


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 2, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST TO MODIFY THE
MEMBERSHIP OF THE ALEXANDRIA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY
COMMISSION

ISSUE: Request from the Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission (EPC) to replace the student member position with one position to be filled by a member from the Alexandria business community (attached).

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Approve the request to replace the designated student member position (currently vacant) with one position filled with a member from the Alexandria business community; and
- (2) Request the City Attorney to prepare the necessary ordinance and docket it for Council consideration.

DISCUSSION: The EPC has had difficulty in filling the student member position for several years due to the time commitment necessary. As with any group's mission, the needs of the body are dynamic and certainly Council's support of the Eco-City initiative has put an added emphasis on the need for a more formal business representation. Furthermore, with the City Council's adoption of the Environmental Action Plan 2030, a significant target for this action plan is the creation of a green economy in Alexandria. Thus, it is timely and appropriate that the EPC requests this change in its membership, and staff recommends that Council approve the request. The total members of the EPC will stay the same at 13 members with this change.

The EPC continues to encourage Alexandria high school students to be involved in Eco-City activities, and intends to increase their involvement in the Alexandria Earth Day.

ATTACHMENT: Letter from EPC Chair Scott Barstow to Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council, September 15, 2009.

STAFF:

William J. Skrabak, Director, OEQ, T&ES

Khoa Tran, OEQ, T&ES



City of Alexandria Virginia
Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission
P. O. Box 178
Alexandria Virginia 22313

September 15, 2009

Honorable Mayor William Euille and Members of City Council
City of Alexandria
Suite 2300, City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: Environmental Policy Commission Membership Requirements

On behalf of the Environmental Policy Commission (EPC), I am writing to request changes to the EPC's membership configuration. Specifically, the EPC voted unanimously in June to request that the EPC be made up of five members from the environmental science field, five citizen-at-large members, one member from the urban planning field, one member from the environmental law field, and one member from the Alexandria business community.

As you know, EPC is beginning work on implementation of the City's Environmental Action Plan. We believe it will be very important to engage and enlist members of Alexandria's business community in this work. Although one position on the EPC is currently designated for an Alexandria high school student, the EPC has had continuous difficulty filling this position and the position has currently been vacant for over one year. Consequently, we request that the City Council change the position designated for a high school student to one designated for a representative of the business community. Ideally, this member would be affiliated with another business organization, such as the Chamber of Commerce or the Alexandria Economic Development Commission, but it is the EPC's view that any Alexandria business owner or representative should be eligible.

The EPC remains committed to working with Alexandria high school students, and intends to increase students' involvement in Eco-City activities, as well as expand opportunities for student involvement in Earth Day activities. We are working with Alexandria City Public Schools on development of their environmental initiatives. We will also include a focus on Alexandria's student population in our efforts to establish volunteer projects to meet Action Plan goals. However, given their crucial role in enabling Alexandria to develop a sustainable economy, we believe our city's businesses should be represented on the commission.

Thank you for your consideration on this issue, and for your continued support for improving our ecosystem.

Sincerely,

Scott Barstow
Chair, Environmental Policy Commission