

*City of Alexandria, Virginia*9
6-26-01

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 21, 2001

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *ps*

SUBJECT: PROPOSED PLAN FOR SPENDING A PORTION OF THE FUNDS SET ASIDE IN CONTINGENT RESERVES IN THE APPROVED FY 2002 BUDGET FOR PARK MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

ISSUE: City Council consideration of the proposed spending plan and the allocation of \$181,811 of the \$250,000 set aside in contingent reserves in the approved FY 2002 Budget for park maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Approve the proposed spending plan, including the authorization of four additional full-time positions in the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, and the purchase of a pick-up truck as follows:
 - Laborer Supervisor (\$43,779)
 - Laborer III (\$37,272)
 - Tree Trimmer (\$40,124)
 - Horticultural Specialist (\$38,636)
 - Pick up truck (\$22,000)
- (2) Approve the transfer \$181,811 of the \$250,000 set aside in the approved FY 2002 contingent reserves account for park maintenance to the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities.

BACKGROUND: As part of the FY 2002 budget deliberations, City Council established a \$250,000 contingent reserve for the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities. These funds were specifically to be used for enhanced park maintenance, subject to City Council approval of a spending plan proposed by the Department.

DISCUSSION: The proposed spending plan includes personnel and equipment that will be used to help meet the current demand for park maintenance operations.

The Laborer Supervisor and Laborer III positions will be used to create a waterfront park maintenance crew. The establishment of a waterfront maintenance crew will enable the department to continue meeting the present demand for services along the waterfront parks while increasing the resources for maintenance at other parks in the City. Staff from other crews are currently being utilized to handle the increased maintenance requirements for the waterfront and as a result, scheduled maintenance has been impacted throughout the City resulting in delays in services being performed at other parks. The addition of these park positions will help improve the delivery of services and the maintenance of parks throughout the City.

Proposed hours of staff coverage for the waterfront are 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., seven days a week, throughout the year. During the months of May through September, staff hours will extend to 8:30 p.m. These staff hours will be maintained with the use of the two new positions and existing full-time or seasonal staff positions. This crew will perform tasks including, but not limited to, grass cutting, trimming, planting and river cleanup.

The Tree Trimmer position will provide a fourth full-time staff member to assist in our tree maintenance operations, and will enable the department to staff three, two-person crews (using two seasonal workers and four full-time staff) during May through September. The addition of the fourth full-time position will provide the department with the ability to assign one crew to the small tree and traffic sign clearing maintenance program, while other crews respond to citizen requests and park maintenance issues.

The Horticultural Specialist position will provide a fourth full-time staff member to the horticultural unit and allow for the creation of three crews (using three seasonal workers and four full-time staff). Three crews will help meet the increasing demands at City sites that involve the seasonal change of flowers and plants, as well as watering, weeding, mulching and trimming. Areas such as Market Square, the Lyceum, King Street Gardens and City portals are examples of such sites.

The Horticultural Unit is currently responsible for over 160 sites and areas. As a part of the ongoing effort to improve horticultural operations and site aesthetics, \$45,000 in additional funding has been provided in the approved FY 2002 budget. These additional funds, along with the new staff position, will help provide the needed resources to meet current responsibilities.

In addition to personnel, a half ton pick up truck (\$22,000) will be added to the Department's fleet for the waterfront parks crew. This vehicle is required for staff transportation and delivery of materials throughout the waterfront parks district.

FISCAL IMPACT: Staff recommends hiring personnel and purchasing the truck at the beginning of FY 2002. The annual cost for personnel and equipment will be \$181,811. The remaining \$68,189 will be held in reserve until sometime in the second half of FY 2002, at which time staff will likely return to City Council with further recommendations on remaining allocations for maintenance operations.

STAFF: Sandra Whitmore, Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
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