


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 2, 2007

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMORANDUM #30 : SPECIAL EVENTS – CITYWIDE SUMMARY OF COSTS

This memo is in response to Mayor Euille’s request for a detailed listing of the costs of special events in the City. Many different City departments provide support to run these special events throughout Alexandria. When appropriate and based on existing City policies, the City seeks reimbursement from the event sponsors in order to help cover costs. In sum, staff calculates the City spent \$834,416 in FY 2006 to support special events, of which \$182,911 (22%) was reimbursed by the special event sponsor. The net City subsidy was \$651,505.

Departmental Support Roles

The primary departments involved in supporting special events are Parks and Recreation, Fire, Code Enforcement, Police, T&ES, Health, and General Services. Each plays an integral role in delivering these special events.

- Parks and Recreation has two very distinct roles in supporting special events. First, the Special Events section of RPCA helps plan for and coordinate the majority of special events occurring in Alexandria. They provide a central contact point for groups wanting to hold events and then work with other City departments to provide appropriate support. The Parks Division provides support at events by assisting with event set-up and take down, trash pickup, and preparation of park facilities.
- The Fire Department provides first aid services and coordinated communications services. Code Enforcement inspects and issues permits for these events with the goal of ensuring a safe environment.
- The Police Department provides security, crowd control, and traffic flow.

- Transportation and Environmental Services controls street closures, street cleaning, waste management, and parking restriction (closing parking spaces and covering meters). Through DASH, T&ES also offers transit services when needed.
- General Services sets up indoor City facilities and Market Square when needed.
- The Health Department's role is to regulate food and food vendors at special events.
- Risk Management provides legal counsel, ensuring events are properly insured and the City's liability is minimized.

City Sponsorship/Support of Special Events

Most special events occurring within the City receive some level of sponsorship from the City. That sponsorship can range from the complete planning and operation of an event, to indirect support costs (Police and Fire coverage, street cleaning, trash pickup, etc.), to direct funding for the sponsor of an event. A typical event receives a combination of these differing types of support. For example, the City provides \$5,400 in direct funding to the event sponsor and around \$40,000 in various indirect support costs for the St. Patrick's Day Parade each year.

Only around 38% of special event sponsors provided any level of reimbursement to the City to help cover costs in FY 2006. Many special events are not currently charging any sort of admission fee and would not have the capability to help defray City costs without changing this practice. Even with these limitations, the City was able to recover around 31% (typically in the 30-33% range) of its total event-specific special events costs in FY 2006.

The Police Department had the highest cost recovery rate in the City (54.5%), while the Special Events section of RPCA had the lowest cost recovery rate (12.2%). Most departments fell somewhere around the 30% cost recovery range.

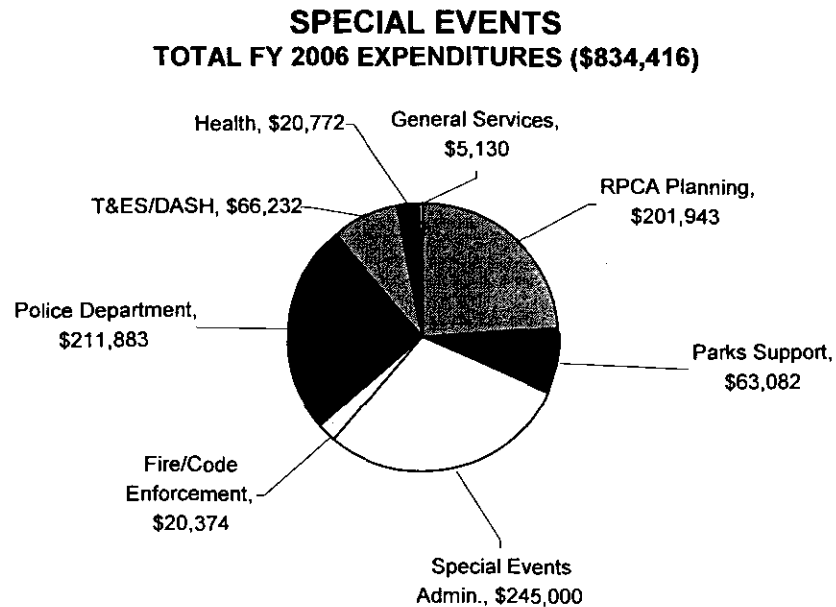
- The Police Department specifically budgeted \$110,000 in FY 2006 for overtime costs associated with special events. With this funding and reimbursed costs from event sponsors, the Police Department is able to fully cover its costs most years.
- RPCA budgets money specifically for supporting special events as well. The special events section of RPCA had an FY 2006 budget of approximately \$447,000. Some of this funding supported specific special events and some funded the administrative oversight of Citywide special events. The Department also budgeted \$77,000 to directly sponsor or co-sponsor special events.
- The Parks Division had a special events overtime budget of \$29,000.

- Other departments either recovered their costs from the event sponsors or absorbed the costs in their General Fund budgets.

