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Relevant Budget Legislative References

State Code

Sec. 58.785.1: Requires that the local tax rate must be adopted by June 30, but after April 15.

City Charter

General Provisions

Sec. 3.04 (b): The City Council shall have the power to adopt the budget of the City.

Sec. 4.02 (c): The City Manager shall have the power and shall be required to prepare and submit the annual budget to the City Council as provided in the Charter, and shall be responsible for its administration.

Sec. 5.05 : Work programs, allotments. Before the beginning of the budget year, the head of each office, department or agency shall submit to the Director of Finance, at such time as may be set by him, a work program for the year, which program shall show the requested allotments of the appropriations for such office, department or agency, for such periods as may be designated by the City Manager, for the entire budget year. The City Manager shall review the requested allotments and may revise, alter or change such allotments Before approving the same. The aggregate of such allotments shall not exceed the total appropriation available to said office, department or agency for the budget year.

Sec. 5.06: Allotments constitute basis of expenditures and are subject to revision. The Director of Finance shall Authorize all expenditures for the offices, departments and agencies to be made from appropriations on the basis An approved allotments and not otherwise. An approved allotment may be revised during the budget year in the same manner as the original allotment was made. If, at any time during the budget year, the City Manager shall ascertain that the available income, plus balances, for the year will be less that the total appropriations, he shall Reconsider the work programs and allotments of the several offices, departments and agencies and revise the allotments so as to prevent the making of expenditures in excess of the said income.

Sec. 5.07: Transfer of appropriations. The City Manager may at any time transfer any unencumbered appropriation balance or portion thereof within the accounts of an office, department or agency. The Council when advised of The details by the City Manager may be duly docketed resolution transfer any unencumbered appropriation balance or portion thereof form one office, department or agency to another. (Acts 1968, ch. 510, Sec. 1)

Sec. 6.03: Each department head, the judges of the courts, each board or commission, and any other office or agency supported by the City, is required to file with the City Manager, at the prescribed time, all estimates of revenue and expenditure for the ensuing fiscal year. Such estimates shall be submitted on forms furnished by the finance director and all information required by the City Manager is to be submitted thereon. The City Manager shall hold staff hearings to review and revise these estimates as (s)he may deem advisable.

Sec. 6.05: In no event shall the expenditures recommended by the City Manager in the general budget exceed the receipts estimated, taking into account the estimated cash surplus or deficit at the end of the current fiscal year, unless property assessments have been raised or unless the City Manager shall recommend an increase in the rate of ad valorem taxes on real estate and tangible personal property or other new or increased taxes, licenses or other sources. Receipts from increased taxes, licenses or other sources shall be estimated on the basis of the average rate of increased collections during the preceding two fiscal years except in instances in which the City Manager submits, as a part of the budget, a written statement explaining any estimate that is made on some other basis. Receipts from new taxes, licenses or other sources shall be estimated on information available for other cities, the State of Virginia or other states, the federal government or other appropriate sources. If estimated receipts exceed estimated expenditures, the City Manager may recommend revisions in the tax, license or other ordinances of the City in order to bring the general fund budget into balance.

Sec. 6.08: The budget and budget message and all supporting schedules shall be a public record in the office of the City Manager, open to public inspection after the budget has been submitted to the Council and made public by it; provided, however, that no department or agency head, judge or board or commission, manager or director of finance shall divulge details of the proposed budget estimates until the budget has been submitted to the Council and made public by it.

Sec 6.08.1: The school board shall, prior to the time work has begun on the school budget, hold a public informational hearing to receive suggestions from the public concerning the school budget. The school board shall also hold a public hearing on its proposed budget prior to submitting it to the City Manager. The school board shall cause a notice of the time and place of each public hearing to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the City at least seven days prior to the hearing. The school board shall also cause copies of the proposed budget to be available to the public at least seven days prior to the public hearing on the proposed budget. The school board may submit to the City Manager as its proposed budget the same proposed budget considered at the public hearing or it may, subsequent to said public hearing, submit a revised proposed budget.

Responsibility of the City Manager for the Budget:

Sec. 6.02: The City Manager is required to submit a general budget, a capital budget and an explanatory budget message in the form and with the contents provided by the Charter.

Sec. 6.04: The general budget shall contain:

- (a) An estimate of that portion of surplus cash remaining at the end of the fiscal year which is to be used in meeting expenditures in the general budget;
- (b) An estimate of receipts from current ad valorem taxes on real estate and personal property, and from all other sources;
- (c) A statement of debt service requirements;
- (d) An estimate of cash deficit, if any, at the end of the current fiscal year, and an estimate of obligations required by the Charter to be budgeted for the ensuing year; and,
- (e) An estimate of expenditures for all other purposes to be met in the coming fiscal year.

Sec. 6.05: In no event shall the expenditures recommended by the City Manager in the general budget exceed the receipts estimated, taking into account the estimated cash surplus or deficit at the end of the current fiscal year, unless property assessments have been raised or unless the City Manager shall recommend an increase in the rate of ad valorem taxes on real estate and tangible personal property or other new or increased taxes, licenses or other sources.

