

2
4-16-05

**STATEMENT OF JACK WILMER
BEFORE THE ALEXANDRIA CITY COUNCIL
APRIL 16, 2005**

MY NAME IS JACK WILMER.

MY WIFE AND I ATTENDED PRIVATE
BOARDING SCHOOLS BUT 25 YEARS AGO WE
ELECTED TO HAVE OUR THREE CHILDREN
ATTEND THE ALEXANDRIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

THEY DID, FROM KINDERGARTEN THROUGH
TC WILLIAMS, THE LAST GRADUATING FROM TC
IN 2003. IT WAS A FABULOUS EXPERIENCE FOR
THEM, AND FOR US AS PARENTS.

THE COUNCIL APPARENTLY IS CONSIDERING NOT PASSING ALONG TO THE SCHOOLS THE \$160,000 IN STATE AID WHICH HAS BEEN MADE AVAILABLE FOR EDUCATION BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

THAT'S UNBELIEVABLE, UNCONSCIONABLE, AND PROBABLY ILLEGAL.

I TRUST THAT WHEN THE TIME FOR A VOTE ARRIVES THE COUNCIL WILL NOT ONLY MAKE AVAILABLE THE MONEY WHICH THE ASSEMBLY HAS PROVIDED BUT WILL ALSO PROVIDE THE FUNDING WHICH THE SCHOOL BOARD – WHICH WAS ELECTED BY THE SAME CITIZENS WHO ELECTED THE COUNCIL -- HAS REQUESTED.

THE MANY PEOPLE WHO ARE BEING DRAWN TO ALEXANDRIA NEED TO KNOW HOW GREAT OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE. LET'S TAKE TC WILLIAMS HIGH SCHOOL AS AN EXAMPLE.

TC IS INCREDIBLY DIVERSE.

IT'S LIKE A MINI UNITED NATIONS – 60 NATIVE LANGUAGES ARE SPOKEN THERE.

THIS DIVERSITY IS OF INCALCULABLE VALUE.

A STUDENT LEAVES TC WITH AN APPRECIATION THAT EVERYBODY, NO MATTER

WHERE THEY ARE FROM, NO MATTER WHAT
THEIR SKIN COLOR, IS SOMEBODY.

A STUDENT LEAVES TC WITH ENDURING
FRIENDSHIPS WITH PEERS FROM VERY DIVERSE
BACKGROUNDS.

IT IS NO ACCIDENT THAT PRESIDENT
CLINTON CAME TO TC TO SPEAK TO THE NATION
AFTER THE COLUMBINE TRAGEDY. THE POPULAR
DENZEL WASHINGTON MOVIE, REMEMBER THE
TITANS, CATALOGUES THE DEVELOPMENT OF
TC'S RACIAL HARMONY.

IT IS NO ACCIDENT THAT ONE TC
GRADUATE, AN ENGINEER WHO WENT TO

PRINCETON AND THEN SCHLUMBERGER OIL CO,
AND RECEIVED RECOGNITION BY THE
SCHOLARSHIP FUND, IS NOW TEACHING IN NEW
YORK CITY'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS. SHE
RECOGNIZED THE NEED, AND IS CONTRIBUTING
TO IT.

NOT IS IT ANY ACCIDENT THAT TC SCIENCE
AND LIBERAL ARTS HONORS STUDENTS – WHO
ATTENDED UVA AND IVY LEAGUE COLLEGES -
HAVE RETURNED TO TC TO TEACH AND TO THE
ALEXANDRIA COMMUNITY TO WORK.

THERE IS NO SCIENCE MYOPIA AT TC OR IN
THE ALEXANDRIA SCHOOLS – BUT THERE IS A
VERY STRONG SCIENCE PROGRAM.

THE HONORS PROGRAM AT TC IS
EXTRAORDINARY.

IT IS VERY COMMON FOR KIDS TO LEAVE
THEIR LOCAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN 9TH GRADE
TO TAKE TC HONORS AND AP COURSES.

A RECENT WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE
RANKED PERFORMANCE ON THE SAT 2. ALMOST
EVERY STUDENT IN DAVID KEENER'S AP
BIOLOGY CLASS RECEIVED A 5 – THE HIGHEST
SCORE. THIS PERFORMANCE DWARFED THAT OF
THE AP CLASSES IN OTHER SCHOOLS.