Overall, the City spent approximately \$834,416 (including administrative oversight) and the overall special events budgets totalled \$676,000. This yielded a budget deficit of about \$158,000 in FY 2006.

Overall City Costs

Total City expenditures for supporting special events (including administrative overhead) in FY 2006 were about \$834,416. The largest shares of this total belong to the Parks and Recreation Department (\$510,000), the Police Department (\$212,000), and Transportation and Environmental Services (\$66,000), with other departments spending between \$5,000 and \$20,000 each.



The highest-funded special events in FY 2006 were the City’s Birthday Celebration (\$71,776), Ethnic Festivals (\$74,540), the St. Patrick’s Day Parade (\$45,400), and the Scottish Christmas Walk (\$22,339 net City cost). These four events alone constituted more than 25% of the total costs of all special events in FY 2006.

After recovering approximately \$183,000 from event sponsors, the overall net City cost for special events was about \$652,000 in FY 2006. The major events that are largely reimbursed were the Jamestown 400th Anniversary (\$53,866), the Hard Times Café Music Festival (\$38,072) and the Fall Arts Festival (\$20,851).

Future Actions Necessary

Although the City budgeted slightly more for special events activities in total in FY 2006 the actual expenditures, some rearranging of funding needs to occur in the future. Properly budgeting for these support costs within each department will ensure that no department is forced to absorb these costs and placed at a disadvantage. Also, not all departments have been reporting their costs for reimbursable events. Finally, City Staff will be addressing the need to develop a consistent set of policies for cost recovery and proposing them for Council consideration at a future date following consultation with major special event sponsors. City staff also will be reviewing our internal procedures for measuring and charging for special event costs determined to be appropriate by Council-endorsed policies.

Attachment 1: City Special Events – FY 2006 Event Specific Support Costs

Attachment 2: Summary by Department – FY 2006 Event Specific Support Costs

Attachment 3: Total City Special Event Budget and Spending

Special Events - FY 2006 Event Specific Support Costs

EVENT	EVENT SPECIFIC EXPENDITURES							TOTALS		
	RPCA Sp Events Planning	Parks Support	Fire/Code	Police Dept	T&ES/DASH	Health	General Svcs	TOTAL COST	REIMBURSEMENT /RECOVERY	NET CITY COST
1 USA/Alexandria's Birthday	\$52,894	\$5,370	\$1,132	\$9,000	\$1,920	\$1,460		\$71,776		\$71,776
2 Concert Series	\$36,448	\$2,400					\$3,200	\$42,048		\$42,048
3 Virginia Scottish Games	\$5,000	\$2,060	\$613			\$730		\$8,403		\$8,403
4 7-Ethnic Festivals	\$39,040	\$11,565	\$2,829	\$10,768	\$5,228	\$5,110		\$74,540	\$2,650	\$71,890
5 Comcast Outdoor Film Fest.	\$980	\$2,880	\$263	\$5,000		\$876		\$9,999	\$2,554	\$7,445
6 Run Slim 10k Race			\$263	\$3,500				\$3,763	\$3,263	\$500
7 Friendship Fire Festival	\$1,452	\$240	\$212	\$400	\$738	\$73		\$3,115		\$3,115
8 One Love Festival		\$240				\$365		\$605		\$605
9 Midtown Softball Tournament		\$1,980						\$1,980	\$1,980	\$0
10 Alex. Festival of the Arts			\$1,227	\$21,942	\$3,380		\$1,500	\$28,049	\$20,851	\$7,198
11 Jamestown 400th Anniversary	\$22,000	\$6,450		\$22,916	\$2,500			\$53,866	\$50,942	\$2,924
12 Canine Games		\$360		\$210		\$110		\$680	\$210	\$470
13 Family Fall Festival	\$1,500	\$1,260				\$110		\$2,870		\$2,870
14 Art on the Avenue		\$1,320	\$2,032	\$8,574	\$3,640	\$2,957		\$18,523	\$9,894	\$8,629
15 Walk for Breast Cancer		\$600		\$3,635	\$407			\$4,642	\$3,635	\$1,007
16 Halloween Parade		\$300		\$2,400	\$2,280			\$4,980		\$4,980
17 Seaport Day		\$900						\$900	\$900	\$0
18 Turkey Trot			\$175	\$6,185	\$688			\$7,048		\$7,048
19 Toys for Tots	\$50	\$150						\$200		\$200
20 City Tree Lighting	\$500	\$1,380					\$250	\$2,130		\$2,130
21 Calls from the Clauses	\$250							\$250		\$250
22 Potomac West Tree Lighting		\$1,440						\$1,440		\$1,440
23 Scottish Xmas Walk		\$300	\$339	\$19,500	\$7,700			\$27,839	\$5,500	\$22,339
24 Holiday Parade of Boats		\$360						\$360		\$360
25 First Night Alexandria			\$254	\$4,675	\$938			\$5,867	\$4,675	\$1,192
26 G.W. Race	\$13,670	\$1,170	\$175	\$2,900				\$17,915	\$2,900	\$15,015
27 G.W. Re-enactment/Parade		\$2,220	\$438	\$15,800	\$9,335		\$60	\$27,853	\$3,700	\$24,153
28 City Black History Program	\$3,849							\$3,849		\$3,849
29 M.L. King Program	\$1,101							\$1,101		\$1,101