Sec. 6.06: The explanatory budget message shall contain an outline of the proposed financial policies of the City for the budget year and a description of the important features of the budget plan. Major policy changes are to be explained and reasons for salient changes in cost and revenue items from the previous year are to be indicated. A statement of pending capital projects and proposed new projects, with proposed financing plans, shall be included.

Sec. 6.07: At the same time that the City Manager submits a general budget (s)he may also submit a general appropriation ordinance and those additional tax ordinances as may be required to balance the Proposed budget.

Sec. 6.14: The capital budget is a budget of the proposed capital improvements projects for the ensuing fiscal year and for five years thereafter, with recommendations for financing the proposed improvements for the coming year.

Responsibility of the City Council for the Budget:

Sec. 6.09: At the meeting of the City Council at which the budget and budget message are submitted, the council shall determine the place and time (at least sixty days prior to the beginning of the budget year) of a public hearing on the budget, and shall publish a notice of said place and time, which shall not be less than seven days after the date of publication.

Sec. 6.10: All interested persons shall be given an opportunity to be heard at the public meeting for or against any of the estimates of any item of the budget.

Sec. 6.11: After the conclusion of the public hearing the City Council may insert new items of expenditure or may increase, decrease or strike out items of expenditure in the general fund budget, except that no items or expenditures for debt service or other provision of law shall be reduced or stricken out. The City Council shall adopt a balanced budget, or adopt measures for providing additional revenues in the case that expenditures exceed revenues.

Sec. 6.12: The budget shall be adopted by the votes of at least a majority of Council not later than the 27th day of June. If the City Council has not taken final action on or before this date, the budget as submitted shall be deemed to have been finally adopted by the Council.

Sec. 6.13: An appropriation in addition to those contained in the general appropriation ordinance, except for the purpose of meeting a public emergency as provided for elsewhere in this charter, may be made by the Council, by not less than a majority affirmative vote of all members of Council, only if there is available in the general fund a sum unencumbered and unappropriated sufficient to meet such appropriation.

Sec. 6.14: The City Council shall hold at least one public hearing on the capital budget and shall take final action not later than twenty days after June 27, the date prescribed for the adoption of the general budget.

Sec. 6.15: The City Council may establish by ordinance a reserve fund for permanent public improvements and may appropriate thereto any portion of the general fund cash surplus not otherwise appropriated at the close of the fiscal year.

**Ordinance 4291 - Adopted February 22, 2003,¹
Establishing the Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee**

AN ORDINANCE to amend Chapter 4 (COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS), of Title 2 (GENERAL GOVERNMENT) of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended, by adding thereto a new Article R (BUDGET AND FISCAL AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMITTEE).

THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

Section 1. That Chapter 4 of Title 2 of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended, be, and the same is hereby, amended by adding thereto a new Article R to read as follows:

ARTICLE R

Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee

Sec. 2-4-130 Creation, composition, organization and term.

(a) The Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee initially established by Resolution No. 1464, is hereby established by ordinance and designated as a standing committee known as the Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee.

(b) The members of the committee shall be appointed by the City Council as follows:

- (1) seven members, one each of whom shall be designated by the mayor and members of city council;
- (2) three members appointed at-large in accordance with the provisions of section 2-4-7 of this code;
- (3) one member designated by the Alexandria School Board; and
- (4) two members designated by the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce.

(c) The members designated by the mayor and members of city council, the school board, or the chamber of commerce shall serve at the pleasure of the mayor, member of council, school board or chamber of commerce designating such person, and any vacancies in such positions shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. Members appointed at large shall serve for a term of two years, and vacancies and reappointments shall be handled in the manner prescribed in section 2-4-7 of this code.

¹The Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee was established July 2, 1985, by Resolution 1129. Resolution 1464 amended Resolution 1129 by adding two representative of the Chamber of Commerce to the committee. Resolution 1129 has been replaced by Ordinance 4291 as a result of Council action on February 22, 2003.

(d) All members of the committee shall:

- (1) by virtue of their education and employment in the public or private sector, have demonstrated competence in one or more of the following areas: accounting, financial analysis, budget and fiscal management, public finance, or urban economics;
- (2) be residents of and residing in the City of Alexandria at the time of appointment and continue to do so during the term of their appointment. The provisions of section 2-4-7(d) notwithstanding, this provision may not be waived; and
- (3) not be (i) a member of any other board or commission having one or more members appointed by the city council, or (ii) an employee of the city, the school board, the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, or any agency of any such entity or organization.
- (4) declare to the committee their position as an officer or director of any entity or organization, and abstain from discussing, participating or voting on any matter before the committee, that directly relates to any appropriation or grant made or awarded by or through the city to the entity or organization of which the member is an officer or director.

Sec. 2-4-131 Functions, powers and duties; staff assistance.

