

Public Testimony – Budget Hearing

Ellen Stanton – Chair, Historic Alexandria Resources Commission

I am here today to thank City Council for the support that you have shown for the Office of Historic Alexandria. The Commission strongly supports the Fiscal Year 2009 Operating budget and Capital Improvement Program as proposed.

I will highlight just a few of the maintenance projects at each historic structure.

Repairs have been made at the Black History Museum, with important work to prevent water penetration planned for the fall. Perhaps you have visited Fort Ward and seen that the exterior has been painted and that rotted wood has been replaced. At Friendship Firehouse exterior and interior painting has been completed and work on the cupola due to water leakage is in the design phase. Major work at Gadsby's is due to begin this winter when the HVAC system is replaced. This project is funded with a combination of local, federal and grant monies. Cellar doors have been replaced at Lloyd House and estimates are being received to address changes to effect positive drainage at the southeast corner of the building. Lastly, I hope that you have noticed that exterior has been painted at the Lyceum. In addition, work on ADA compliance at the south entrance of the Lyceum will begin this fall.

Planning has begun on many other important maintenance projects.

In this exciting year, when we are anticipating many visitors to Alexandria, it is essential that we continue this work on our greatest resource, our historic structures.

The Office of Historic Alexandria, with the new Director Lance Mallamo in place, is planning many exciting programs for the citizens of Alexandria as well as for heritage tourists to enjoy.

We thank the City Manager for his strong and continuing support of maintenance and we ask that City Council support the CFMP and CIP budget as proposed for the Office of Historic Alexandria.

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10-13-07



Fall Public Budget Hearing

FY 2009 Operating Budget FY 2009-FY 2014 Capital Improvement Program

October 13, 2007



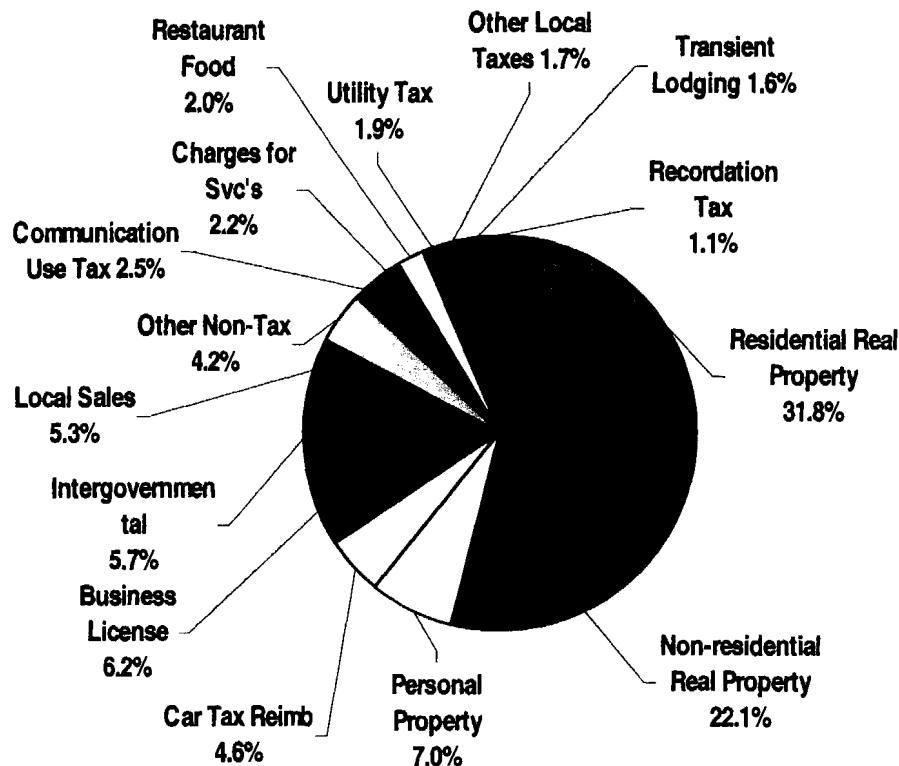
Budget Schedule



- Council Retreat – October 27, 2007
- Council Sets Budget Target – Nov. 2007
- Community Pre-Budget Briefings – Jan. 2008
- City Manager Proposed Budget – Feb. 12, 2008
- City Council Work Sessions – Feb./April 2008
- Spring Public Budget Hearing – April 14, 2008
- Effective Tax Rate Hearing – April 22, 2008
- Adoption – May 5, 2008



Revenue Outlook



- Real estate taxes
 - More than 50% of total
 - Still uncertain
 - Best guess very low single digit % growth
- Other local taxes
 - Best guess low single digit % growth
- Non-tax revenue
 - Best guess low single digit % growth
- State Aid reductions



Expenditure Outlook



- Initial planning assumption – low single digit % growth
- Maintaining current services and policies generally requires about 4.5% to 5.0% growth
- Little, if any, room for new program initiatives



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Alexandria City Council Public Hearing
FY 2009 Operating Budget
October 13, 2007

Diane Charles, Executive Director, SCAN of Northern Virginia

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10-13-07

Parenting can be tough. Asking for help doesn't have to be. This is the public education theme SCAN has developed to help remind all of us that it is normal to find parenting a challenging job and it only makes sense to be as knowledgeable as possible on the subject and to seek assistance.

Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) of Northern Virginia is based here in Alexandria. As most of you know, we operate the **Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program** in Alexandria and now also in Arlington. We have a **Public Education Program** we carry out throughout Northern Virginia and our **Parent Education Program** has its roots here in Alexandria, but we also do parenting programming in Fairfax and Arlington.

I'm here today to focus on parent education in Alexandria. As SCAN's campaign theme reaffirms, parenting is a difficult job, but finding help and seeking help doesn't have to be. In Alexandria, SCAN offers parenting classes in English and Spanish. These are structured classes that follow a specific curriculum, have a pre-test and post-test, offer child care for very young children and a children's program for the other children. The parents learn about communication, child development, the importance of nurturing, rules and rewards and positive discipline. The parents also learn that their challenges are not unique and it is o.k. to get help and learn new approaches.

SCAN has partnered with the City of Alexandria in providing these parenting classes for over 8 years through some funding from the Children's Fund. Fortunately, SCAN brings to Alexandria other resources and funders to combine with the funds from Alexandria to make these classes happen. But there should be more classes and more funding. SCAN really is the only organization providing this type of specific parenting skills classes in Alexandria.

The classes I have just described are most effective when the number of class participants is around 15. We currently are able to provide 3 – 4 series of these classes a year. The need is much greater than we can meet. In the last two years, we always have a waiting list for these classes. With Alexandria's new Center for Alexandria's Children, where we currently offer some of these classes, as a City and a community, we have the opportunity to encourage parents to improve or learn new parenting skills and do it in partnership with our CAC.

I don't think I need to dwell on the fact that our children and their future are extremely influenced by the way they are treated and brought up by

An Affiliate of
Prevent Child Abuse Virginia

Virginia Chapter,
Prevent Child Abuse America

United Way #8349

their parents. Additionally, if their parents didn't have the advantage of a role model to follow, then we will only see a trend continue. We have the opportunity to help parents make the kind of difference in their children's lives that will impact so many other parts of our community.

SCAN also offers a weekly educational parent support group in English that has been operational for 6 years and is held at the Fairlington Methodist Church located at King Street and 395. Thanks to Alexandria's Community Partnership Fund, we added a second parent support group in Alexandria in 2003 – this one in Spanish, called Padres Unidos (Parent Connection) which is held weekly at the Cora Kelly Recreation Center. These groups offer parents a time when they can bring the issues and challenges they are facing that week to a non-threatening group, facilitated by a trained professional. A short educational presentation is provided at the start of each session and the parents may discuss that topic further or they may bring their own issues to the group. Child care is provided for their children.

This weekly parent support group is another option of support for parents in our community. SCAN applauds the City for enabling and supporting this option, albeit less structured, because it provides an ongoing resource for parents who may not be able to take advantage of an 8 week class.

SCAN wants to continue to partner with the City to ensure that parent education becomes the top priority it should and needs to be. Alexandria is a caring community that comes together to meet our City's needs. Parenting is a critical component to ensuring that our children are safe and their future has the most promising outcomes possible. It starts at home and it starts with parents. I ask and encourage you and our City leaders to consider this important fact when looking at the budget and all the needs in our community.

SCAN will continue to work with the city and the new Center for Alexandria's Children to explore ways to make parent education and support even more available and accessible. As the City considers their priorities as they relate to the upcoming budget, please review the resources that we dedicate to this important and essential issue and ask: Does it reflect the value we put on our children, their parents and our families here in Alexandria?

ALEXANDRIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
City Council Public Hearing
October 13, 2007

My name is Rick Dorman. I am representing and speaking for Alexandria Chamber of Commerce. I am a 20+ year resident of Alexandria and run my consuming business from Alexandria.

For over 100 years, the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and its members have been working to improve the quality of life for all in our City. We view the budget as the financial expression of how you will carry out the City's Strategic Plan.

The activity-based budgeting process and the managing for results initiative currently being implemented are tools we in business support. As in the past, we commend the City Manager and his staff on these budgeting and measurement processes.

For at least 3 years, the Chamber has encouraged you to hold increases in the City budget 5% or under. We encouraged you to keep increases in **real estate tax bills** to a minimum. We continue to urge the City Council to find other revenue sources *through expansion and growth* to help control the rising real estate tax bills of those who currently live and/or have business in Alexandria.

The current projections of approximately 4% growth in real estate values along with the projected shortfall in the Cities CIP for 2009 and 2010 will add greater challenges to budgeting for next year. While last year was a challenge, the challenge this year will be even greater. We urge the City Council to restrain from increasing taxes on current residents and businesses in Alexandria.

In time, the savings realized through cutting expenses will not balance the budget. We must spend today to realize the long term increase in *revenue* growth to keep our City viable and vibrant. Expanding our tax base becomes a win-win situation for the community. It keeps our City diverse and affordable; it provides revenues to maintain our historic buildings, to insure our public safety, and to provide quality education for our children.

The Chamber has encouraged you to grow our City's revenue by growing our City's commercial space and activity.

The Mayors Economic Sustainability Work Group has worked diligently to provide a bearing for the City to follow to financial sustainability. Its focus is where it needed to be ... on better utilization of our current assets ... our history, our transportation centers and yes ... the Alexandria Waterfront.

The City must spend now if we are to realize a sound financial future. A sound financial future that supports the quality of life in Alexandria that is affordable to more than the lucky few who can afford to live or move here.

