

**CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA**

**Special Public Hearing Meeting  
Thursday, October 30, 2008 - - 7:00 p.m.**

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**Present:** Mayor William D. Euille, Vice Mayor Redella S. Pepper, Members of Council Ludwig P. Gaines, K. Rob Krupicka, Timothy B. Lovain, Paul C. Smedberg and Justin M. Wilson.

**Absent:** None.

**Also Present:** Mr. Hartmann, City Manager; Mr. Pessoa, City Attorney; Ms. Evans, Deputy City Manager; Mr. Jinks, Deputy City Manager; Police Captain Ogden; Mr. Kincannon, Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities; Mr. Johnson, Director, Office of Management and Budget; Mr. Baier, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services; and Mr. Lloyd.

**Recorded by:** Jacqueline M. Henderson, City Clerk and Clerk of Council

**OPENING**

1. Calling the Roll.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Euille, and the City Clerk called the roll; all the members of Council were present.

2. Presentation on the FY 2009 and FY 2010 Budget Outlook (City Manager and City Staff.)

Director of Management and Budget Johnson made a presentation on the FY 2009 and FY 2010 budget outlook, and he and Deputy City Manager Jinks responded to questions of City Council.

3. Public Hearing to Obtain Citizens Input on the City's Proposed Fiscal Year 2010 Budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP.)

The following persons participated in the public hearing on this item:

(a) Tracy Rickett, chair, Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission, spoke about the 2009 budget, noting that there was noted at the Retreat on Saturday a budget shortfall of \$10.5 million, and to close the funding gap, the City Manager has recommended budget adjustments, efficiency measures, service reductions and fee increases and use of the environmental settlement fund. He said the City's ability to

determine which efficiency measures and service reductions would have the least impact on core services is the direct result of budget processes adopted a few years ago. He said BFAAC continues to support the managing for results initiative and its performance measures and agree with the concept of determining the cost of current services as a foundation for building the budget, to continue to support the use of budget guidance from the City Council to the City Manager and continue to support the use of phase review process on CIP projects. Mr. Rickett said that with regard to the setting of the real property tax rate, they had previously urged Council to monitor the percentage of per capita income that goes to pay the residential real property tax and to be especially cautious in setting rates that result in ratios above the historical ranges. The measure could be helpful in a year where incomes as well as property values may be decreasing. The City should continue to utilize the MFRI and activity analysis when making operating budget decisions and CIP decisions.

(b) Mary Riley, chair, Alexandria Community Services Board, said the CSB has sought outside funding and has been very successful in securing that funding for children's mental health services. She said the staff in Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse now are being asked to work even harder to make up for the vacant jobs that have been frozen because of the budget crisis. Ms. Riley said their board will need to consider the elimination of services and programs for FY 2010 and beyond. She noted what clients would be denied of in this year alone and spoke about the need for mental health counselors in the schools. She asked Council to consider their most vulnerable residents who need CSB services.

(c) Mary Agee, 10455 White Granite Drive, Oakton, with Northern Virginia Family Services, thanked Council for its commitment to Northern Virginia Family Service. She noted that her plea is to think about its most vulnerable, that their obligations are to ensure the well being of those most afflicted. She said Healthy Families Alexandria and the Medication Access Program are two programs that receive City support through Northern Virginia Family Services. She said she hoped Council would consider it a partner in talking about the process of the budget for 2010.

(d) Nina Randolph, 424 N. Union Street, chair of the Resource Development Committee for Healthy Families Alexandria, spoke of the need for Healthy Families and the families it served last year. Ms. Randolph asked for Council's continued support for the most vulnerable in the City.

(e) Gary Carr, 216 Aspen Street, spoke of childhood obesity and the need for running tracks at G.W. and Hammond Middle Schools. He spoke of the economic opportunity, in that a first class running facility will serve as a magnet for all runners across the region and nation. He said the cost is a matter of asphalt and paint, and once the base is constructed, a rubberized track surface or artificial turf could be added later, and he spoke of grants, programs and donations.

(f) Kevin Bergen, 1402 Oakbrooke Avenue, trustee at Hopkins House and chair of the community outreach and public advocacy committee, spoke of Council's

support for Hopkins House children and early childhood education throughout the City. He asked that when Council deliberates that it put people and the vital services and programs that serve and sustain them ahead of things. Mr. Bergen said the Commonwealth says that for every dollar it budgets and spends on the children, it will realize \$7.00 in savings.

(g) Bill Reagan, 801 N. Fairfax Street, executive director, Alexandria Small Business Development Center, said the SBDC provides substantial return on the City's investment in terms of successful business starts, well operated businesses, new jobs, gross receipts and a business friendly environment. He noted that any cuts in City funding will require cutbacks in the SBDC staff and that will limit their ability to work with businesses. He spoke about SBDC's role in revenue generation.

(h) Moira Bindner, 4 Canterbury Square, #302, spoke of Council's investment in early childhood education and thanked Council for its past support. She spoke of her daughter and noted that she was prepared to start school because of Hopkins House and being in a quality childhood preschool. By maintaining Council's commitment to early childhood education, they protect more children from falling through the cracks. She asked Council to maintain funding for early childhood education.