DR. PATEL'S AP PHYSICS COURSE AT TC IS EQUALLY CHALLENGING. HIS TC TEAM TWICE DEFEATED THOMAS JEFFERSON SELECTIVE ADMISSION SCIENCE SCHOOL IN THE SCIENCE BOWL, ONCE HAVING A STUDENT ON THE LOSING TEAM LITERALLY THROW HIS BADGE AT DR. PATEL IN DISGUST.

TC'S ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IS RECOGNIZED BY COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICERS.

IN THE LAST 2 YEARS ALONE, TC SENT STUDENTS TO EVERY IVY LEAGUE SCHOOL EXCEPT BROWN, WITH 5 GOING TO YALE.

IN THIS PERIOD TC ALSO SENT 16 TO UVA, 9
TO WILLIAM AND MARY, AND OTHERS TO
STANFORD, GEORGETOWN , WELLESLEY, DUKE,
SMITH, THE NAVAL ACADEMY, ETC.

TC IS A VERY SPECIAL SCHOOL AND IS PART
OF A VERY SPECIAL PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM.

YOU CAN BE SURE THAT RESIDENTS WHO
NOW COMPLAIN OF RISING PROPERTY TAXES
BECAUSE OF HIGH PROPERTY VALUES WOULD
COMPLAIN EVEN MORE IF THEIR PROPERTY
VALUES WERE DECREASING.

AND THAT'S JUST WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF
THIS COUNCIL FAILS TO ADOPT THE SCHOOL

BOARD'S PROPOSED BUDGET, AND IF THE
COUNCIL WITHHOLDS THE \$160,000 WHICH THE
STATE ASSEMBLY HAS MADE AVAILABLE FOR
EDUCATION.

THE COUNCIL MUST PLACE THE HIGHEST
PRIORITY ON THE ALEXANDRIA PUBLIC
SCHOOLS, WHICH ARE THE LIFEBLOOD OF OUR
COMMUNITY.

THANK YOU.

2
4-16-05



<mortalcoil@att.net>
05/02/2005 03:25 PM

To <Jackie.Henderson@alexandriava.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject

2 May 2005

Dear Ms. Henderson,

Please relay to all seven Council members and add to the official city record of the property tax issue the following:

"We, Carl A. Posey and C.E. Ann Wadia of 509 Wolfe Street, urge each Council member to vote for the so-called three-percent compromise, which would provide a 3.5-percent spending increase overall, while taxing properties at a rate of \$0.86 per one hundred dollars' assessed value."

Thanks.

Carl A. Posey & C. E. Ann Wadia
509 Wolfe Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

2
4-16-05



a fish
<afsuper2000@yahoo.com>
05/02/2005 03:27 PM

To <Jackie.Henderson@alexandriava.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject tonite's budget mtg

Jackie: please forward this message to all councilmembers, mayor and city manager and please include comments for public record. Thank you.

Mayor Euille, Councilmembers and City Manager:

As I have just received my rent increase which is higher than a 3.5% budget increase, I am asking that you all abide by the wishes of 5,000 citizens and civic associations that have signed the petition for a 3.5% budget increase and a 3% property tax increase. This is the fair and just thing to do. By increasing unnecessary taxes for citizens and businesses, you will keep businessness and future residents out of Alexandria. If you impose a \$3.00 p/month cell phone charge, once again you will be double taxing Alexandria residents, as we will be paying the additional taxes for all city employees and management who have cell phones thru the city as well as local business owners.

You all can do the right thing. You have a fiduciary responsibility to Alexandria residents when you were sworn into office. FIVE THOUSAND (5,000) citizens and many civic associations are going to watch what you do and how you vote.

Thanks,

Annabelle Fisher

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Tired of spam? Yahoo! Mail has the best spam protection around
<http://mail.yahoo.com>

2
4-16-05



"Jim & Barb"
<mellenti@comcast.net>

To <Jackie.Henderson@alexandriava.gov>

cc

05/02/2005 03:38 PM

bcc

Please respond to
<mellenti@comcast.net>

Subject Lowering Property Taxes!

LETTER TO CITY COUNCIL:

I am writing this letter to fully support the efforts of the "Alexandrians For A 3% Compromise" and to confirm that I and my wife, Barb, are some of those who are really angry over the city's large (and seemingly automatic) spending increases that have resulted in greater than 10% increases in our individual property tax bills each year" (see original e-mail below). Out of curiosity, does City Council members get a pay increase of 10%? If not, how can they justify an increase of greater than 10%? Even if they do, I can assure you that as a military retiree, our annual pay increase has been limited from 2 to 2.5% per annum the past 12 years! You might even consider the Governments annual Consumer Price Index, has it ever been greater than 10%?