* Bold italicized #'s represent full or partial reimbursement from sources outside of the City

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Attachment 1

EVENT	EVENT SPECIFIC EXPENDITURES							TOTALS		
	RPCA Sp Events Planning	Parks Support	Fire/Code	Police Dept	T&ES/DASH	Health	General Svcs	TOTAL COST	REIMBURSEMENT /RECOVERY	NET CITY COST
30 St. Patrick's Day Parade	\$5,400	\$855	\$438	\$23,800	\$14,769		\$120	\$45,382		\$45,382
31 Art in City Hall	\$1,900							\$1,900		\$1,900
32 Run vs. Row		\$150	\$263	\$4,000				\$4,413		\$4,413
33 City Days of Remembrance	\$1,200							\$1,200		\$1,200
34 G.W. Parkway 10k Classic		\$360	\$175	\$6,807	\$527			\$7,869	\$7,167	\$702
35 Colin Casey 5K		\$240	\$292			\$146		\$678		\$678
36 Earth Day	\$3,451	\$243			\$2,295	\$292		\$6,281		\$6,281
37 Cheerleading Competition		\$990						\$990		\$990
38 Cherry Blossom Festival	\$1,520	\$120				\$438		\$2,078		\$2,078
39 USPTO			\$127	\$1,883		\$475		\$2,485	\$2,010	\$475
40 Memorial Day Jazz Festival	\$4,697	\$2,220		\$1,800		\$511		\$9,228	\$700	\$8,528
41 Kelly Cares 5K		\$300	\$351	\$6,030				\$6,681	\$6,681	\$0
42 Mt. Vernon School Fun Fair		\$2,025	\$169			\$183		\$2,377		\$2,377
43 Ch. Barrett School Bazaar			\$381			\$183		\$564		\$564
44 Titan Expo		\$1,200	\$323			\$183		\$1,706		\$1,706
45 King Street Pedestrian Plaza	\$2,000							\$2,000		\$2,000
46 Supper Under the Stars	\$3,041					\$584		\$3,625		\$3,625
47 Hardtimes Café Music Fest.		\$720	\$613	\$2,950	\$2,500	\$219		\$7,002	\$4,283	\$2,719
48 Alex Red Cross Waterfront Fest		\$8,714	\$4,227	\$16,864	\$2,500	\$5,767		\$38,072	\$38,072	\$0
49 Juneteenth Celebration			\$254					\$254		\$254
50 July 4th USPP				\$6,500				\$6,500	\$6,500	\$0
51 Gulf Coast Relief Run			\$263	\$3,844				\$4,107	\$3,844	\$263
52 Firefighters Wreath Cerem.			\$85					\$85		\$85
53 Godspeed					\$4,887			\$4,887		\$4,887
54 Mt Vernon Ave - 2nd Thurs.			\$762					\$762		\$762
55 Mt Vernon Ave - 1st Thurs.			\$1,524					\$1,524		\$1,524
56 APD SWAT Team Eudurathon			\$175					\$175		\$175
TOTALS	\$201,943	\$63,082	\$20,374	\$211,883	\$66,232	\$20,772	\$5,130	\$589,416	\$182,911	\$406,505

* Bc *alicized #'s represent full or partial reimbursement from source outside of the City

Special Events - FY 2006 Event Specific Support Costs Summary

DEPARTMENT	EVENT SPECIFIC EXPENDITURES*	RECOVERED COSTS	NET CITY COSTS	% COSTS RECOVERED
RPCA Planning	\$201,943	\$24,650	\$177,293	12.2%
Parks Support	\$63,082	\$20,744	\$42,338	32.9%
Fire/Code Enforcement	\$20,374	\$6,418	\$13,956	31.5%
Police Department	\$211,883	\$115,452	\$96,431	54.5%
T&ES/DASH	\$66,232	\$8,380	\$57,852	12.7%
Health	\$20,772	\$5,767	\$15,005	27.8%
General Services	\$5,130	\$1,500	\$3,630	29.2%
TOTAL	\$589,416	\$182,911	\$406,505	31.0%

* Includes only expenditures directly attributable to specific special events and does not include administrative overhead

Total FY 2006 City Special Event Budget vs. Spending	
RPCA Special Events Administrative Overhead	\$245,000
Event Specific Expenditures	\$589,416
TOTAL City Expenditures	\$834,416
All-City Special Events Budgeted Amount*	\$676,000
Total Budget Surplus/(Deficit)	(\$158,416)

* includes \$447,000 from Special Events section of RPCA; \$29,000 from Parks Division; and \$110,000 from the Police Department