There is a cost to implementing the Task Forces recommendations. However, the lost opportunity costs are much greater.

Considering the slow real estate growth and the CIP pinch in 2009 and 2010 the Cities responsibility to its residents and business is to set aside the NICE to haves for the NEED to haves. What is a must and what would be nice to have ... what meets the Cities long range vision and what doesn't... what can increase the flow of business and visitors to Alexandria and not drive them out.

Focus on what will help Alexandria grow in areas that return more of their tax dollars to the City than residential real estate. The answer to these questions has been presented for a number of years by a number of committees, task forces, organizations and most recently by the Economic Sustainability Work Group.

We must make our business and commercial districts a destination, rather than an alternative. We must have better utilization around our transportation hubs. We must increase the FARs in appropriate areas of this city to draw the type of development that complements Alexandria and supportive of the Cities bottom line.

We need to focus our spending today for our future economic sustainability ...

My name is Elizabeth Moon. I'm a both a resident of Alexandria and the President of Focus Data Solutions, an IT firm in Alexandria.

One of our City's most unique, but most under-utilized assets is our waterfront. To discuss capital improvement without underscoring the vital importance of the waterfront is a grave mistake. As recommended by the Economic Sustainability Workgroup and, recently, in the Chamber's Waterfront vision statement, the City needs to renew its commitment to its waterfront.

Alexandria needs to create and execute a plan to develop a welcoming waterfront that reflects our City's historic nature and presents opportunities for recreational and business uses. A timely and properly executed plan will generate additional revenues to benefit all Alexandria.

We are lagging behind our neighbors in this process. The National Harbor Collaborative is moving forward on recommendations now that are for the most part temporary in nature. These recommendations are meant to be complementary to a more comprehensive waterfront plan. The Collaborative's charge expires in April 2008.

The time for waterfront planning, both visionary and fiscal, is now – not April 2008.

National Harbor and projects like it are just one of those wonderful opportunities knocking ... no **pounding** on our door. We need to answer. Not put out the **not wanted** sign.

Our waterfront is a capital improvement worthy of funding now to help insure a prosperous way of life for our City and for generations of Alexandrians to come. As we have done for the past 100 years, The Alexandria Chamber of Commerce looks forward to playing an important role as your partner in addressing critical issues that are important to our quality of life, our economic vitality and our City's budget process.

City Council presentation- 10/13/2007

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I am Fay Slotnick, 311 Second Street in the City of Alexandria and Director of the Parent Leadership Training Institute.

First, thanks to all of you who were so supportive. We could not exist without the help of the city and of the schools and many members of the community who have generously contributed both time and money because they believe that giving voice and the tools of democracy to parents will make the City a better place for everyone. The Mayor and Superintendent Perry have seen our students and graduates in action and know that this program has changed their level of participation and contribution. Cathy David has said that parent involvement is key to bridging the achievement gap and they are looking to PLTI to help it achieve that goal.

Now for the plea. We know that this works. Ct has a 15-year record of success and we have had extraordinary success in our first year with more than ½ of our class serving on school advisory committees and city boards and commissions. But perhaps the more important achievement is that the alumni remain a knitted community of advocates, mentoring and volunteering to serve the new class while continuing to participate in the larger community, expanding the force for force for change where it is needed.

My fear is that PLTI is not sustainable as a stand-alone 501(c)(3). We do not have a constituency of people with low income or education levels or of immigrants or of women, or of senior citizens. We have it all and more. We have those with masters degrees, those with incomes that significantly exceed the poverty level, and we have mothers, fathers and grandparents. This is what makes the program work. This is what is needed for ONE ALEXANDRIA. It is essential to have all points of view exposed, discussed, and understood for effective advocacy to flourish. It is essential to see that although on the surface we appear so different, our experiences have a great deal of commonality. It is essential to hear new voices. But PLTI does not fit into most funding models. We need the continued, dedicated and increased support of the City so we can train advocates to go out and make a difference, in schools, in housing, in healthcare, in the issues that effect all our children.

In order to have ONE ALEXANDRIA, it is essential that you fund to the greatest extent possible all of the human service organizations that work. In the end, the citizens will save money and benefit from improved quality of life.

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10-13-07

Dagobert Soergel
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Good morning. I am Dagobert Soergel, and I am here to state the importance of adequate funding for early childhood education and health services for children. I am the treasurer of the Child and Family Network Centers, but I represent strictly myself.

It is time for the City to step up to the plate.

1984, 15 children from the then public housing project in Cameron Valley failed Kindergarten. Countless more children since then have entered school unprepared, many with limited English. We know from Public School data that these children are destined to do poorly in school. The public system has failed these children. The public system has failed these children. Why as a society do we let this happen? Why do we let this happen when data also show that attending a high-quality preschool empowers children to succeed. Why?

Private organizations like Hopkins House, ALIVE, the Alexandria Health Clinic, and Child and Family Network Centers have stepped into the breach. They are supported to some extent by the City, and that support is appreciated, but it is not enough. CFNC is performing a public service, yet of its 2 Mio dollar budget, the City contributes only \$400,000, or 20% when it should be closer to 50%. CFNC serves 144 children, but 46 more are on the wait list.

