

EXHIBIT NO. 1

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 12, 2008

TO: THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

CC: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

FROM: MAYOR WILLIAM D. EUILLE & COUNCILMAN JUSTIN M. WILSON

SUBJECT: ELECTION REFORM

The mission adopted by the City Council on September 14, 2004 states that successful government is one that "engages the entire community as it plans for the future¹." The most basic symptom of community engagement is participation in the electoral process.

Over the past 30 years, that civic engagement, as measured by the percentage of residents participating in our municipal elections, has steadily declined², from 41% in 1976 to 19% in 2006.

In 1992, the City Council expressed concern over the reduction in turnout among voters in municipal elections. At the time, a committee was appointed consisting of George Cook, Mike Holm, Myke Reid, Jack Ticer, Nancy Cox, William Hurd, and Sandra Murphy.

In April of 1993, the Committee provided their report³ to City Council—recommending three changes:

- Decreasing the number of elections by electing City Council members to four-year terms
- Changing the time of City Council elections to the fall
- Making it more convenient to vote by increasing the number of polling places

In March of 2007, again in response to concerns regarding reductions in turnout, the Mayor appointed a new committee to study the issue—this time consisting of Richard Hobson, Becky Davies, Robert Calhoun, Christopher Campagna, Lynnwood Campbell, William Cleveland, Iris Henley, Anna Leider, and Joyce Woodson.

¹ City of Alexandria, "Mayor and City Council, 2004-2015 Strategic Plan." Adopted September 14, 2004.

² Turnout in 1976 was 41%, 1979 was 39%, 1982 was 37%, 1985 was 36%, 1988 was 34%, 1991 was 30%, 1994 was 29%, 1997 was 24%, 2000 was 25%, 2003 was 27%, 2006 was 19%.

³ Ad Hoc Committee on Election Procedures, "Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Election Procedures." April 14, 1993.

In June of 2007, the Committee provided their report⁴ to the City Council—making three recommendations:

- That the current process for Council and School Board elections not be changed
- That the Council and the School Board each have sufficient authority to decide if a pay raise for a future Council or School Board, respectively, is warranted (the process called for under current law), and see no need for this Committee to make any such recommendation.
- That the citizens of Alexandria are better served if the Mayor and Council have adequate staff assistance, and we recommend that each Council member have a Fulltime aide (each member currently has a half-time aide); also recommend that staff assistance for the Mayor be increased by the equivalent of a half-time person (the Mayor currently has the equivalent of one full-time aide).

Both the 1992/1993 and the 2007 committees grappled with a similar set of issues, including:

- Changing the municipal elections from May to November
- Changes in the length of City Council terms
- Staggering the election of City Council members
- Creation of wards/districts for the election of City Council members
- Transition to non-partisan elections for City Council
- Changes to compensation for the City Council

Of these listed changes, City Council has the authority today to accomplish a change in the election from May to November, and a change in compensation for the City Council. The remaining changes that were discussed by the two committees would require a change to the City Charter, and the concurrence of the General Assembly and the Governor.

The Code of Virginia⁵ prescribed that a City might change its elections to November by the adoption of an ordinance by the City Council or by the submission of signatures to the Circuit Court requesting a binding referendum.

Subsequent to the receipt of the 2007 report, the City Council chose to appoint two members of the Council to formulate recommendations based on the 2007 report. As those designees, and in recognition of the significant community interest in this issue, we have the following recommendations to our colleagues:

- 1) That City Council adopts a resolution addressed to the Alexandria Circuit Court, requesting an advisory referendum to appear on the ballot on November 4, 2008, containing the question: "Should the Alexandria City Council consider and adopt

⁴ Richard Hobson, Chair, "Report of the Committee Created to Review the Election Process for the Alexandria City Council and the School Board." June 21, 2007.

⁵ Code of Virginia. Section 24.2-222.1. Amended 2002.

an ordinance to change the election date of the Mayor, members of the City Council and members of the School Board from the May general election to the November general election cycle?"

- 2) If the November referendum is successful, an ordinance to move municipal elections to November shall be introduced at the Tuesday November 11, 2008 Legislative Meeting, and scheduled for public hearing and adoption at the Saturday November 15, 2008 Public Hearing.
- 3) At the November 15, 2008 Public Hearing, the City Council shall solicit input as to additional changes to our elections that may be required.
- 4) At the November 25, 2008 Legislative Meeting, the City Council shall adopt a resolution including any desired changes to the City Charter. That resolution shall be forwarded to the City's General Assembly delegation for introduction during the 2009 General Assembly session.
- 5) If changes to the City Charter are requested, City Council shall hold the required public hearing at the December 13, 2008 Public Hearing.

cc: Ignacio Pessoa, City Attorney
Bernard Caton, Legislative Director
The Alexandria School Board
Mary LaMois, Secretary, Alexandria Electoral Board
Senator Patsy Ticer
Senator Richard Saslaw
Delegate Brian Moran
Delegate Adam Ebbin
Delegate David Englin

RESOLUTION NO. ____

WHEREAS, Section 24.2-222.1 of the Code of Virginia authorizes the Alexandria City Council, by ordinance, to change the election date of the Mayor, members of the City Council and members of the School Board from the May general election cycle to the November general election cycle; and

WHEREAS, Section 3.13 of the Alexandria City Charter provides that the City Council has the authority to submit any proposed ordinance, question or issue to the qualified voters of the City for an advisory referendum; and