I fully support the idea that the City Council set reasonable limits to their spending increases, which would also set reasonable limits - not the 20% increase each year we have experienced - in our individual property tax bills.

An 86-cent tax rate (per \$100 assessed value) is a reasonable rate, especially since the property assessments have increased beyond all recognized indices. You should consider being reasonable with your property taxes (and spending), for a change.

Angry in Alexandria.
Jim Mellon and Barb Valenti
907 Eldon Drive
Alexandria, VA 22302

Original E-Mail

LETTER TO CITY COUNCIL

Dear Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Pepper, Councilmen Gaines, Krupicka, Macdonald and Smedberg, and Councilwoman Woodson,

On behalf of 5,000 Alexandrians For A 3% Compromise and (hopefully without being presumptuous) more than a dozen Civic Associations -- representing 1000s more Alexandrians -- which have approved a similar 3% Resolution, we ask for your vote on May 2nd for a 3% Compromise - a 3%-to-3.5% spending increase resulting in a 3% increase in our city-wide property tax bill at a property tax rate of 86 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

We urge City Council, on or before May 2nd, to direct the city staff (who have been working on the budget since last fall) to provide City Council with an FY'06 Revised Budget that recommends how they would allocate a 3.5% spending increase or \$18.4 million more over last year, totaling \$539.2 million. We realize that there is sufficient time to undertake this effort since you and city staff have ample time before staff sends out the property tax notices in June for the second half of FY 2005 and secondly, the statutory deadline of June 27 (City Charter Section 6.12) to complete the budget.

We respectfully request you to vote for a property tax rate of 86 cents that allows for the 3.5% spending increase. We are pleased to see signs that you are moving in that direction; but urge you not to stop until you get to the 86-cent tax rate. We want to thank:

- Mayor Euille who told a neighborhood group that he would try to get the property tax rate down to 88.5 cents "if possible."
- Vice Mayor Pepper for clearly sensing how so many of us feel when she said "Such tax increases have spurred an organized anti-tax effort that is unprecedented in recent memory...We are paying attention."
- Councilman Gaines for requesting city staff to examine a tax rate reduction in the range of 8 cents to 16 cents (or 91.5 cents to 83.5 cents).
- Councilmen Krupicka and Smedberg for having proposed another 1-cent reduction in the property rate, taking it down to 90.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value; and
- Councilman Macdonald for being sympathetic to the idea of determining a cap on our residential property tax bills.

Our apologies to Councilwoman Woodson if she has made overtures toward our 86-cent rate of which we are not aware.

On March 22nd, City Council said that you would "consider" lowering the property tax rate below 91.5 cents. We urge you to do so.

On a personal note, I hope you have appreciated the positive tone in all of my remarks to you. However, I would be remiss if I did not inform you of real anger in a vast number of Alexandrians over the city's large automatic spending increases that result in 10%-to-40% increases in our individual property tax bills each year.

Thank you for all the time and effort you have put into this issue and so many others for our city.

Lou Cordia
Alexandrians For A 3% Compromise

2
4-16-05



Jackie Henderson/Alex
05/02/2005 03:44 PM

alexvamayor@aol.com, delpepper@aol.com,
To councilmangaines@aol.com, council@krupicka.com,
macdonaldcouncil@msn.com, paulcsmedberg@aol.com,
cc
bcc
Subject Fw: Lowering Property Taxes!

----- Forwarded by Jackie Henderson/Alex on 05/02/2005 03:44 PM -----



"Jim & Barb"
<mellenti@comcast.net>
05/02/2005 03:38 PM

To <Jackie.Henderson@alexandriava.gov>
cc
Subject Lowering Property Taxes!

Please respond to
<mellenti@comcast.net>

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Alexandria, VA 22302

Original E-Mail

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Thank you for all the time and effort you have put into this issue and so many others for our city.

Lou Cordia
Alexandrians For A 3% Compromise

2
4-16-05



<SEAlva@aol.com>
05/02/2005 04:29 PM

To <Jackie.Henderson@alexandriava.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject real estate taxes

Dear Ms. Henderson,

Please convey my concern over rising real estate taxes in Alexandria to the City Council. Things have gone sky high and I am wondering if it will ever stop!

We have to stop taxing homeowners at this outrageous rate or you will be responsible for encouraging people to leave Alexandria for other counties/cities where rates are more reasonable and predictable.

Many thanks for your assistance in this matter of major concern.