(i) Elissa Webster, 1100 Quaker Hill Drive, #1, said she is a teacher in the Alexandria City Public Schools, and she spoke of the elimination of the school resource officer at Minnie Howard, which is based on the fact that too few incidents are being called in to the police to justify the expense of the officer's salary, but SRO's are being retained at both GW and Hammond Schools, and T.C. Williams has two SRO's, and she spoke of the role of the SRO.

(j) Wendy Christian, 3801 W. Braddock Road, a licensed clinical social worker at Minnie Howard School, spoke of the removal of the school resource officer at Minnie Howard and said she couldn't understand why the Police Department would consider abandoning the position of the officer at the school. She spoke of the need for the officer at the school and the need for school safety. She asked Council to think about it carefully and wouldn't want anyone to have regrets based on economics or politics.

(k) Jerome Cordts, 120 N. West Street, chair, Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission, said nursing salaries are not competitive and services have been cut back at the Casey Clinic and the Casey Clinic is not accepting new patients, except those with HIV who are covered by the Ryan White funds. Casey Clinic service losses are permanent, and State budget cuts in FY09 resulted in the permanent loss of four positions in the Alexandria Health Department. Mr. Cordts said adolescent clinic services will be reduced, as City budget cuts will result in two positions being held vacant at the adolescent clinic. Healthy partnerships need continued support, and linkages among organizations such as the Alexandria Health Department, Inova Hospital and the Alexandria Neighborhood Health Services, Inc., are imperative, and they have an inherent responsibility to work with their peers to solve problems.

(l) Christine Michaels, 801 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 402, representing the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, complimented the Council, City Manager and staff for addressing the deficit it faces and taking pro-active steps to address the City's financial future. She said the Chamber re-states its position that a uniform tax rate shared by both residents and businesses sends a strong message that Alexandria is ready to promote and support economic development that benefits all Alexandria's constituents. Ms. Michaels said they encourage Council not to eliminate viable and valuable services and programs in the name of surviving FY 2009 only and encourage Council to practice fiscal restraint, cut where appropriate and invest in strong long-term economic development plans to meet their future head on. She asked Council to support small business and economic development programs sponsored by the Chamber, the Small Business Development Center, and AEDP. Ms. Michaels said the Chamber encourages Council to reexamine the Economic Sustainability Work Group report and the recommendations.

(m) Paula Whitacre, 600 Fort Williams Parkway, one of the co-chairs of the Minnie Howard part of the T.C. Williams/Minnie Howard PTSA, spoke of the plan to cut the one school resource officer from Minnie Howard as part of the Police Department's proposed cuts, and she said the PTSA supports keeping the only school resource officer at Minnie Howard.

(n) Linetta Earley, 2659 Arlington Drive, president, parents council at Helen Day Preschool Academy at Hopkins House, spoke in support of the City's investment in childcare and early childhood education. She urged Council to maintain the current level of funding for early childhood education in Alexandria and if possible to increase the investment.

(o) Bea Porter, 1727 Cameron Street, spoke in support of the childcare at Hopkins House and said it is important to have the early childhood education.

(p) Annabelle Fisher, 5001 Seminary Road, suggested that Council freeze the pay increases for the City Manager, City Attorney and City Clerk, and that it also look at freezing cola's and salary increases for department heads. Taxpayers should not be funding ACVA, AEDP or SPDC. She said on the Schools, they don't know what their budget is yet, and the Council needs to look at if they need money. Council needs to stop bailing out those social service agencies that aren't performing and showing outcomes and they need to put money into those agencies that are doing the job well. She spoke of the consultant money spent each year. She said revenue from parking tickets need to be taken out of the general fund and put in the police budget.

(q) Mark Roth, 5014 Domain Place, vice president, Senior Services of Alexandria, spoke about the proposed budget reductions to the senior taxi program, and said senior taxi provides over 14,000 rides per year to needy senior citizens, and said the reduction represents a 15 percent cut in the funding, which is 2,300 taxi rides. He said the cuts affects vulnerable citizens.

(r) Barbara Green, 1410 Dogwood Drive, spoke in support of senior taxi and noted that she has relied on senior taxi often in the past two years due to a back problem and her diagnosis of breast cancer, and she said the senior taxi was her lifeline in getting her to radiation treatments.

(s) Bill Rossello, 501 Cathedral Drive, representing the 1,700 youth soccer players of the Alexandria Soccer Association, spoke about the need and demand for playing fields, noting that the supply has declined. He urged Council to continue the program its started and construct more synthetic turf fields.

(t) Susan Pettey, 220 N. Royal Street, representing the Alexandria Waterfront Committee, spoke about the investments in the waterfront area and noted that it was crucial to continue to maintain and improve the waterfront parks, marina and other City-owned properties in order to reap the benefits of the investment. She noted two issues that have been identified as priorities by the committee, which include seawall maintenance and repairs and progress in the Windmill Hill Park plan are not included in the budget.