WHEREAS, Section 3.13 of the City Charter and Section 24.2-684 of the Code of Virginia further provide (1) that any such advisory referendum be initiated by resolution of the City Council, addressed to the Circuit Court of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and (2) that, if the request is found by the Court to be in proper order, the Court shall order the advisory referendum election to be held in within a reasonable time and on a date in conformance with state law; and

WHEREAS, Section 24.2-682(A) of the Code of Virginia permits such advisory referendum election to be held on the same day as a general election; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has concluded that it is necessary and desirable to submit to the qualified voters of the City an advisory referendum on the question of whether the City Council should change the election date of the Mayor, members of the City Council and members of the School Board from the May general election cycle to the November general election cycle; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has concluded that such advisory referendum question should be placed on the ballot at the November 4, 2008 general election, in order that as many qualified voters as possible participate in the referendum election;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council does hereby request that the Circuit Court of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, order and direct that the following advisory referendum question be submitted to the qualified voters of the City at the November 4, 2008 general election:

Should the Alexandria City Council consider and adopt an ordinance to change the election date of the Mayor, members of the City Council and members of the School Board from the May general election to the November general election cycle?

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council does hereby direct the City Clerk to attest, and the City Attorney to file this resolution with the Circuit Court, in the manner provided by law.

ADOPTED:

WILLIAM D. EUILLE, **MAYOR**

ATTEST:

Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC, City Clerk

CITY SEAL HERE

Notice of Public Hearing on the City of Alexandria Electoral Process

The City Council of Alexandria seeks public input regarding possible changes to the city charter to determine if the community prefers that the present process or a different process be used to elect the City Council and School Board.

Therefore, the Council will hold a public hearing on Saturday, June 14, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. (or as soon thereafter as this matter may be heard) in the Council Chamber, Alexandria City Hall, 2nd Floor, 301 King Street. The purpose of the hearing is to receive public comment on (1) which one of the following sets of questions should be submitted for advisory referendum to the voters of the City (comments on the wording of the questions are also welcome); and (2) whether the preferred set of questions should be included on the ballot at a May general election, or at a November general election.

Option One is a set of four questions that would read as follows:

The City Council is seeking public input regarding possible changes to the city charter to determine if the community prefers the present process or a different process to elect the City Council and School Board. The following questions represent four approaches to conducting local elections. These approaches are designed to avoid overlap with federal elections. Please vote "yes" or "no" on each question.

1. Do you support continuing the existing 3-year terms of service for the City Council and School Board, with May elections for all members?

Yes ___ No ___

2. Do you support a change to 4-year terms of service for the City Council and School Board, with November elections every 4 years for all members held at the same time as state delegate and state senate elections (that is, in odd-numbered years)?

Yes ___ No ___

3. Do you support a change to 4-year, staggered terms of service for the City Council and School Board, with November elections every 2 years for a portion of the Council and School Board held at the same time as state delegate and state senate elections?

Yes ___ No ___

4. Do you support a change to 4-year, staggered terms of service for the City Council and School Board, with May elections every 2 years for a portion of the Council and School Board?

Yes ___ No ___

Option Two is a set of two questions that would read as follows:

The City Council is seeking public input regarding possible changes to the city charter to determine if the community prefers the present process or a different process to elect the city council and school board.

1. Should the City change from spring (May) elections every 3 years for the City Council and School Board to fall (November) elections every 4 years that occur at the same time as elections for state delegates and state senators (that is, in odd-numbered years)?

Yes ___ No ___

2. Should the City change from electing City Council and School Board members all at the same time to staggering terms of service so that a portion of the City Council and School Board is elected in alternating elections?

Yes ___ No ___

For further information, please contact: Bernard Caton, Legislative Director, at 703.838.3828 or Ignacio Pessoa, City Attorney, at 703.838.4433.

Individuals with disabilities requiring assistance or special arrangements, and individuals who require translation services to participate in the City Council meeting may call the City Clerk's Office at 703.838.4550 (TTY/TDD 703.838.5056). We ask that you provide a 48-hour notice so that proper arrangements may be made.

Persons wishing to speak on this item may sign up prior to the public hearing meeting by calling the Office of the City Clerk and Clerk of Council at 703 838-4550.

From John Howard Eisenhour, 630 S. Pitt St.

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6-14-08

**TESTIMONY CONCERNING ELECTION REFORM
ADVISORY REFERENDUM LANGUAGE AND TIMING AT
CITY COUNCIL ON JUNE 14, 2008**

MR MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL --

MY NAME IS JOHN EISENHOUR. MY WIFE AND I HAVE LIVED IN THE CITY SINCE 1966 AND WE HAVE BEEN HEAVILY INVOLVED IN THE ELECTION PROCESS FOR MUCH OF THAT TIME. I HOPE THAT YOU WILL READ MY ENTIRE STATEMENT BUT GIVEN THE TIME CONSTRAINT I PLAN TO PRESENT AN ABBREVIATED VERSION NOW. HERE ARE MY BOTTOM LINES:

- 0 ASK ONE QUESTION IN NOVEMBER – TEXT ON PAGE 3**
- 0 ELECT ALL LOCAL OFFICIALS IN LEAP YEAR +3**
- 0 DO NOT REPEAT NOT SCHEDULE THIS ADVISORY REFERENDUM FOR MAY, 2009**

BACKGROUND

AS SOMEONE WHO WAS A MEMBER OF THE CITY COUNCIL'S CITIZENS AD HOC COMMITTEE BACK IN 1972–1973 (RESULTED IN SPEAKER TIME LIMITS, LIGHTS AND BUZZERS, SATURDAY PUBLIC HEARING MEETINGS, PUBLISHED ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULES, COUNCIL AIDES, ETC), MANY YEARS EXPERIENCE AS AN ELECTION DAY OFFICIAL, AND AS THE CURRENT OFFICE MANAGER FOR THE ALEXANDRIA DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE, I HAVE AN INTENSE INTEREST IN THIS SUBJECT AND, PERHAPS, A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE ON THE ELECTION CYCLE.