These private organizations perform a vital public service, but many of them are at the breaking point, and their executives are under constant stress on how to make the budget to maintain vital services. It is time for the City to step up to the plate. This is Alexandria. The majority of the citizens of my beloved city do care. Despite a vocal minority, if citizens knew what is going on they would want you to raise the revenue the City needs to create equal opportunity for all. They would know that it is only prudent to make sure we have a highly skilled labor force. It is time for leadership. It is time for the City to step up to the plate. Thank you.



Northern Virginia
Family Service

Mary B. Agee, ACSW
President and CEO

PRESENTATION TO THE ALEXANDRIA CITY COUNCIL

OCTOBER 13, 2007

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Good morning, Mr. Mayor and members of the City Council. I am Carol Freeman with the Healthy Families program of Northern Virginia Family Service and a resident of Alexandria for over 28 years. We want to thank all of you for your steadfast support for so many years. You have invested in NVFS and the community through the Healthy Families program, medication access program, and the Alexandria Transitional Housing program. We appreciate your increased investment in the Community Partnership Fund and the Children's Fund this past year.

As you begin to deliberate the 2009 budget and its priorities, NVFS encourages you to continue supporting health and human service programs. We especially ask your consideration of beginning the implementation of the recommendations from the *Universal Pre-school Task Force* that brought together knowledgeable public and private sector individuals to develop a broad plan for reaching this goal. The outcome can be simply reduced to: *continue to invest from the very beginning of a child's life and through the early childhood years so that every child can begin school developmentally on target and ready to learn.* Please review the recommendations and continue the already sound investment in early childhood in the city.

Alexandria along with all Northern Virginia jurisdictions is struggling with sufficient affordable housing. We encourage you to maximize resources towards this continuing community need which is experiencing an enormous gap of resources. Transitional housing programs, voucher programs, rental assistance programs, and others are essential in the mix of housing opportunities. NVFS has demonstrated through the Alexandria Transitional Housing Program the critical need for supportive services entwined with all housing programs. The case management services help to launch families towards a road to independence more effectively when combined with the housing.

NVFS hopes that you will continue demonstrating your concern for the total community through increased resources to support human services. This commitment is what sets Alexandria apart. Thank you again for your support.

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**BFAAC TESTIMONY ON FY 2009 OPERATING
BUDGET AND FY 2009-2014 CAPITAL
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM OUTLOOK**

Good morning Mr. Mayor and Members of Council. My name is Tracy Rickett and I am here to present the views of the Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee. BFAAC appreciates the opportunity to present our preliminary views on the FY 2009 budget at this public hearing, and we encourage your on-going efforts to ensure public involvement in the budget process.

We would like to re-emphasize two themes today: 1) the importance of adhering to sound financial policies and procedures; and 2) the importance of maintaining a long-term perspective.

With regard to sound financial policies and procedures, we continue to support the Managing for Results Initiative and its use of performance measures. We also agree with the concept of determining the cost of current services as a foundation for building the budget.

Two years ago, the City revised the budget calendar and changed some of its processes in order to develop the budget in a more deliberate and transparent way. Expenditure targets were used for the first time and BFAAC saw that as a positive step. Although the targeting process itself has proved challenging, especially with respect to the Alexandria City Public Schools, we continue to think that the process is a useful one. We also think that the target should be set at a level that challenges the City Manager to propose innovative ways to restrain spending.

Also as in years past, we urge the Council to continue to adhere to its current debt policy guidelines. As we observed in our reports on the FY 2007 and 2008 budgets, the City will be at or near target borrowing capacity through FY 2011, leaving very little room to incur additional debt without violating those guidelines. This means that some major new capital projects may need to be deferred, scaled back, or eliminated to avoid exceeding the guidelines.

To that end, last year's BFAAC Report recommended that the City adopt a new framework for assessing CIP projects, one that would make it possible for the Council to make careful and reasoned decisions on which projects to potentially scale back, slow down, or eliminate. We are pleased that the City's recent work session on the CIP included a number of our recommendations, most particularly that:

- 1) each project in the CIP be linked more clearly to the City's strategic plan;
- 2) each project demonstrate its ability to maintain or enhance a service level in the Operating Budget as identified by the relevant department through MFRI, so that a project's impact on the Operating Budget is fully understood; and
- 3) MFRI will be implemented in the CIP using a "stage-gate" review process focusing on efficiency, technical performance, and impact metrics.

With regard to maintaining a long-term perspective, BFAAC has consistently expressed concern about the City's heavy reliance on real property taxes. Not since the early 1990's, have we seen the kind of drop off we are experiencing in the rate of increase in real property tax revenue. With 59% of our real property tax revenue coming from residential and 41% from commercial, BFAAC believes it is essential for Council to find ways to promote commercial growth so as to provide relief to our residents who have been asked over the last few years to shoulder more and more of the financial responsibility. We also encourage the City to continue to try to diversify its revenue sources, despite the constraints imposed by the Commonwealth.

We applaud the Mayor and Council for convening the Economic Sustainability Work Group. BFAAC would like to thank its members for their hard work and dedication to improving Alexandria's economic future. BFAAC has not had an opportunity to fully discuss their findings, but we do note that many of their

recommendations regarding economic development and tax diversification mirror those of earlier BFAAC reports.