(a) The functions, powers and duties of the committee shall be to advise and support the city council as to:

- (1) an examination of the city's budget procedures and process and ways of improving such procedures and process, including participation by the public therein;
- (2) the forecasting of future revenue and expenditure requirements and the effect on the several taxes and fees levied by the city and burden of taxation imposed on Alexandria citizens and business organizations;
- (3) an evaluation of the comparative tax, revenue and expenditure levels in Alexandria with those in neighboring jurisdictions and the effect of such differences on the ability of Alexandria to attract new residents and economic development; and
- (4) such other tasks as may be requested by the city council.

(b) Except as expressly provided in this article, the committee may adopt rules and regulations in regard to procedure and other matters for the conduct of its business, so long as the same are not inconsistent with the city code, including, but not limited to, the establishment of committees through which it may carry on its functions, duties and purpose.

(c) Subject to the availability of funds and staff, and recognizing that the city manager must give priority attention to requests from the city council, the city manager is authorized to provide such staff or other assistance to the committee as requested, and to make such information available to the committee as is available to the public generally.

Section 2. That no provision of this ordinance shall be deemed to affect the appointments or terms of the members of the Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee in office on the effective date hereof.

Section 3. That Resolution No. 1464 be, and the same hereby is, rescinded.

Section 4. That this ordinance shall become effective upon the date and at the time of its final passage.

Resolution No. 2371

**Budget Resolution Setting Guidance for FY 2011 General Fund Operating Budget
and Capital Improvement Program for FY 2011-FY 2020**

WHEREAS, the City Council of Alexandria passed Resolution 2368 on November 10, 2009, that established the process to be used for formulating the budget during the term of this Council and requires that City Council set budget guidance for the City Manager and the School Board for the FY 2011 budget;

WHEREAS, the City Council held a public hearing on the FY 2010 budget on October 17, 2009; and

WHEREAS, the City Manager and the Alexandria City Public Schools presented to City Council at its November 7, 2009, retreat their preliminary forecasts of revenues, expenditures and capital needs; and

WHEREAS, the City Council's deliberations on the budget each and every year reflect a balancing of the needs of the community, with the community's ability to afford services to meet those needs; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to continuously improving City government effectiveness and efficiency, and expects the City Manager and City staff to focus on managing for results; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to continue performing fully its obligations to provide the core services expected of a municipal government and to continue to provide quality services and facilities for the residents and businesses of Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, the national economy has suffered the worst recession in at least 30 some years and perhaps 50 years;

WHEREAS, the regional and local economy has also declined significantly, although not at the rate of the national economy;

WHEREAS, a decline in real estate values in the City is expected between 5.7% and 9.4% with a best estimate of 8.1%;

WHEREAS, a loss in State revenues is expected for both the City General Fund budget and the Schools operating budget;

WHEREAS, these reductions in General Fund revenues due to the decline in the national, regional and local economies presents the City Council and City government with an overall decline of revenues of between 5.4% and 1.8%; with a best estimate at this time of a decline in revenues of -3.9% for FY 2011;

WHEREAS, this decline places demands on the City's ability to deliver services, maintain and expand its infrastructure as well as meeting the expectations of City residents; and

WHEREAS, City Council fully expects that there will be substantial service reductions in the proposed budget and that these reductions may need to be continued for the foreseeable future;

WHEREAS, the budget must contain for all contractual commitments, including debt service; and

WHEREAS, City Council will not make any other material changes that may threaten the City's AAA/Aaa bond rating.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA:

1. **Base Budget for City-Managed Programs and Activities:** That the City Manager shall submit a proposed FY 2011 Operating Budget for City-managed programs and activities of no more than \$365,408,344 million for City operations, debt service and cash capital to fund the CIP, and transit subsidies, plus an additional amount required to be appropriated to receive Build America Bond subsidy from the Federal government (\$833,088 in FY 2011) and whatever amount is proposed for storm water operating and capital expenditures to be funded by a storm water utility fee (see section 8 below) .
2. **City Staffing Levels:** That the City Manager shall not increase total City employment levels (as measured on a full-time equivalency basis) in the base budget above those estimated in the Approved FY 2010 operating budget.
3. **Cost Saving Measures:** That the City Manager shall continue to identify and implement cost saving measures and efficiencies in all City operations, including public safety.
4. **City Staff Compensation:** That the City Manager shall include in the base budget funding for merit/step increases for eligible employees and an additional step (the "Q" step) on the pay scale.
5. **Market Rate Adjustment:** That the City Manager shall not include a market rate adjustment for either City or Schools staff;
6. **Schools Transfer:** That the City Manager shall include in the base budget a transfer to the Schools for operating expenses of \$167,886,567.