I TESTIFIED AT LENGTH ON THIS SUBJECT BEFORE THE COMMITTEE THAT DICK HOBSON CHAIRED LAST YEAR AND I WAS VERY DISAPPOINTED WITH THE RESULTS OF THAT BODY'S DELIBERATIONS. YOUR PUBLIC HEARING ON APRIL 12, 2008 WAS BETTER, BUT, BASED ON THE PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY THE CITY ON JUNE 6, 2008, I STILL DON'T THINK THE PROBLEM IS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD.

I AM HERE TODAY REPRESENTING ONLY MYSELF.

BASIC PROBLEM

FUNDAMENTALLY, WE HAVE TOO MANY ELECTION DAYS – FEDERAL, STATE AND CITY – IN ALEXANDRIA CITY AND MANY VOTERS CANNOT

SUSTAIN THEIR INTEREST IN THESE EVENTS. THE ONLY OPTION AVAILABLE TO CURE THIS OVERLOAD IS TO EXTEND MAYOR/COUNCIL/SCHOOL BOARD TERMS TO FOUR YEARS, ELIMINATE MAY ELECTIONS AND FIT THE LOCAL ELECTION PROCESS INTO THE JUNE PRIMARY/NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION CYCLE MANDATED BY THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS. BY ELIMINATING ALMOST 20% OF ELECTION DAYS OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS THE CITY SHOULD SAVE A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF MONEY AS WELL. HERE ARE MY ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE BASIC REFORM.

REASONS FOR FOUR-YEAR TERMS:

- AVOID YEARS WHEN LARGE FEDERAL/STATE ELECTIONS OVERLAP WITH LOCAL ELECTIONS
- I CAN THINK OF NOTHING FAVORING THREE-YEAR TERMS OVER FOUR-YEAR TERMS. AND, INTERESTINGLY, I CAN'T REMEMBER ANYONE ARGUING THAT WAY AT THE APRIL PUBLIC HEARING

REASONS FOR LOCAL ELECTIONS IN NOVEMBER:

- MORE VOTERS WILL PARTICIPATE – AND I CONSIDER THE NOTION THAT A LOW TURNOUT IS A GOOD THING SINCE ONLY LONG TIME RESIDENTS PARTICIPATE TO BE ANTI (SMALL D) DEMOCRATIC
- FEWER EXPENDITURES BY THE CITY (MAYBE \$ 200,000 OF THE \$1,200,000 NOW BEING SPENT ANNUALLY BY THE ELECTIONS BOARD) AS WELL AS BY MANY CITIZENS WHO GET HIT UP CONSTANTLY FOR MONEY BY CANDIDATES AT EVERY LEVEL
- REGULARIZE THE ANNUAL PROCESS – PRIMARIES AND/OR CAUCUSES IN JUNE, GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NOVEMBER
- MANY VIRGINIA CITIES HAVE ALREADY SWITCHED TO 4 YEAR TERMS
- THE OFT HEARD ARGUMENTS THAT 1) IT IS GOOD FOR COUNCIL TO BE PRESSURED BY AN ELECTION THREAT NEAR BUDGET TIME EVERY THIRD YEAR (BUT NOT OTHER YEARS) AND THAT 2) CIVIC GROUPS CAN'T GET “GEARED UP” IN THE FALL STRIKE ME AS DOWN RIGHT FRIVOLOUS
- BEST OF ALL, ONE LESS GENERAL ELECTION AND, IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT BECAUSE OF THE POTENTIAL FOR CROSSOVER VOTING, THAT THE PARTIES WOULD AGREE TO USE THE JUNE PRIMARY THAT IS LIKELY TO HAPPEN ANYWAY, NO EXPENSIVE PARTY CAUCUSES FOR REGULAR LOCAL ELECTIONS

SPECIFIC LANGUAGE CHANGES

CONCERNING THE EXACT LANGUAGE OF THE ADVISORY REFERENDUM, I BELIEVE THE 4 QUESTION FORMULATION WILL TOTALLY CONFUSE VOTERS. **PLEASE DON'T GO THERE !**

THE TWO QUESTION APPROACH WORKS IF YOU THINK YOU MUST OFFER STAGGERED TERMS AND PROVIDED THAT BOTH QUESTIONS ARE MODIFIED TO BE MUCH MORE PRECISE. AS WRITTEN THEY WILL CONFUSE AND MISLEAD THE VOTERS. STARTING WITH THE TEXT SHOWN IN THE MANAGER'S REPORT, HERE IS HOW I WOULD EDIT THE TWO QUESTIONS:

1. Should the City change from spring (May) elections every 3 years for Mayor, City Council and School Board to fall (November) elections every 4 years [that occur at the same time as elections for state delegates and state senators(that is, in odd-numbered years)] **in the third year after a Presidential election** ?
2. Should the City change from electing the Mayor and City Council and School Board members at the same time to [staggering terms of service so that a portion of the City Council and School Board is elected in alternating elections] **electing the Mayor and x (3?) City Council persons plus x (4?) School Board members in the third year after a Presidential Election as well as x (3?) City Council persons and x (4?) School Board members in the first year following a Presidential election** ?