We understand that the Mayor and Council will be discussing the Work Group's report at the Council Retreat later this month. These issues are of the utmost importance to our City, and your decisions on how to proceed will have implications for all of us. As such, it will be essential that you articulate your goals and the strategies you intend to use to meet them. Engage the public early and often in the process so that together we can maximize the benefit of all this work.

Because of their long-term implications, BFAAC has long urged the Council to closely scrutinize personnel expenditures, which account for most of the City's operating budget. New hires in any year will impact the budget for many years to come. We continue to recommend that the budget documents present total personnel cost, including compensation and benefits, in a clear and comprehensive fashion. BFAAC believes that the City should

move toward implementation of a compensation system that includes both pay-for-performance principles and a response to market factors. We also believe that the City should shift the ratio of its overall spending on benefits away from fringe benefits and toward salary.

We are pleased that the City and Schools have begun to address ways to control health care costs while trying to maintain the quality of care. Because health care costs are increasing so dramatically with no end in sight, we have particularly urged the City to consider cost containment strategies in its employee health benefits, including looking at the option of self-funding.

BFAAC supports the City's efforts at pre-funding its Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) obligations and we strongly encourage the City Council to work with the School Board to begin pre-funding the ACPS OPEB obligations.

As always, we look forward to working with you and Staff and we thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

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ALEXANDRIA COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD

Promoting Respect, Recovery, Hope



Mary Riley, Chair

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Executive Director

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October 19, 2007

Alexandria City Council
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Mr. Mayor and Council Members,

The Community Services Board (CSB) held its annual retreat on the same day as your public hearing on the FY09 budget, so I was unable to appear before you to describe an urgent need.

The CSB's Parent Infant Education (PIE) program, serving at-risk children ages 0-3, consists of 4.0 FTEs and served 342 children in FY07. The annual number of consumers served has increased by 24% from FY03 without additional staffing. Over the past four years, staff caseloads in the program have averaged 50 - 70 consumers. Most nationally-recognized recommendations for early intervention caseloads set 40 as the **maximum**.

We have been notified by the Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS) that Alexandria is a system in need of intervention in the PIE program for: 1) provision of timely services; 2) completion of transition activities; and (3) number of children identified and served. In order for the CSB to meet the federal mandates against which the DMHMRSAS evaluates us, we need two additional FTEs at a total cost of \$120,000..

While we understand the funding restrictions faced by the City, I think it is important that you understand that there are also many other unmet needs. Some of these were described by community members who spoke during the CSB's annual public hearing on May 10, 2007 on the FY08 budget. Seventeen community stakeholders provided testimony or written comments. Ten speakers, including T.C. Williams High School Principal Mel Riddile, provided testimony on the need for additional mental health and substance abuse clinicians in the schools. (I've attached the May 2007 *Council Update* I provided to you with some alarming statistics on depression and suicide attempts among ACPS students.) Other speakers testified to the need for additional mental health services for court-involved youth, and for Alexandria's elderly and homeless populations.

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH, MENTAL RETARDATION AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

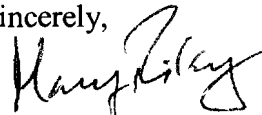
Furthermore, recent changes at the State level in interpretation of the *Comprehensive Services Act for Children and Families* will place an additional burden on CSB staff providing case management services to children and adolescents. We are also concerned that studies by all three branches of State government as a result of the Virginia Tech tragedy may result in mental health law reforms that place additional burdens on CSBs.

The CSB continues to monitor the number of homeless residents in the City of Alexandria. Chronic homelessness is a societal problem that is closely linked with mental health and substance use issues. The most recent *Council of Governments Point-In-Time Survey* in Alexandria identified a total of 404 homeless individuals, of whom 92 were unsheltered on the night of the count. (Another 38 were staying in hypothermia shelters and thus are unsheltered in the warmer months of the year.) The number of chronically homeless individuals living on the streets has remained at about 100 over the past several years. While the CSB's residential program prioritizes serving chronically homeless individuals with mental health and substance use disabilities, and the Safe Haven (expected to open its doors in early FY09) will increase services to that group of people, resources cannot meet existing needs..

Finally, we wish to express our gratitude that funding reductions are not planned at this stage of the budget process. Over the past several years, these reductions and "efficiency savings" have made CSB staffing levels very thin, so much so that we risk creating waitlists if positions become vacant, even for a short period of time.

In summary, we ask that you continue your support of the Department in the FY09 budget deliberation. Your ongoing support has provided the Department with the resources needed to serve more than 4,000 consumers annually, more than 40% of whom have annual incomes of less than \$5,000.

Sincerely,



Mary Riley

Chair, Alexandria Community Services Board

Cc: City Manager James Hartmann
Deputy City Manager Michele Evans
Deputy City Manager Mark Jinks
City Clerk Jackie Henderson



May 2007

COUNCIL UPDATE

From the Alexandria Community Services Board

Overseeing the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse

Public Hearing Highlights Needs for At-Risk Groups

At the CSB's May 10 public hearing, Dr. Mel Riddle, T.C. Williams Principal, and nine others provided testimony on the need for additional mental health and substance abuse prevention services in the schools. One speaker presented the results of a survey of 109 T.C. teachers, 66% of whom said they could benefit from workshops on mental health issues.