7. **Capital Improvement Program (CIP):** That the City Manager's proposed CIP shall include:
 - a. Specific estimates for FY 2011 through FY 2016 and preliminary estimates for FY 2017 through FY 2020;
 - b. No more cash capital from current revenues than that planned for FY 2011 through FY 2015 in the Approved FY 2010 – FY 2015 CIP;
 - c. No more debt issuance than that planned for FY 2011 through FY 2015 in the Approved FY 2010 – FY 2015 CIP;
 - d. The use of General Fund operating budget surplus expected in FY 2010 as a designation for capital projects in FY 2011 and beyond, provided that the first \$3.6 million of any such surplus will be designated for the FY 2012 General Fund operating budget;
 - e. Specific descriptions of projects that can be funded within recommended levels of funding and their costs estimated for all years (FY 2011 – FY 2020); and
 - f. Identification of projects that exceed the recommended levels of funding whether or not the estimated costs are identified or remain to be developed. These projects should be shown by year if known or alternatively listed in a general appendix.

8. **Storm Water Utility Fee:** That the City Manager shall propose a storm water utility fee as necessary and appropriate for the provision of additional storm water capital projects and operating costs above those contained in the Approved FY 2010 – 2015 CIP. Such additional Special Revenue Fund expenditures and fees proposed for storm water utility operations and capital projects under this section shall be considered as a part of the base budget allowed by section 1 above.

9. **Taxes, Fees, Fines and Service Charges:** That the City Manager shall propose whatever combination of taxes, fees, fines and service charges that are necessary and appropriate to balance the base budget provided that these proposals:
 - a. Are within the constraints imposed by the Code of Virginia;
 - b. Maximize the non-real estate revenue sources available to the City within those constraints; and
 - c. Do not contain an additional real estate tax for transportation purposes on commercial real estate.

10. **Sale/Lease of Capital Assets:** That the City Manager shall propose measures to sell or lease excess City capital assets as appropriate in the base budget and use those proceeds to fund the CIP as cash capital.

11. **Options for Additional Operating and CIP Expenditures:** That the City Manager may propose whatever additional operating costs and capital projects as deemed appropriate for Council consideration above those specified in the base budget, together with appropriate sources of revenue available within the constraints imposed by the Code of Virginia, so long as those options would provide additional operating expenditures to improve public safety, transportation or educational services or provide additional capital expenditures deemed necessary and appropriate by the City Manager.

12. **Fiscal Year 2012 Special Analysis:** That the City Manager shall prepare a special analysis that shows the projected expenditures and revenues for FY 2012.

That analysis shall contain:

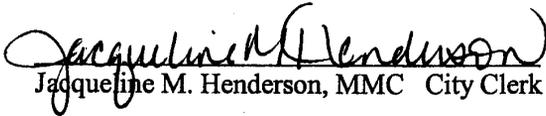
- a. Revenue estimates at the same level of detail as shown in the long range forecast section of the budget document, including three forecast estimates – high, mid and low level.
- b. Revenue estimates that assume the same tax rates as those proposed for FY 2011 in the base budget.
- c. Expenditure estimates in the same level of detail as provided in the long range forecast section of the budget document.
- d. A detailed estimate of the impact in FY 2012 of any recommended expenditures in the FY 2011 base budget.
- e. The impact on FY 2012 revenues and expenditures of any of the options for additional operating and CIP expenditures proposed under the authority of section 11 above; and
- f. A general discussion of the types of actions that might be necessary to balance the FY 2012 budget if there is a projected deficit for that year.

The City Manager shall also provide estimates of the revenue and expenditure impact in FY 2012 of any budget amendment proposed by a Council member for consideration during the FY 2011 budget development process.

Adopted: November 24, 2009


WILLIAM D. EULLE MAYOR

ATTEST:


Jacqueline M. Henderson, MMC City Clerk

Resolution No. 2368

**Budget Resolution Establishing the Process To Be Used
To Adopt Operating Budgets and Capital Improvement Programs**

WHEREAS, the Alexandria City Council wishes to establish specific policies to guide upcoming budget deliberations to ensure responsible actions with current economic resources; and

WHEREAS, resolutions No. 2088, 2150, 2166, and 2256 previously adopted by City Council have now expired; and

WHEREAS, City Council wishes to establish a budget process that is responsive to the economic times in which we live and that provides the Council and community with clear information about the trade-offs between revenues and services in order to facilitate the creation of the final budget; and

WHEREAS, City Council understands that after four years of program reductions, audits and efficiency efforts, the capacity of the city to do the same work for less money has been essentially eliminated; and

WHEREAS, City Council believes that flexibility is needed for both the preparation and evaluation of expense items as well as with regard to diversifying the sources of revenue available to fund the General Fund Operating Budget; and

WHEREAS, City Council's deliberations on the budget each and every year reflect a balancing of the needs of the community, with the community's ability to afford services to meet those needs; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to provide the core services expected of a municipal government and to continue to provide quality services and facilities for the residents and businesses of Alexandria, but understands that economic reality will require stark trade-offs between services and revenues; and