HOWEVER, I THINK THAT **YOUR FIRST STEP SHOULD BE TO THROW OUT QUESTION #2 ALL TOGETHER.** THE IMPACT OF ADDING THE STAGGERED TERMS DIMENSION TO THIS EFFORT IS SUBSTANTIAL SINCE THE FIRST YEAR FOLLOWING A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION (LEAP YEAR + 1) IS ALSO WHEN THE GOVERNOR, LT GOVERNOR, ATTORNEY GENERAL, COMMONWEALTH ATTORNEY AND THE SHERIFF AS WELL AS STATE DELEGATES ARE ELECTED. IN ADDITION, IT IS OFTEN THE CASE THAT STATE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND SUCH ARE PROPOSED IN THIS YEAR. THUS, THE CITY OFFICE CANDIDATES THAT RUN IN LEAP YEAR +1 COULD WELL BE DROWNED OUT BY HIGHER ORDER RACES. AND, HOW WOULD YOU SPLIT UP THE SCHOOL BOARD EVENLY GIVEN THE AREA REPRESENTATION ASPECT.

IN MY APRIL STATEMENT TO COUNCIL I SAID THAT I COULD SUPPORT LOCAL ELECTION ACTIVITY IN LEAP YEAR + 1 BUT ON REFLECTION I NOW THINK IT PRESENTS TOO MANY PROBLEMS. AND, I AM SURE THAT THE VOTERS WOULD WANT TO KNOW JUST HOW THE STAGGERED SYSTEM WOULD WORK BEFORE VOTING ON IT. **QUESTION #2 ABOVE AND THE IDEA OF STAGGERED TERMS SHOULD BE DROPPED.**

REASONS FOR LOCAL ELECTIONS IN LEAP YEAR + 3:

- THIS IS THE YEAR IN WHICH OTHER ELECTIONS ARE LEAST LIKELY TO DROWN OUT LOCAL ISSUES
- THE ONLY OTHER OFFICES UP FOR ELECTION IN LEAP YEAR + 3 ARE STATE SENATOR, STATE DELEGATE, AND THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT – OFFICES WHOSE OCCUPANTS OFTEN NEED TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE MAYOR, COUNCIL AND EVEN THE SCHOOL BOARD TO ACHIEVE POLICY OBJECTIVES

WHEN TO HOLD THE ADVISORY REFERENDUM

THE REMAINING ISSUE IS WHEN THE ADVISORY REFERENDUM SHOULD BE HELD. THE (SMALL D) DEMOCRATIC THING TO DO IS TO PLACE IT ON THE BALLOT WHEN THE MOST VOTERS ARE EXPECTED – AND I STILL THINK IT SHOULD APPEAR THIS NOVEMBER. HOWEVER, AS A LONG TIME ELECTION OFFICER I SHARE THE ELECTORIAL BOARD'S CONCERN ABOUT THE IMPACT IT MIGHT HAVE ON THE LENGTH OF LINES THIS TIME AROUND.

BUT, NEXT MAY IS NOT THE ANSWER EITHER SINCE THIS MATTER WOULD LIKELY BECOME A MAJOR DEBATING TOPIC BETWEEN THE CONTENDERS FOR MAYOR, CITY COUNCIL AND THE SCHOOL BOARD WITH ACCUSATIONS OF AN INCUMBENT POWER GRAB, ETC. THE PEOPLE ARE ENTITLED TO BE ABLE TO CAMPAIGN FOR OR AGAINST AND THEN VOTE ON A MAJOR CHANGE TO THE SYSTEM WITHOUT CURRENT CANDIDATES OF EITHER PARTY USING THE ISSUE FOR PERSONAL ADVANCEMENT.

CONSEQUENTLY, I BELIEVE THAT THE NEXT WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY FOR THIS ISSUE WOULD BE THE NOVEMBER 2009 BALLOT AFTER LOCAL ELECTIONS ARE OVER. AND, NOVEMBER 2009 IS LIKELY TO BE THE NEXT LARGEST TURN OUT UNTIL NOVEMBER 2012. IF NOVEMBER 2008 OR NOVEMBER 2009 DOES NOT WORK, I RECOMMEND DEFERRING FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THIS ISSUE UNTIL NOVEMBER 2012. IF A FOUR YEAR DELAY IS SELECTED, THE ISSUE COULD BE PLACED ON THE NOVEMBER BALLOT BY THE TEN OUTGOING COUNCIL (THOSE ELECTED TO A 3 YEAR TERM IN MAY 2009), DEBATED BEFORE THE MAY 2012 LOCAL ELECTION BUT VOTING WOULD TAKE PLACE IN NOVEMBER 2012 WHEN MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION IS LIKELY AGAIN.

IF AND WHEN THE VOTERS VOTE YES ON THE SINGLE QUESTION THAT I BELIEVE THEY SHOULD CONSIDER (BE IT IN NOVEMBER 2008, NOVEMBER 2009, OR NOVEMBER 2012) AND THE STATE GOVERNMENT SUBSEQUENTLY APPROVES THE NECESSARY CHARTER CHANGES, IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THE MAYOR, COUNCIL AND SCHOOL BOARD TO TRUNCATE THE TERMS IN WHICH THEY ARE THEN SERVING SO AS TO IMPLEMENT THE NEW ELECTORIAL SCHEDULE. PRESUMABLY, NEW OFFICERS WOULD BE SWORN ON THE NEW YEAR FOLLOWING THEIR ELECTION IN NOVEMBER.