(u) Kimberly Caplan, 303 E. Glendale Avenue, Apt. 3, spoke of the proposed cuts to the DASH service, noting that she does not own a car and lives in Alexandria because of the good transit system. She said the DASH system provides City taxpayers with a high level of service for a modest investment, and she said the cuts will add long-term costs to the City by increasing the number of cars on the roads, decreasing air quality and making it more difficult to expand service the next time gas prices spike. She asked Council to consider extending the recent peak fare increase to all service hours.

(v) David Caplan, 303 E. Glendale Avenue, Apt. 3, spoke of the proposed cuts to the DASH service, noting how it will hurt City residents and neighborhoods. He noted the service impacts of cuts to the AT3, AT4, AT7 and AT10 would have on the residents, and he said he would support a modest fare increase if that is what it takes to keep the DASH service.

(w) Roger Waud, 501 Slaters Lane, #1203, said that in the Office of the City Attorney, that department will cover any impacts using in-house instead of outside legal counsel. With the departure of the City Attorney, there are outside attorneys involved in on-going legal issues in the City, and he suggested that when it hires a new City Attorney, that those outside attorneys with the background and history be maintained, at least until the new City Attorney is brought up to speed.

(x) Fay Slotnick, 311 Second Street, director, Parent Leadership Training Institute, thanked the Council and City Manager for the support of the PLTI and for not reducing the Alexandria fund for Human Services so far. She encouraged Council to take it off the table for further reductions. She said she keeps costs to a minimum in the PLTI and there is no place left to cut.

(y) Charniele Herring, 715 N. Ashton Street, spoke in support of Hopkins House and maintaining the current level of funding for FY 2010 and perhaps even increasing the funding. She spoke of the importance of early childhood education, and she said that for every dollar it spends in early childhood education, it saves as little as \$7.00 and as much as \$17.00 in the future. Ms. Herring said on behalf of the Commission for Women, she spoke about the reductions in 2009 for the police detectives for domestic violence cases, and she said without having the extra detective, the priority will be put to what is considered the most serious cases, and those cases that need further investigation will not be investigated.

(z) Dorothy Peaches Turner, 310 Manning Street, spoke in support of Senior Services of Alexandria, and those who use the senior service taxi cab. She said she uses the taxi service and said it is a great service for the seniors. Ms. Turner asked Council to consider the budgets for the recreation centers, as they are home to the kids and they need good recreation centers to keep them alive and not get into trouble.

(aa) Kristin Langlykke, director, Alexandria Neighborhood Health Services, Inc., said ANHSI runs the Arlandria Health Center, and Gene Kendall, board president, wanted to speak but he was on a business trip. Ms. Langlykke thanked Council for its past support and noted that the demand for primary health care for low income and uninsured individuals continue to grow at the health center and they have experienced a 40 percent increase in visits this year. Ms. Langlykke said she hoped they could protect ANHSI's current level of City funding for this fiscal year and in FY2010.

(bb) Michael McLeese, 3 Tom Court, security supervisor for Alexandria City Public Schools, spoke in support of retaining the school resource officer at Minnie Howard School. He noted that when he started in 1988, vandalism at the schools was almost \$100,000 and they are lucky now if they have \$7-8,000 a year, and that is because they have patrols at the schools.

(cc) Jackie Lewis, 1012 Wilkes Street, spoke of her concern for the budget cuts to the youth program of the Recreation Department, noting that it is a joy for her to see the kids running up and down the halls and having fun because they have a place to go at the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center.

(dd) Steve Kerekes, 428 Monticello Blvd., said the intersection at Valley and Gunston a few years ago was re-done to put in traffic islands, and he was not sure it facilitated traffic flow and he saw situations where a DASH bus could not navigate the turn. He said he's also seen lines painted on the street with arrows so the bike riders know which direction to go in, and that has caused him to wonder what they are doing with the tax dollars when they have lanes so people can know where to ride their bicycle. He expressed concern over the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services 28 percent increase in the budget and even after the reductions, their budget went up 25 percent over two years and it is adding staff and he thought the department could bare deeper cuts than others.

(ee) Chris Marlowe, 6314 A Eagle Ridge Lane, said she takes art classes at the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center, and the room they use for the art classes is occupied by the children in the after care program. She asked Council to maintain the level of services it has for the children. She spoke of the people that work there and that are mentors for the children.

(ff) Sharon Schultz, 4414 Raleigh Avenue, #101, said she takes art classes at the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center, and she spoke in support of the Center and noted the great program for the children.

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**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO DISCUSS**, upon motion by Councilman Wilson, seconded by Vice Mayor Pepper and carried unanimously, City Council adjourned the special public hearing meeting of October 30, 2008 at 8:55 p.m. The voting was as follows:

Wilson	"aye"	Gaines	"aye"
Pepper	"aye"	Krupicka	"aye"
Euille	"aye"	Lovain	"aye"
	Smedberg		"aye"

APPROVED BY:

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WILLIAM D. EUILLE    MAYOR

ATTEST:

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Jacqueline M. Henderson, City Clerk