If the following services were available, teachers reported that they would refer:

- 20% of students *monthly* for mental health issues
- 19% of students for a stress-management group
- 23% of students for an anger-management group

The recent *Developmental Assets Survey* of 3,041 students in grades 7 – 12 presents some alarming statistics:

- 19% of students report being depressed
- 17% report having attempted suicide (a rate that is twice the national average)
- 56% of T.C. students admit to alcohol use in the past 12 months

The Virginia Tech tragedy and other incidents throughout the region point out the need for early detection and treatment of youth in mental health crises. The average ratio of guidance, social work and CSB staff in Alexandria middle and high schools is 1:228 students; it is 1:197 in the elementary schools. This does not begin to meet the needs enumerated above.

Other speakers at the hearing testified to the need for additional residential services for persons with intellectual disabilities, additional mental health services for court-involved youth, and additional mental health services for Alexandria's elderly population.

Mental Health "HOPE" Campaign to Address Stigma

As we discussed at the joint City Council/School Board Work Session on April 11, the CSB is a lead agency in the *Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria's Mental Health & Substance Abuse Prevention Work Group*, a community-wide coalition that has chosen to focus on youth in its first year through an anti-stigma campaign (*Alexandria's Mental Health HOPE Campaign**), depression and suicide prevention workshops for youth, a community anti-drug coalition, and long-term efforts to secure funding to provide additional prevention and intervention staff in the schools.

A Mental Health Month Community Event, "Stigma and the System: Roadblocks to Recovery," featuring Pete Earley, author of "Crazy: A Father's Search Through America's Mental Health Madness," will be held on May 30 (details on reverse). Earley's book, a finalist for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in nonfiction, documents his struggle to get psychiatric care for his son. The event will present an opportunity for the community to ask questions about the issues that Earley raises in his book and will also present ways in which community members can take action to fight stigma and change the system.

*See attached HOPE campaign card with resource information.

Questions?

Call Mary Riley, CSB Chair, at 703-836-8823 or e-mail: maryriley@comcast.net

Alexandria Community Services Board
A Caring Community Promoting Respect, Recovery, Hope

TRANSFORMATIONS

A YEAR IN REVIEW

ANNUAL REPORT JULY 1, 2006 TO JUNE 31, 2007

In this issue of **Transformations!** you will find the highlights of the FY07 fiscal year. This past year has been a wonderful, productive year by all measurements. My thanks to all of our volunteers, our exceptional Board of Directors, the many funders who support us, and a terrific OAR staff. Together we have made a difference in the lives of many. Here are some highlights of the work accomplished:

- Served a total of 2209 individual clients.
- Provided classes inside the Arlington County and Alexandria Detention Centers for 700 individuals, many of whom came to the OAR office for re-entry services when they were released.
- Helped over 150 (almost all felons) find employment.
- Provided almost 2,000 toys to the children of about 500 inmates that were in the two detention centers over the Christmas Holidays.
- Opened SAGE FLOWERS, a wholly-owned subsidiary of OAR.
- Held by-monthly Saturday training seminars for volunteers and interns.
- Hired new Director of Reentry and Outreach, along with four new case managers.
- Held a four-hour training for over 70 individuals who work with at-risk young people in

Northern Virginia based on the Why Try? curriculum.

- Received a grant from the US Department of Labor for our Faith-Based Initiative.
- Formed the "Get Smart" ex-offenders group to provide speakers to young people around Northern Virginia.
- Provided pre-GED classes for OAR clients, in partnership with the Arlington Public Schools Adult Education Office.
- Secured a Spanish-language curriculum (and extensive training) from the Mexican Government, which covers the equivalent of pre-GED through two years of college - to be used in classes inside and outside of the detention centers.
- Developed and delivered several new courses inside the detention centers including Small Business Basics; Floral Retailing; Substance Abuse Education; and Employment Information.
- Enlisted three new Board members.
- Published quarterly newsletters, *Transformations!*



OAR Staff 2007: From left to right: (1st row) Christian Jones, Kathy Hollins, (2nd row) Gail Arnall, Elizabeth Jones Valderama, Denise Costley, Crystal DeBuck, Rachel Sparico, (3rd row) Odalis Jimenez, Will Wilson, Rudy Curtis, Juanita DeShazor, & Susan Jiofack

- Secured funding from seven foundations that have never given to OAR in the past: Meyers Foundation, Cafritz Foundation, Gannet Foundation, Philip Graham Fund, Shrewsbury Foundation, Weissberg Foundation, and the Arlington Community Development Block Grant.

A Word from one of our Clients that sums up the year!

"In the near future I can see even more opportunities developing through OAR,

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CHRISTIAN MOORE RETURNS IN OCTOBER

Christian Moore, a nationally-known trainer of teachers and other professionals working with at-risk children, will provide his **Why Try?** two-day certified training during the week of October 15, 2007. There is no charge for the training; all are welcome. Over 70 people attended his half-day seminar last May and all asked us to bring Christian back for the two-day training.

Christian has developed a new approach to help kids take ownership of their lives and begin to develop Emotional Intelligence. The training is designed for adults who work with juveniles in all venues. Additional information can be found on the Why Try? website at

www.WhyTry.org. You can see the PowerPoint presentation and listen to the music.

We are offering two training dates: Monday-Tuesday, October 15-16; and Wednesday-Thursday, October 17-18. Registration is required. The training will be at the Arlington Parks and National Resources Conference Center off Three Mile Run near Shirlington. We have a total of 400 seats available.