3
6-14-08



"Goodale, Geoffrey M."
<GGoodale@foley.com>
06/13/2008 04:33 PM

To <alexvamayor@aol.com>, <delpepper@aol.com>, <councilmangaines@aol.com>, <council@krupicka.com>, <timlovain@timlovain.com>, <paulcsmedberg@aol.com>, <jackie.henderson@alexandriava.gov>, <geoff.goodale@bsvca.net>

bcc

Subject City Council Hearing of June 14, 2008 -- Comments Regarding Docket Item 3

<<BSVCA Comments on Docket Item 3.pdf>>

Dear Mayor Euille and Members of City Council:

Attached please find comments that the Board of Directors of Brookville-Seminary Valley Civic Association, Inc. ("BSVCA") respectfully submits for your consideration in deliberating on proposed referendum questions regarding whether to change the way in which the Mayor, the Members of Council, and the Members of the School Board are elected. As discussed below, we request that the Council defer consideration of this matter until citizens are granted further opportunity to evaluate the proposed referendum questions, and we urge the Council not to place any referendum questions on the November 2008 ballot.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. We respectfully request that this e-mail and the attached document be included in the record relating to this proceeding, and accordingly, we are including the City Clerk as a "cc" recipient on this e-mail. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 672-5341 or at (703) 618-6640.

Respectfully submitted,

Geoffrey M. Goodale
President, Brookville-Seminary Valley Civic Association, Inc.

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used by the recipient or any other taxpayer, for the purpose of avoiding Federal tax penalties, and was not written to support the promotion or marketing of any transaction or matter discussed



herein. BSVCA Comments on Docket Item 3.pdf

BROOKVILLE-SEMINARY VALLEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. Box 23348
Alexandria, VA 22304

June 13, 2008

Mayor William D. Euille and Members of City Council
301 King Street – City Hall
Alexandria, VA 22314

Re: Comments on Docket Item 3 of the Council's Public Hearing of June 14, 2008

Dear Mayor Euille and Members of City Council:

The Board of Directors of Brookville-Seminary Valley Civic Association, Inc. ("BSVCA") respectfully submits these comments to the City Council (the "Council") for its consideration in deliberating on proposed referendum questions regarding whether to change the way in which the Mayor, the Members of Council, and the Members of the School Board are elected. As discussed below, we request that the Council defer consideration of this matter until citizens are granted further opportunity to evaluate the proposed referendum questions, and we urge the Council not to place any referendum questions on the November 2008 ballot.

The BSVCA is a non-profit organization that seeks to promote the best interests of Alexandrians in general and those in the West End in particular. Individuals from several hundred households in the Brookville-Seminary Valley area are included among the BSVCA's members.

Since the proposed referendum questions that the Council is now considering were only announced on June 6, there has not been a lot of time for the public, or the Council for that matter, to analyze fully the different sets of questions, or whether there may be other questions that should be considered. For this reason, we request that the Council defer consideration on the proposed questions until the public has more opportunity to evaluate them and their implications. We think that it would be especially beneficial for a public meeting to be held at which the Alexandria Electoral Board, the Council, and the public could consider such issues before the Council votes on this matter.

We also urge the Council not to place any referendum questions on the November 2008 ballot. In our view, it is entirely possible that many voters would find the proposed referendum questions to be confusing, which could result in delays at the voting booth. Given the extremely large numbers of people that are expected to vote in November, such delays could be very detrimental.

For the reasons discussed above, we request that the Council defer consideration of this matter until citizens are granted further opportunity to evaluate the proposed referendum questions, and we urge the Council not to place any referendum questions on the November 2008 ballot. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone at (703) 618-6640 or by e-mail at geoff.goodale@bsvca.net.

Respectfully submitted,



Geoffrey M. Goodale

President, Brookville-Seminary Valley Civic Association, Inc.



alexvamayor@aol.com
06/13/2008 10:09 AM

To Jackie.Henderson@alexandriava.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Re: Request for additional time to speak at City Council, June 14th

3

6-14-08

OK.
Bill

-----Original Message-----

From: Jackie.Henderson@alexandriava.gov
To: alexvamayor@aol.com; delpepper@aol.com; councilmangaines@aol.com;
council@krupicka.com; timothylovain@aol.com; paulcsmedberg@aol.com;
justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov
Sent: Fri, 13 Jun 2008 8:03 am
Subject: Fw: Request for additional time to speak at City Council, June 14th

----- Forwarded by Jackie Henderson/Alex on 06/13/2008 08:03 AM -----

David Fromm or Amy Slack <alsdmf@earthlink.net>
06/12/2008 10:52 PM

To Jackie Henderson <jackie.henderson@alexandriava.gov>
cc

Subject Request for additional time to speak at City Council, June 14th

To Mayor Euille and members of City Council,

For the Public Hearing on Saturday, June 14th, I have prepared a written statement concerning Docket item #3.

My continuing research into the proposed changes to the election process and the arguments for and against them has found a variety of data, analysis and other documents that I believe are of merit to the discussion.

As with my last statement on the issue (April 12th), practice readings have consistently run longer than three minutes, hence I am requesting two extra minutes so that I may complete its presentation at the hearing without interruption by the buzzer.