WHEREAS, over the last ten years, residential real estate taxes have borne an increasing share of the burden of paying for City and School services both because of the earlier run-up in residential home value and development and most recently because of the decline of commercial property values; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to managing the growth of City General Fund operating and capital expenditures in order to properly balance residential real estate taxes; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to assisting Alexandria City Public Schools improve student performance, decrease drop-out rates and in achieving its mission and being among the best in Northern Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the City-Council understands that delayed infrastructure maintenance threatens the health and safety of the community as well as its long-term economic prosperity; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to maintaining a fair, reasonable and competitive compensation plan for City and School employees; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to continuously improving City government effectiveness and efficiency, and expects the City Manager and City staff to continue its focus on managing for results, sharing services with the Alexandria City Public Schools, and developing clear accountable metrics for all city programs and services; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to maintaining its top AAA/Aaa credit ratings; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to achieve the vision and strategic goals, objectives, and initiatives as outlined in the City Council's Strategic Plan; and

WHEREAS, sufficient time for the budget process is necessary for the City Council and the community to deliberate on the various issues raised given the budget's complexity and importance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, that the Council shall, for the purposes of consideration of the Budget for the City of Alexandria, adopt this resolution and adhere to the following rules of procedure:

Section (a) The Timing of the Setting of Budget Guidance by City Council and the City Manager's Budget Submission to City Council

(1) That the City Manager shall plan and prepare the proposed Operating Budget and proposed six-year Capital Improvement Program and that such preparations shall include, but not be limited to, requests for City departments to identify efficiencies, low priority programs not crucial to achieving City Council strategic goals, objectives, and initiatives, potential discretionary supplemental increases crucial to achieving City Council's strategic goals, objectives, and initiatives, and potential City-wide process changes that would be beneficial to City operations and to the public.

(2) That the City Manager shall present to City Council in time for the fall Council Retreat a preliminary forecast and outlook for (a) revenues (including the outlook for real estate assessments), (b) expenditures necessary to maintain appropriate services and policies (including in the City Manager's forecast of cash capital and debt service costs related to the most recently approved Capital Improvement Program and estimates of the cost of any appropriate market rate-adjustment for City and School staff), (c) the outlook for possible additional requests for City operating needs in the upcoming fiscal year and future capital needs in the upcoming fiscal year and succeeding 5 to 10 fiscal years, (d) the outlook for possible budget reductions and increases in fees, fines and charges for services, and (e) the outlook for Federal and State grants and the costs of meeting unfunded Federal and State mandates, both current mandates and projected new mandates.

(3) That the Alexandria City School System shall separately present to City Council, but in a format coordinated with the City Manager, its preliminary forecast and outlook for (a) expenditures necessary to maintain appropriate services and policies, (b) the outlook for additional requests for Schools operating in the upcoming fiscal year and capital needs through the upcoming fiscal year and the succeeding 5 to 10 years, (d) the outlook for possible budget reductions and increases in fees, fines and charges for services, and (e) the outlook for Federal and State grants, and the costs of meeting unfunded Federal and State mandates, both current mandates and projected new mandates.

(4) That as part of its fall Retreat, City Council will consider this information and any other relevant information available to it at that time from the efforts described above, including resident input to be provided by a public hearing on the upcoming budget to be conducted prior to City Council's fall Retreat.

(5) That City Council shall, as a result of information available to it at the Retreat, direct that the City Manager prepare a budget resolution to be adopted by City Council to guide the preparation of the upcoming Operating Budget and next Capital Improvement Program.

(6) That City Council plans to adopt such a budget resolution during the month of November for the next fiscal year.

(7) That the City Manager shall submit a proposed Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program to the City Council no later than the first legislative meeting of Council in February, prior to the upcoming fiscal year. Such budget shall meet any guidance for General Fund revenues and expenditures established by City Council.

(8) That the Board of the Alexandria City Public Schools is requested to approve an Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program no later than the week of the first legislative meeting of the Council in February, prior to the upcoming fiscal year. Such budget, if it shall exceed or otherwise not comply with the guidance provided by City Council, shall clearly identify what operating programs and activities would be funded, if additional funding were provided above that guidance, and the reasons therefore.

(9) That the Council shall hold a budget public hearing on the City Manager's proposed budget in the month following the budget submission by the City Manager and may hold an additional public meeting on the budget, if Council deems it necessary, in April, in addition to any effective tax-rate public hearing needing to be held prior to budget adoption.

(10) That the council requests that staff create a way for residents and organizations to submit written budget comments to the Council in lieu of or in addition to participation in public meetings.

(11) That City Council shall consider these recommendations and endeavor to enact an Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program that balances the needs of the community with the community's ability to afford services to meet those needs.

Section (b) Proposed Budget for the City of Alexandria -

(1) For purposes of this resolution, the proposed budget of revenue rates and expenditure levels for the fiscal year shall be that proposed by the City Manager.

(2) For purposes of this resolution, the Chief Financial Officer shall provide revenue and/or expenditure projections for any motion or amendment that could affect the proposed budget specified in Section (b) (1).

