

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 13, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO #26: HOLDING CULTURAL OPERATIONS DEPUTY DIRECTOR POSITION VACANT FOR ALL OF FY 2010

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This memorandum is written in response to Councilman Wilson's request for additional information on the potential for increased savings from holding the Recreation Department's Cultural Operations Deputy Director position vacant for all of FY 2010. Information is provided on how much the additional savings will be and the expected operational impacts of extending the vacancy period.

In order to meet the assigned budget reduction target, one of the Recreation Department's proposed reductions for FY 2010 is a three month delay in the hiring of the Cultural Operations Deputy Director. Holding the position vacant for three months results in a general fund savings of \$38,484. If the position is held vacant for all of FY 2010 the resulting savings is \$143,090 which is \$104,606 in additional savings over the existing three month vacancy proposal.

The Department, not including the Cultural Operations Deputy Director position, currently has three vacant senior positions. The Park Planning Division Chief is proposed for elimination in FY 2010; the Recreation Services Division Chief is proposed to be held vacant for FY 2010; and the Administration Division Chief recently retired. In addition, the Special Assistant to the Director retired last year and the position was eliminated in FY 2008. The Director of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities is also leaving this spring.

This position has been vacant since October 2007 (when Janet Barnett retired). A recently completed organizational analysis of the Recreation Department and the potential for reorganization delayed the filling of the position. If this position is held vacant for all of FY 2010, the Recreation Department expects organizational impacts. Holding the Cultural Operations Deputy Director position vacant for all of FY 2010 will increase the work-load on senior staff and will impact the Department's ability to meet community demands. Specifically, it will likely limit the Department's capacity to implement management improvements related to the Cultural Opportunities Program and will increase the workload of the Departments senior management team.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Department, not including the Cultural Operations Deputy Director position, currently has three vacant senior positions. The Park Planning Division Chief is proposed for elimination in FY 2010; the Recreation Services Division Chief is proposed to be held vacant for FY 2010; and the Administration Division Chief was recently vacated by retirement. In addition, the Special Assistant to the Director retired last year and the position was eliminated in FY 2008. It should also be noted that the Director of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities has recently submitted his resignation, this is effective mid-April 2009.

Given the recent reorganization and the hiring of a Director of the Office of the Arts, this position of Cultural Operations Deputy Director will not be refilled with that title or duties. Rather, given the challenges and workload facing the Recreation Department in FY 2010, it is recommended that this position remain budgeted. When the new Recreation Department Director is hired she or he will then have an authorized senior position to define and hire. In response to the Matrix best practices and efficiency audit on the Recreation Department senior Recreation Department staff recommend the creation of a Chief Operating Officer to assist with the management of the Department. The creation of that specific function is still an open question, but there is no doubt in staff's mind that additional management resources are needed in the Recreation Department.

It will be awhile until the new Department Director is onboard and has some time to assess management needs, so it is recommended that this position, which was the Cultural Operations Deputy Director, remain budgeted for FY 2010, but three more months of funding could be removed in recognition that it will not be until very late in calendar year 2009 or early calendar year 2010 that the position would be filled. This will result in an additional savings of \$33,061.