Sincerely,
David Fromm
2307 E Randolph Ave
703.549.3412 (H)



David Fromm or Amy Slack
<alsdmf@earthlink.net>

06/12/2008 10:52 PM

To Jackie Henderson <jackie.henderson@alexandriava.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Request for additional time to speak at City Council, June 14th

To Mayor Euille and members of City Council,

For the Public Hearing on Saturday, June 14th, I have prepared a written statement concerning Docket item #3.

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Sincerely,

David Fromm

2307 E Randolph Ave

703.549.3412 (H)

202.404.4670 (W)

alsdmf@earthlink.net

Statement of Michael E. Hobbs
for the
Alexandria City Council
June 14, 2008

#3 – City of Alexandria Electoral Process

Thank you, Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Pepper, and members of Council. I am Michael Hobbs, residing at 419 Cameron Street.

Your notice for this public hearing invites comment on just two options: first, whether to put four questions or just two questions to an advisory referendum on our election process; and second, whether to do so in May or in November.

I would respectfully submit that there are at least two other options which you should or could consider.

The third would be to put neither of these sets of questions to a referendum. The Election Process Review Committee (which you, yourselves appointed) was a very distinguished panel. It included members of both parties, a majority from Alexandria's majority party, and included former public office holders, both state and local, from both parties. It followed an exemplary process in developing its report, including the publication of pro-and-con issue papers on all of the alternatives it considered, and the solicitation of testimony both before and at a full-day public hearing on those alternatives. The process was a model of fairness, openness, objectivity and balance.

At the end of that process, not one of the nine members of the committee voted to recommend simply shifting the elections to November, which is the proposition that three of you proposed for consideration when the present discussion began this March. Two members favored moving the election to November, but only if the term were lengthened to four years and scheduled so as never to coincide with a presidential election year—changes which the Council apparently cannot make alone, without the concurrence of the General Assembly. Seven of the nine members, including four of the five Democrats and three of the four Republicans, did not believe the election should be moved to November at all, apparently for many of the reasons which were so amply testified to at their public hearing last June, and your own public hearing this April.

The Election Process Review Committee's deliberation was fair, open, thorough, and comprehensive. Surely one of the options you could responsibly consider at this point would be to accept their report and recommendations and move on.

The fourth option would be for Council itself to decide these questions, based on the Committee's report and all of the testimony that you have heard, and to take responsibility for that decision either way. Putting either of these sets of complex and interrelated questions to a referendum is arguably not an exercise of responsibility, but an abdication of it. Anyone familiar with the techniques of public opinion polling knows that the wording

and sequence of the questions can elicit almost any desired result. That is as good a reason as any why most of us prefer government by responsible, accountable, elected representatives, rather than by public opinion polls. Our election process is, certainly, an important question. But are our budget and tax rate, the selection of our City Manager and Superintendent of Schools, or the adoption of our City's Strategic Vision unimportant? Why are those questions not put to a public referendum?

If you must proceed to a referendum, I believe the "Option One" set of questions would be preferable. "Option Two" has the virtue of greater brevity, but it omits the option of voting "yes" in favor of the May election cycle or "yes" in favor of electing all members at the same time, as we do now. In a careful process, the burden of persuasion should be on those who propose changing our settled practice, rather than on those who do not.

If you decide on a referendum, you should also consider adding questions on non-partisan elections, and on elections in whole or in part from wards, neither of which are addressed in either Option One or Option Two. The Election Process Review Committee sought opinion on those questions, as well as on shifting the date to November, changing the term, or electing to staggered terms. It is ironic that of all the changes considered by the Committee, the only changes still under consideration in your proposed referendum questions are those which—if answered the "right" way—would further strengthen the assurance that incumbents would be reelected and that challenges would be futile; and the two questions which are not asked are those which, if answered the "wrong" way, might reduce rather than enhance the incumbents' security.

If a referendum were to be conducted, it should be done in May, rather than in November. All of those who usually vote in May are well-informed and highly motivated about our Alexandria electoral process, while a majority of those who vote only in November would not be so familiar with our local process. Further, a referendum in May would avoid the risk of interference with or complication of the conduct of an election for state or federal office. The worst choice would be to conduct such a referendum in a presidential or gubernatorial election year. The Electoral Board has already spoken to the nightmare that might occur if these questions were put on the ballot this November, when record turnout is expected for the Presidential election. The risk might be only slightly less in November 2009, when there's a substantial possibility that there will be an Alexandria "favorite son" on the ballot for Governor, and thus another near-record turnout.

A final observation. The objective for this process is an effort to increase participation in our local elections, and that is an objective that all of us who care about our City and its governance can certainly subscribe to. But the value of any proposed change measured against that standard depends on what we mean by "participation."

On the one hand, it is likely that few if any additional voters would be motivated to turn out in November simply by the addition of the local offices to the ballot. Virtually all of those who are interested in and vote in our City elections in May already turn out and vote as well in the federal and state elections in November, so there are no "new" November voters to be found among that group. The turnout in November is driven largely by the greater

interest to more voters in the state and federal elections, and the number of voters voting in those elections is not likely to be enlarged simply by the addition of municipal elections to the ballot. What would happen is that there would be a greater numerical total of votes cast for the local candidates in November than in May, simply because they are on the ballot when there is a greater number of voters present.

That is “participation” of a sort, and it is of some value. But the price of achieving it would be the abandonment of our stand-alone May election, and all of the participation leading up to it, altogether. That is real, intense, and concentrated participation, focused directly on Alexandria issues and Alexandria candidates. Losing it would be a great loss, while any corresponding gain might be illusory and superficial.