Section (c) Maximum Expenditure Levels May Not Exceed Sum of Projected Revenue and Appropriation from Fund Balance in Proposed Budget

(1) It shall not be in order in the Alexandria City Council to consider any motion or amendment to the proposed budget of the City of Alexandria if there has not been a budget memo requested that relates to the specific item or a Council discussion of the proposal during a budget work-session or public hearing and

(iii) such motion or amendment is not provided in writing electronically or in hard copy to all members of Council and the City Manager or Chief Financial Officer at least 7 days before the first budget work session to consider such motions or amendments (the preliminary add-delete work session), or discussed at the preliminary add-delete work session to be considered at the final add-delete work session.

(2) In the Alexandria City Council, any appropriation from the Fund Balance or any like account beyond that proposed in the Manager's proposed budget shall require an affirmative vote of five Council Members.

(3) In the event that the City Manager recommends final revenue technical adjustments that result in a net increase or net decrease from the revenue estimates specified in section (b) of this resolution, the net change in the revenue estimate shall be reflected as a change in the proposed appropriation from the Fund Balance. As specified in Section c (2), any appropriation from the Fund Balance beyond that proposed in the Manager's proposed budget, including the net effect of final revenue adjustments, shall require an affirmative vote of five Council Members.

Section (d) Expiration -- The provisions of this resolution shall expire with the expiration of the term of this City Council.

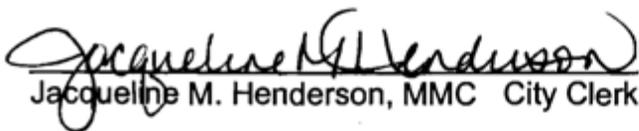
ADOPTED: 11/10/2009



William D. Euille

Mayor

ATTEST:



Jacqueline M. Henderson, MMC City Clerk

Reduction In Force (RIF)

A.R. 6-22

PURPOSE: This Administrative Regulation will establish the policy of the City Administration in the event of a Reduction in Force (RIF) of the employees of the City of Alexandria.

POLICY: The City of Alexandria will implement a Reduction in Force only when such action is required by a lack of work or a lack of funds may be the result of a policy decision by the City Council, or it may be made necessary by program modification or funding shortfall.

The City Manager will determine whether a layoff will apply across the City or, within a Department only, through the issuance of a RIF order.

A reduction in force is to be accomplished in a way which will reduce adverse impact on employees to the greatest extent which is reasonable under the circumstances, and in a manner consistent with the City's affirmative action commitment.

Exceptions to any part of this policy may be made by the City Manager, as needed to ensure that service levels are maintained. Events not expressly covered by this policy shall move forward with a recommendation by the City of Human Resources.

REDUCTION IN FORCE: The administration shall consider the following in order as listed:

1. Normal attrition.
2. Job sharing or reduced work schedules.
3. Termination of temporary appointments in the affected classes.
4. Reassignment to funded, vacant positions approved for hiring (voluntary demotions).
5. Layoff of regular employees in the affected classes.

DEFINITIONS:

Administration: The City Manager or his or her designee.

Affected Class: The class to which the employee is assigned when he/she becomes subject to the reduction in force procedure.

Bumping Rights: An employee's right, based upon higher seniority, to transfer from one job classification/position designated for elimination under a RIF order to the same or lower job class series, which maintaining current salary, within a Department or between Departments or agencies. The result may be the removal of the current employee in that job classification/position that has less seniority.

Department: All offices, divisions, and other work units that are under the control of a single Department head.

Month: For the purposes of seniority, a month is credited after an employee serves 15 calendar days of the month in which the employee is in a paid status.

Probationary Employee: An employee who is serving the first twelve months of a regular position is considered to be a probationary appointment. The initial probation may be extended up to an additional six months. Employees are removed from probationary status by written approval of their department head or designee.

Reduction in Force (RIF): a Reduction in Force is the elimination of a position or positions due to a lack of funding, a change in a work program, design or service within a department of City-wide, or a technological change or advancement that impacts work force needs. Employees subject to a RIF may be separated from the City payroll.

Grant Funded Employee (Restricted/Unrestricted): A source of funding for an employee's position. May include grant only or grant/City funding sources.

Seniority: Continuous employment (without an unpaid interruption greater than six months) with the City of Alexandria in a benefited position, except absences on approved leave with or without pay for absences to serve in the Armed Forces (action forces, Reserves, or National Guard), of the United States. Employees who have a break in service greater than six months will be credited with the total continuous months served in a paid, benefited position since the last date of rehire. Ties will be broken by performance records followed by the last four digits of the employees payroll identification number. The higher number prevails.

Service Needs: A position within an affected class that requires unique knowledge, skills, and abilities that are not required for every position in the affected class and that cannot be acquired by other employees in 6 months or less.

Temporary Appointment Employee: This includes any City employee designated as seasonal, Undefined, temporary, regular/limited term. Exceptions from the RIF of temporary appointments Can be made based on the service needs of the department.

REDUCTION IN FORCE PROCEDURE

The City Manager will make a determination of a need to reduce the work force as the result of Inadequate work available or as the result of inadequate funding to meet payroll obligations for any Specific program, and within a department. The affected Department Head will recommend to the Office of Management and Budget the positions to be eliminated. The Director of Management And Budget, in concert with the Director of Human Resources will forward recommendations with Appropriate comments to the City Manager. Upon the approval of the City Manager, the Human Resources Director shall be responsible for the implementation of the Reduction in Force directive. The directive shall specify the number of positions in each classification to be affected.