Go to the OAR website at www.OARonline.org for more information and instructions for registering. Please help us spread the word about this wonderful training.

SAGE FLOWERS

With over \$270,000 earned in our first



SAGE flowers
wisdom grows.

year, Sage Flowers, OAR's First Subsidiary, has surpassed our goals. But we still need your help to make a profit.

Place your order today and support OAR's work. Call 703-451-3021 or visit our website at www.SageFlowers.net

OAR STAFF

Gail C. Arnall, Executive Director

Sue Bell, Grants Manager

Denise Costley, Women Empowered
for Change Program Coordinator

Rudy Curtis, Re-entry Advisor

Crystal DeBuck, Re-entry Advisor

Juanita DeShazor, Re-entry advisor

Kathy Hollins, Administrative Coordi-
nator

Odalís Jimenez, Administrative Assist.

Susan Jiofack, CSP Case Manager

Christian Jones, MASTERS Men's Edu-
cational Unit CoordinatorElizabeth Jones Valderrama, Dir. of
Volunteer and Education Services

Rachel Sparico, CSP Case Manager

Will Wilson, Director of Re-entry and
Outreach**OAR BOARD**

Bruce Griffin, Chairman

Kayra Alhambra

Christina Beibesheimer

Bruce Blackman

Pamela Bulloch

Michael Carleton

Jennifer Christie

Bill Cleveland

John Pettiford

Robert Price

Elissa Rumsey

Nancy Swift

Tom Ward

Gail Arnall

**"GET SMART" CLUB AT OAR SPEAKS
OUT AGAINST CRIME**

This past spring, the OAR Re-entry Staff invited several clients to help form a "GET SMART" club at OAR. The purpose of the club is to prepare previously incarcerated individuals to speak to young people about their experiences, impressing upon these children that crime really does not pay.

Sixteen men and two women responded. The group has met almost every Friday afternoon for the last three months. They have developed a training regiment for themselves, modeled in part on the principles embodied in Toastmasters Clubs of America.

In July, several GET SMART members spoke to the girls and staff in the Girl's Outreach Program of Arlington. The result of just that one appearance was so rewarding. One of the teenager girls that heard the presentation had not spoken to her father for several years. Following the GET SMART presentation, she sat down and wrote him a letter.

The members of the club work at least in pairs, often with an OAR Staff member present. If you would like to have speakers from GET SMART speak to a youth group in Northern Virginia, please call Mr. Wilson at OAR (703) 228-7030.

A YEAR IN REVIEW*Continued from Page 1*

as long as I continue to be willing to listen to the staff and apply valuable information that is provided to me. I encourage others to do the same and while doing so to keep your 'Head Up' and don't give up. The OAR staff will not quit, as long as you try!"

Thanks to all of you for your continued support

Gail Arnall, Executive Director



OAR Board 2007: From left to right: (1st row) Tom Ward, Pamela Bulloch, Michael Carleton, Jennifer Christie, (2nd row) Bill Cleveland, Robert Price, (3rd row) Nancy Swift, Gail Arnall, Bruce Griffin, Christina Beibesheimer, Kayra Alhambra, & John Pettiford

FY 07 REVENUE AND EXPENSES

Audit in progress

Revenue	
Government Grants/Contracts/Foundations	\$833,883
Churches/Civic	\$9,832
Individual contributions	\$15,836
Client Fees	\$23,355
Investment Income	<u>\$204</u>
Total Revenue	\$883,110
Expenses	
Program Services	
Jail Based	\$256,891
Community Service	\$171,260
Re-entry	\$342,521
Management & General	<u>\$146,795</u>
Total Expenses	\$917,469

Join us in Breaking the Cycle of Crime: Volunteer!

Contact OAR's Director of Volunteer and Education Services, Elizabeth Jones Valderrama, at ejones@oaronline.org

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR FY 07 PROVIDED BY A GROWING NUMBER OF FUNDERS

Two years ago, OAR had financial support from local and state governments, United Way and one foundation. In FY07, we were able to secure funding from **nine** additional, new funding sources, several of which will help fund programs for FY08. We are so thankful to the following funders who support the work of OAR:

- Alexandria Sheriff's Office
- Arlington Community Development
- Block Grant
- Arlington County
- Arlington Sheriff's Office
- Cafritz Foundation
- City of Falls Church
- Gannett Foundation
- Meyer Foundation
- Philip L. Graham Fund
- Shrewsbury Foundation
- U.S. Department of Labor
- United Way Community Impact Fund
- Verizon Foundation
- Virginia Law Foundation
- Virginia State Department of Criminal Justice Services
- Weissberg Foundation

VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTE 17,000 HOURS

OAR's volunteers provide a variety of services to offenders in the Arlington County and Alexandria Detention Centers, including:

- Facilitating women's, men's, and Hispanic support groups
- Teaching Life Skills Classes, such as Anger Management, Money Management, Stress Management, Health Awareness, Creative Writing, Conflict Resolution, Self Awareness through Cinema, and Leadership Skills
- Tutoring in GED, ESL, basic Literacy in English and Spanish and writing skills
- Teaching computer skills
- Arranging for guest speakers to address program participants
- Leading Book Clubs, Meditation sessions,
- Providing other classes and services
- Serving as liaisons with employers, places of worship and others for funding and services
- Tutoring in GED, basic computer skills and Literacy
- Recruiting new volunteers

In the community, volunteer activities include:

- Serving on the Board of Directors
- Training volunteers and staff
- Developing program proposals and curricula
- Translating documents into other languages

Volunteers entering the detention centers complete over 20-hours of required training throughout the year. OAR Volunteers have not only contributed over 17000 hours this year alone, but have enriched the lives of so many clients. We want to thank each and every one of you for Helping to Break the Cycle of Crime!