Conducting our city elections all by themselves, in May, tells our voters that this is the most important election they should follow and participate in as citizens of Alexandria, and in which they can have the most important impact. Shifting the election from May to November shifts it from the most important election to the least, from the top of the ticket to the bottom.

As a citizen who treasures the unique degree to which we now have the opportunity to participate in our local government, I implore you not to jeopardize our rich tradition of citizen government in Alexandria by moving the election to November.

3
6-14-08

June 14, 2008 Public Hearing on the City of Alexandria Electoral Process
Anna Leider, 125 N Lee Street, Secretary of the Alexandria Electoral Board

First of all, as I mentioned at the Public Hearing back in April, I want to assure you that we are prepared to administer the City's elections on any statutorily-permitted date, and we take no position on what those dates might be.

That said, the Alexandria Electoral Board does have serious concerns regarding the potential placement of four questions on the November 4, 2008, Presidential ballot and we feel it would be irresponsible not to inform you of risks to the effective administration of that election.

We are anticipating a record turnout this November with up to one- and two-hour waits possible in many polling places during peak periods. Adding four questions to the ballot, especially these four questions -- which have similar phrasing and can be quite confusing if you aren't reading them carefully -- will certainly increase the time each voter spends in the voting booth by several minutes. And this assumes voters are educated on the issue before they get into the booth. These extra minutes when multiplied by 2,000 to 3,000 voters per precinct will cause wait times to swell, discouraging and frustrating voters and possibly causing many to leave the polling place, unable to stay long enough to cast their vote.

While we will be deploying every available voting machine, recently passed state legislation prohibits us from acquiring more equipment to respond to these additional voters and a longer ballot.

Instead, I would like to note that the School Board referendum some of you have referred to in previous discussions was held in a gubernatorial year. The Electoral Board believes that the risk of having voters turn away in frustration could be minimized or eliminated by holding the proposed referendum in November, 2009. Gubernatorial elections are typically our second highest turnout election, so you would still involve a large segment of the Alexandria electorate without unreasonably stressing or inconveniencing voters. Furthermore, I don't believe that delaying the questions by a year has an impact on whether or not we would hold municipal elections in May 2009.

Just for your information, in Nov. 2005, 35,176 people voted, which was a 46% turnout. And, our voter registration is nearly 10% higher now than it was then.

This election, in Alexandria and coast to coast, is going to be closely watched, and will almost certainly see record turnout. In the best case scenario, voters are going to wait in long lines. If, in your judgment, you believe it's in the best interest of our community to add to those lines in order to ask the electorate these important questions, we will of course abide by your decision and do everything we can to run a smooth election.

However, we do advise that in terms of the effective conduct of this November's election, with its potential for historic levels of turnout, we don't want to do anything that would discourage voters, which means keeping lines to a minimum. So two questions are better than four, and November 09 is better than November, 08.

Finally, we would be happy to answer any questions you have about the two-question option, or the sorts of public information that must be developed to accompany an advisory referendum. For example, in presenting the two ballot options, you've included some very useful prefatory text to help explain the reasoning behind the questions. Unfortunately, the Attorney General's Office has told us that this sort of introductory paragraph would not be allowed to appear on a ballot. It could, however, be used in an informational brochure that would be distributed to voters. We forwarded that opinion to you a couple of days ago.



Michele Evans/Alex
06/12/2008 04:07 PM

To alexvamayor@aol.com, councilmangaines@aol.com,
council@Krupicka.com, timothylovain@aol.com,
delpepper@aol.com, PaulCSmedberg@aol.com,
cc Ignacio Pessoa/Alex@Alex, Jim.Hartmann@alexandriava.gov,
Jackie.Henderson@alexandriava.gov, Valerie Brown/Alex
bcc
Subject Re: Fw: Fwd: Election Hearing 6/14/08

3
6-14-08

Dear Council Members,

Jim asked that I forward his comments to you on the discussion of whether or not Saturday's public hearing on the proposed election changes should be deferred. His concern is that this item has been widely advertised for public hearing on June 14 and probably needs to go forward because of this.

We do have a hold on the evening of June 17 for a possible work session with the Electoral Board, although that meeting has to be confirmed by Council on Saturday.

The docket for the June 24 legislative meeting will be lengthy. In addition to the city manager items we will have public hearings on a BAR appeal and the infill development ordinance, both of which may generate a significant amount of public testimony.

Thanks
Michele
Jim Hartmann/Alex



From: Justin Wilson
Sent: 06/12/2008 03:11 PM EDT
To: alexvamayor@aol.com
Cc: councilmangaines@aol.com; delpepper@aol.com; Ignacio Pessoa; Jim Hartmann; Rob@krupicka.com; Smedbergpc@aol.com; timlovain@timlovain.com
Subject: Re: Fwd: Election Hearing 6/14/08

Bill,

We have a number of important things on the agenda for Saturday (Infill, Eco-City Charter,

Potomac Yard Density Swap, etc) in addition to the Election Public Hearing.

I don't think it'll be productive for us to reschedule public hearings whenever we have conflicts for some members of the community. If we have a conflict that merits rescheduling this public hearing, we should reschedule the whole day (not that I am suggesting that), not individual items.

Information about this hearing was advertised in the newspapers, promoted on the website, and mailed to civic associations. This is also the second public hearing on this issue.