REDUCTION IN FORCE PROCEDURE

- A. Department-specific only reduction in force.
- B. City-wide reduction in force, or
- C. Some combination of A and B.

A. Department – Specific, Reduction in Force (RIF)

If the City Manager determines that the RIF will be Department – specific only, the following procedures shall be followed unless an exception is made by the City Manager:

Step 1. Normal Attrition

Upon receipt of the determination of the City Manager to implement a Reduction in Force (RIF), the Director Human Resources shall halt the processing of advertising or selection for all classes of employees indicated in the RIF order. No further applications for affected positions will be released to any department.

Step 2. Notice to Affected Employees on the City Payroll

The Director of Human Resources shall develop a list of employees by classification and seniority ranking. This list will be used to identify the affected classes in the RIF order. The Human Resources Director will issue a written termination notice to employees in the affected classes as soon as practicable upon receipt of the RIF order. Individual employees will be given a written notice with a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to termination. Copies of all such notices will be forwarded to the employing department.

Step 3. Placement in a Funded, Vacant Positions Approved for Hiring

At the sole discretion of the Department Head, outstanding vacancies in affected positions which are approved for hire by OMB may be filled by placing an employee whose position has been identified for elimination, in the same or appropriate positions in the Department which has not been designated for elimination. Employees who have completed their probationary periods will have the first opportunity for such placements.

Any employee refusing a placement to the same classification will be laid off without further consideration. The Director of Human Resources will notify the employees affected by the RIF of the proposed effective date of placement.

When implementing such a placement, the ability of the employee to perform the work assignment will be assessed. The employees will be required to demonstrate their ability and will serve a new probationary period of one year. All employees so placed will be evaluated at the end this probationary period and their demonstrated performance will be the sole basis of any determination to retain or to terminate the employee from the assignment. In consultation with the affected Department, the Director of Human Resources will determine what constitutes an appropriate position/classification for placement.

Step 4. Layoff of Regular Employees

The layoff of regular employees will be initiated, if necessary, to complete the reduction specified in the RIF order. Employees in the affected classes will be laid off by least seniority order, until the requirements of the RIF order are met. Years/months or seniority will be reduced for each adverse performance or disciplinary action that occurred within the last five years preceding the date of the RIF order according to the following chart.

<u>YEARS OF SERVICE/SENIORITY</u>	<u>Adverse Performance or Disciplinary Action (within the past five years of the RIF notice)</u>
Minus 2 yrs. (24 months) each	<u>MINOR DISCIPLINE (excludes suspensions)</u> <u>Extended probation(s)</u> <u>Each denied merit increase</u> <u>Unsatisfactory Performance Evaluation</u>
Minus 5 yrs. (60 months) each	<u>MINOR SUSPENSIONS or loss of annual leave (up to 3 days)</u>
Minus 10 yrs. (120 months) each	<u>MAJOR DISCIPLINE (greater than 3 day suspension or loss of annual leave)</u>

Once the required number of positions is eliminated in each position/classification, placement may be initiated to vacant funded positions which have been approved for hire within the Department(s) or division(s) identified in the RIF order.

All employees who are affected by internal Departmental placements will be required to demonstrate their ability in their new assignment and a new one-year probationary period will be required. Exceptions to the above procedure (Steps 1 through 4) may be made by the City Manager based on the Department's service and/or business needs.

B. City-wide, Reduction In Force (RIF)

If the City manager determines that the RIF will be City-wide, the following procedures shall be followed unless an exception is made by the City Manager.

Step 1. Normal Attrition

Upon receipt of the determination of the City Manager to implement a Reduction in Force, the Director of Human Resources shall halt the processing of advertising or selection for all classes of employees within the City indicated in the RIF order. No further applications for affected positions will be released to the hiring Departments.

Step 2. Notice to Affected Employees on the City Payroll

The Department of Human Resources shall develop a list of employees by classification and seniority ranking. This list will be used to identify the affected classes in the RIF order. The Director of Human Resources shall issue a written termination notice to employees in the affected classes, as soon as practicable upon receipt of the RIF order. Individual employees will be given a minimum of thirty (30) days notice prior to termination. Copies of all such notices will be forwarded to the employing Department.

Step 3. Placement in a Funded, Vacant Position Which has been Approved for Hiring

At the sole discretion of the Department Heads, outstanding vacancies in affected positions which are approved for hire may be filled by placing an employee whose position has been identified for elimination, in the same or appropriate positions in the City. Employees who have completed their probationary periods will have the first opportunity for such placements. Any employee refusing a placement to the same classification will be laid off without further consideration. The Director of Human Resources will notify both the Department which will receive the employee and the Department affected by the RIF, of the proposed effective date of placement. The Director of Human Resources in consultation with the affected Departments will determine what constitutes an appropriate placement.