OAR BEGINS FAITH-BASED INITIATIVE

OAR has received grant funds to support a new Faith-Based Initiative to provide additional support for those returning to our community from local detention centers and prisons. Our thanks to: The Arlington Community Development Fund, the Philip L. Graham Fund, and the U.S. Department of Labor for the financial support to make this new program possible.

Our new Faith-based Community Outreach Initiative will focus on educating and engaging the faith communities of Alexandria, Arlington and Falls Church in support of OAR's work with offenders. There are two main components:

- to encourage monthly and annual financial support of OAR activities;
- to recruit and train at least three team members from five faith-based organizations to serve as Life Coaches for previously incarcerated adults.

OAR has hired Philip Paradine as the project coordinator for this new initiative. Philip is an ordained Episcopal minister who currently works with students at the Episcopal Seminary in Alexandria who are involved in ministry at the Alexandria Detention Facility. He has been involved in prison ministry for several years and has a long-term interest and experience in working with incarcerated and recently released men and women.



Philip will build upon the solid reputation that OAR has in providing services to ex-offenders and the communities into which

they are released. There is an extensive network of OAR volunteers from the community already offering their skills and commitment, and OAR already receives donations from a number of faith-based organizations in Northern Virginia. The strong network of faith leader associations that exists in Alexandria, Arlington and Falls Church will be critical in identifying potential partners for this new initiative.

Philip would like to make presentations to as many faith-based communities and groups as possible. Please contact him directly by calling 703-660-1636 or by email at pjparadine@juno.com to arrange a time for him to come explain the program and how your church, synagogue or mosque can be involved.

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OAR Offender Aid and Restoration

Serving the County of Arlington and the Cities of
Alexandria and Falls Church since 1974

Court Square West

1400 North Uhle Street Suite 704
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Phone: 703-228-7030

Fax: 703-228-3981

E-mail: info@oaronline.org

Donate through
United Way
OAR's
CFC # is 8078

OAR MISSION

OAR, a community-based restorative justice organization, blends compassion and accountability to assist offenders in leading productive and responsible lives, to the benefit of all.

HISTORY AND PURPOSE

The OAR movement began in 1968 when a group of concerned Citizens led by Jay Worrall Jr. responded to a prison riot in Richmond, Virginia.

These citizens envisioned an improved criminal justice system in which inmates are assisted by trained volunteers from the community. Through ongoing contact with community volunteers it was hoped that inmates would be empowered with information and encouraged to transform their experiences toward responsible and productive lives. The ultimate goal was to break the costly cycle of recidivism and create a more just system. OAR serving Arlington, Alexandria, and Falls Church, began in 1974

VOLUNTEER NEEDS

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Computer Lab Monitors | • Literacy/ GED/ ESL Tutors |
| • Spanish Life Skills Instructors | • Anger Management Facilitators |
| • Stress Management Instructors | • Sage Flowers Volunteers |
| • Expressive Arts Instructors | • Customer Service Instructors |
| • Critical Skills Instructors | • OAR Newsletter Editor |
| • Volunteer Library Administrator | • Project Xmas Angel Coordinator |

OAR'S WISH LIST

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Yarn for WEC Baby Blankets | • School Supplies: pencils, manila & |
| • Educational Videos & Materials | pocket folders, composition & 1 |
| • Holiday Wrapping Paper | subject notebooks, color pencils |
| • \$10-\$20 Holiday Gift Cards | • Standard Xerox Copy Paper |
| • Resume paper | • \$5 Fast Food Restaurant Cards |
| • \$5 Metro Cards & Bus passes | • Thursday night Home Cooked Meals |
| • Small or Medium Shredder | for GED students |

SUPPORTING OAR

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to support the good work of OAR. Visit www.OARonline.org to make a secure online payment. You can send checks made payable to OAR to: 1400 N. Uhle St, Suite 704, Arlington, VA 22201.

NOTES FROM CLIENTS

... I was impressed with Mr. Curtis and Mr. Wilson, two very passionate individuals, regarding helping ex-offenders get transitioned back into society, employed and ultimately aiding them to become productive citizens....Their ability to listen to the ex-offender to gain insight and withhold judgment is not only calming but also refreshing....The OAR staff will not quit, as long as you try! M.L.

...When I got there (OAR) they treated me like a human being with compassion and a true understanding of the problems ex-offenders face...They encourage me to always put my best foot forward even when facing adversities....I am forever thankful to OAR and the work they do to help offenders. K.B.

...OAR has given me that extra encouragement and support of which I believe every ex-offender needs in order to make the transition from prison life back into society. They have been the equivalent to a second family, if you will, in regards to my not wanting to let them down....I have a new outlook on life now that I have OAR in my corner, and I feel empowered by my infinite possibilities. S.F.

We are still taking items to sell on E-Bay. Call us so that we can arrange your tax deductible contribution!

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