Residents are always welcome to provide written comment for the record in lieu of public testimony in situations where they are unable to attend. It would seem to me that would apply for those residents volunteering at the Waterfront Festival.

That's my take.

Justin M. Wilson, Member
Alexandria City Council
Office: 703.838.4500
Home: 703.299.1576
justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov

**alexvamayor@aol
.com**

06/12/2008 02:56 PM To Jim.Hartmann@alexandriava.gov, ignacio.pessoa@alexandriava.gov, delpepper@aol.com, Rob@krupicka.com,
Justin.Wilson@alexandriava.gov, timlovain@timlovain.com, Smedbergpc@aol.com, councilmangaines@aol.com
cc

Subjec Fwd: Election Hearing 6/14/08
t

FYI.
Please respond back to me w/ your thoughts.
Bill

-----Original Message-----
From: alexvamayor@aol.com

To: VMGtheHill@aol.com
Sent: Thu, 12 Jun 2008 2:55 pm
Subject: Re: Election Hearing 6/14/08

Thanks Van.

I have not seen this request prior to your email today.

I will discuss this matter with the Council to determine what their thoughts are about changing the date.

Unfortunately, we have only one other meeting left, June 24th, for which the agenda may already be filled.

I will get back to all about our decision as soon as possible.

Bill

-----Original Message-----

From: VMGtheHill@aol.com

To: Alexvamayor@aol.com

Sent: Thu, 12 Jun 2008 10:07 am

Subject: Election Hearing 6/14/08

Dear Mayor Euille:

Have you seen the attached request from a citizen regarding the hearing re the election process tomorrow? If so what is your decision. There is too much going on tomorrow: the Wilkes Street Tunnel, the Council, and the Red Cross Festival etc.

Van Van Fleet

The meeting scheduled for 9 am on June 14th to discuss possible changes to the City charter to determine if the community prefers that the present process or a different process be used to elect the City Council and School Board needs to be changed to another date. On June 14th, at the same time, is the opening of the Red Cross Waterfront Festival. Hundreds of volunteers have worked endlessly for months to make this event a success. There should be no other meetinbg scheduled involving Alexandria citizens that conflicts with this event.

Flo Frey
411 South Fairfax Street

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3
6-14-08



Andrea Blackford/Alex
06/06/2008 02:36 PM

To alexvamayor@aol.com, councilmangaines@aol.com,
council@krupicka.com, timothylovain@aol.com,
delpepper@aol.com, justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov,
cc
bcc
Subject News Release - City of Alexandria Holds Public Hearing on the
Electoral Process

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information,

Contact:
June 6, 2008
Communications Officer
PIO#218-08/ajb
andrea.blackford@alexandriava.gov

Andrea Blackford,
703.519.3489 or

City of Alexandria Holds Public Hearing on the Electoral Process

The City Council of Alexandria seeks public input regarding possible changes to the City charter to determine if the community prefers that the present process or a different process be used to elect the City Council and School Board.

The Council will hold a public hearing on Saturday, June 14, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. (or as soon thereafter as this matter may be heard) in the Council Chamber, City Hall, 301 King St. The purpose of the hearing is to receive public comment on (1) which one of the following sets of questions should be submitted for advisory referendum to the voters of the City (comments on the wording of the questions are also welcome); and (2) whether the preferred set of questions should be included on the ballot at a May general election, or at a November general election.

Option One is a set of four questions that would read as follows:

The City Council is seeking public input regarding possible changes to the City charter to determine if the community prefers the present process or a different process to elect the City Council and School Board. The following questions represent four approaches to conducting local elections. These approaches are designed to avoid overlap with federal elections. Please vote "yes" or "no" on each question.

1. Do you support continuing the existing 3-year terms of service for the City Council and School Board, with May elections for all members?

Yes ___ No ___

2. Do you support a change to 4-year terms of service for the City Council and School

Board, with November elections every 4 years for all members held at the same time as state delegate and state senate elections (that is, in odd-numbered years)?

Yes ___ No ___

3. Do you support a change to 4-year, staggered terms of service for the City Council and School Board, with November elections every 2 years for a portion of the Council and School Board held at the same time as state delegate and state senate elections?

Yes ___ No ___

4. Do you support a change to 4-year, staggered terms of service for the City Council and School Board, with May elections every 2 years for a portion of the Council and School Board?

Yes ___ No ___

Option Two is a set of two questions that would read as follows:

The City Council is seeking public input regarding possible changes to the City charter to determine if the community prefers the present process or a different process to elect the City Council and School Board.

1. Should the City change from spring (May) elections every 3 years for the City Council and School Board to fall (November) elections every 4 years that occur at the same time as elections for state delegates and state senators (that is, in odd-numbered years)?

Yes ___ No ___

2. Should the City change from electing City Council and School Board members all at the same time to staggering terms of service so that a portion of the City Council and School Board is elected in alternating elections?

Yes ___ No ___

For further information, please contact: Bernard Caton, Legislative Director, at 703.838.3828 or Ignacio Pessoa, City Attorney, at 703.838.4433.

Individuals with disabilities requiring assistance or special arrangements, and individuals who require translation services to participate in the City Council meeting may call the City Clerk's Office at 703.838.4550 (TTY/TDD 703.838.5056). We ask that you provide a 48-hour notice so that proper arrangements may be made.

Persons wishing to speak on this item may sign up prior to the public hearing by calling the Office of the City Clerk and Clerk of Council at 703.838.4550.

www.alexandriava.gov

Andrea Blackford
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