Sincerely,
Susan E. Alvarado
112 S. Royal Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

2
4-16-05



"Alice Harvey"
<AHarvey@oblon.com>

05/02/2005 05:12 PM

To <DelPepper@aol.com>, <CouncilmanGaines@aol.com>,
<Rob@Krupicka.com>, <MacdonaldCouncil@msn.com>,
<PaulCSmedberg@aol.com>, <Council@JoyceWoodson.net>,

cc

bcc

Subject Alexandria's Economic Diversity

Dear Vice Mayor Pepper, Councilman Gaines, Councilman Krupicka, Councilman Macdonald, Councilman Smedberg, and Councilwoman Woodson,

Diversity is one of Alexandria's most valuable elements. I ask that you back up your commitment to socioeconomic diversity as well as racial diversity by supporting the 3% Compromise.

When I began working for a living, back in the late sixties, I, too, was discriminated against -- in terms of education, jobs, and income -- but on the basis of my gender. Later (though surprisingly not all that much later), I was discriminated against on the basis of my age. Finally, I found an employer with the good sense to refrain from discrimination. Now, as I contemplate working full-time until I am at least 70 in order to have any hope of keeping my home, current real estate tax increases threaten to effect a new kind of discrimination against me -- discrimination based on the fact that I have succeeded somewhat, but just not enough for Alexandria.

I have been an Alexandrian for 11 years, and I love our City. I lived in an apartment out in the West End for about seven years. Then I was fortunate, through working very hard, saving as much as I could, and "living small" to save enough for a down payment on a condominium at Carlyle Towers. It will be paid off when I am nearly 90. But I will need to add some extra principal to my mortgage payments for the next 15 to 20 years to have any hope of being able to keep my home when I am too old to work. If our real estate taxes are not reined in, and strenuously, all my work will have been for nothing. I will lose the home I worked more than 30 years to even begin to pay for.

Please don't let Alexandria become a "boutique" city -- a city that is populated only by the Very Rich, playing Lord and Lady Bountiful to the Very Poor, who will work (as it now looks that I did) under the threat that, if they surpass their economic origins by a moderate margin, they will have to abandon their homes and their City in their success.

Please support the 3% Compromise. Businesses need to pay more to support our City, and we need to tighten our belts and cut back on luxuries that only the very rich can afford.

Thank you.

Alice C. Harvey

2
4-16-05



"Victoria Patterson"
<vpatterson@sbpublicaffairs.com>

To <Jackie.Henderson@alexandriava.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject Alexandrian for a 3% Compromise

05/03/2005 12:13 PM

Please respond to
"Victoria Patterson"
<vpatterson@sbpublicaffairs.com>

Good Afternoon Ms. Henderson!

On behalf of Mr. Craigan P. Shirley, please relay the following comment to all 7 City Council Members, the City Manager and add this comment to the official city record on the property tax issue:

"My taxes are too high and I am for a 3% Compromise"

Craigian P. Shirley
Shirley & Banister Public Affairs
122 South Patrick Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 739-5920
(703) 739-5424 Fax
E-mail: cshirley@sppublicaffairs.com

Thank you.

C. Victoria Patterson
Shirley & Banister Public Affairs
122 South Patrick Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 739-5920
(703) 739-5924 Fax
E-mail: vpatterson@sbpublicaffairs.com

2
4-16-05



Martha Lysko
<marthalysko@yahoo.com>

05/03/2005 03:43 PM

To <Jackie.Henderson@alexandriava.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject

We urge that all seven City Council members vote for the 3% Compromise.

Martha Lysko
1404 Roundhouse LN 311
Alex, VA 22314
marthalysko@yahoo.com

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<http://mail.yahoo.com>

2
4-16-05



Jerry King
<jjkingconsulting@yahoo.com>
05/03/2005 05:27 PM

To <Jackie.Henderson@alexandriava.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject Lowering Property Taxes

Please relay my message to all seven City Council Members and the City Manager on the property tax issue (Public Hearing, April 16, 2005 Docket #13).

Dear Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Pepper, Councilmen Gaines, Krupicka, Macdonald and Smedberg, and Councilwoman Woodson,

On behalf of 5,000 Alexandrians For A 3% Compromise and (hopefully without being presumptuous) more than a dozen Civic Associations -- representing 1000s more Alexandrians -- which have approved a similar 3% Resolution, we ask for your vote on May 2nd for a 3% Compromise -- a 3%-to-3.5% spending increase resulting in a 3% increase in our city-wide property tax bill at a property tax rate of 86 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

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Jerry King

J. J. King III