 for the Board and your voice of support has been appreciated.

On a more personal note, as a resident and homeowner in this city for over 13 years, I have come to appreciate Alexandria as a community that cares. I wish the state of Virginia had the same sense of responsibility. I also want you to know I am willing to accept higher taxes if that is what it takes to keep our essential services.