

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 26, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 48: OFFICE OF CITIZEN ASSISTANCE

This memorandum responds to Councilman Krupicka's request for information on three areas in the Proposed FY 2010 budget for the Office of Citizen Assistance. An item-by-item response follows.

- **Describe what makes up the 59,203 Citizen Assistance transactions referenced as part of their budget metrics? (pg. 13-3)**

The 59,203 number represents the total number of citizens assisted, via phone or in-person, at the City Hall switchboard and within the Office of Citizen Assistance during FY 2008. The total number of calls taken was 35,734 and number of in-person inquiries was 23,469. The breakdown is as follows:

1st Quarter - 8,817 calls and 4, 825 walk-ins
2nd Quarter - 9,891 calls and 5,524 walk-ins
3rd Quarter - 8,141 calls and 5,256 walk-ins
4th Quarter - 8,885 calls and 7,864 walk-ins

Most of these calls and walk-ins are at the City Hall switchboard which is staffed by the Office of Citizen Assistance. These numbers do not include Consumer Affairs which accounts for another 14,634 transactions in FY 2008.

- **Describe the breakdown of the \$61,135 spent on the Sister Cities program (Pg. 13-6)**

The budget of \$61,135 represents the staff estimate in the Proposed FY 2010 budget and includes staff salaries, costs associated with hosting delegations from Caen, France and

Dundee, Scotland during the Christmas Walk weekend, stipend for French student intern, and other incidental expenses as listed below.

- Personnel (\$44,477):
 - Staff time (Director of Citizen Assistance [20 percent of time], Supervisory Administrative Officer I [10 percent of time], and other employees who assist during the fiscal year.
- Non-Personnel (\$16,658)
 - \$5,498 represents monies raised by the sister city committees for specific sister cities activities. These funds are in donation accounts and cannot be used for City-sponsored activities. The Alexandria-Gyumri Sister City Committee holds an annual festival in Market Square to raise funds for the American School it supports in our Armenian sister city. The Alexandria-Caen Sister City Committee holds an annual fundraiser and the private donations they receive can only be used for French exchange programs undertaken by the Committee.
 - Estimated \$950 for annual dues to Sister Cities International (a requirement if sister city relationships are to be officially recognized - \$950).
 - A \$1,500 stipend for a student intern from Caen, France to spend the month of July in Alexandria City government under an exchange program (a student from Alexandria spends a month in Caen's City Hall).
 - Estimated \$7,500 to host visiting delegations during the Scottish Walk weekend and any incidental visits by sister city mayors to Alexandria during the fiscal year.
 - Estimated \$1,210 for shipping packages containing City brochures, materials for Caen Sister City Committee to operate Sister Cities booth at the Caen Fair, information/gifts for annual Youth Summit in Dundee (six high school students and a teacher participate), and other visits to sister cities.

- **Describe the breakdown of the \$124,478 spent on Council Requests (Pg. 13-5)**

The majority of the money in the Proposed FY 2010 budget is salaries for the Director of Citizen Assistance (50 percent of time) and Supervisory Administrative Officer I (35 percent of time) at an estimated \$120,188; and the remaining \$4,290 is budgeted for several non-personnel expenditures, including fees for temporary services (\$1,106), telecommunications (\$1,052) and various other small non-personnel costs (\$2,132).