When implementing such placement, the ability of the employee to perform the work assignment will be assessed. The employees will be required to demonstrate their ability and will serve a new probationary period of one year. All employees so transferred, will be evaluated during this probationary period and their demonstrated performance will be the sole basis of any determination to retain or to terminate the employee from the assignment.

Step 4. Layoff of Regular Employees

The layoff of regular employees will be initiated if necessary to complete the reduction specified in the RIF order. Employees in the affected classes will be laid off by least seniority order, until the requirements of the RIF order are met. Years/months of seniority will be reduced for each adverse performance or disciplinary action that occurred within the last five years preceding the date of the RIF order according to the following chart:

<u>YEARS OF SERVICE SENIORITY</u>	<u>Adverse Performance or DISCIPLINARY ACTION (within past five years of the RIF notice)</u>
Minus 2 years (24 months) each	<u>MINOR DISCIPLINE (excludes suspensions)</u> <u>Extended probation(s)</u> <u>Each denied merit increase</u> <u>Unsatisfactory Performance Evaluation</u>
Minus 5 yrs. (60 months) each	<u>MINOR SUSPENSIONS or loss of leave (up to 3 days)</u>

Minus 10 yrs. (120 months) each

MAJOR DISCIPLINE (greater than 3 days suspension or loss of annual leave)

Layoff will be implemented without regard to the employing department of the affected individual. Once the required number of positions is eliminated in each position/classification, placement may be initiated to vacant funded positions which have been approved for hire in any department according to the RIF order.

All employees who are affected by internal placements will be required to demonstrate their ability in their new assignment and a new one-year probationary period will be required. Exceptions to the above procedure (Steps 1 through 4) may be made by the City Manager based on the Department's service and or business needs.

CALCULATING SENIORITY AND BUMPING PROCEDURES

A. Department-Specific RIF Procedure:

Step 1. A list of affected employees, identified for layoff, their job classes and seniority calculated in months, (Part-time and Full-time lists are combined), in a department, shall be compiled.

Step 2. The Human Resources Director will notify affected employees of their bumping rights within 10 days of an employee's notification letter.

Step 3. The Human Resources Department will compile a list of incumbents holding the same identified jobs and/or classifications or class series, listed by name, title and seniority in months, in the employee's department.

Step 4. The Human Resources Department, in consultation with the affected Department, will determine which positions to offer employees, based on classifications, class series and seniority.

Step 5. The bumping employee has 10 working days to accept the offer of a placement within the employee's current classification or class series. Full-time positions will not be reduced to accommodate Regular part-time employees. Acceptance of the bump/transfer is voluntary. If placement is available and declined, the employee is terminated under the RIF and no further action will be required. The employee will be eligible for leave payouts and severance pay.

Employees who accept a lateral or lower position as a result of bumping, will not see a reduction in their pay, but will incur a new merit date and new probationary period as the result of occupying a new position. In no case will an employee move to a higher grade. If the same job classification and/or series does not exist in the Department, the employee will be subject to termination.

B. City-wide RIF Procedure:

Step 1. A list of affected employees, identified for layoff, their job classes and seniority calculated in months, (part-time and full-time lists are combined), City-wide, shall be compiled.

Step 2. The Human Resources Director will notify affected employees of their bumping rights within 10 days of the employee's notification letter.

Step 3. The Human Resources Department compiles list of incumbents holding the same identified job and/or classification or class series, listed by name, title, seniority in months, across City Departments.

Step 4. The Human Resources Department, in consultation with the affected Department Heads will determine which positions to offer employees based on classifications, class series and seniority.

Step 5. The affected employee has 10 working days to accept the offer of a placement. Full-time positions will not be reduced to accommodate Regular part-time employees. Acceptance of the bump/transfer is voluntary. If placement is available and declined, employee is terminated under the RIF and no further action will be required. The employee will be eligible for leave payouts and severance pay.

Employees who accept a lateral or lower position as a result of bumping, will not see a reduction in their current pay, but will incur a new merit date and new probationary period as the result of occupying a new position. In no case will an employee move to a higher grade. If the same job classification and/or class series does not exist in the City, the employee will be subject to termination.

SALARY ASSIGNMENTS

Regular full-time and part-time employees placed as the result of this Administrative Regulation, to a work assignment in their same position/classification, shall retain their same salary step and within-scale eligibility date. Employees who accept a lower classification shall be placed on the step of their new salary grade which is the nearest to their original salary. If placed between two pay steps, the employee will receive the higher step in the new grade.

Employees will receive a new merit date that documents the start of the one-year probation. Employees, who bump into a position whose salary is at the top of or above the pay scale, shall have their salary frozen at their current salary level.

SEVERANCE PAY

Severance pay is authorized to be paid at an employee's current rate of pay at the time of lay off and granted to Regular employees laid off under the procedures of this regulation and in accordance with the following formula. The pay does not count toward hours worked in any pay period in which it is granted.

Completed YEARS OF SERVICE	WEEKS OF SEVERANCE PAY
<u>0 to 5</u>	<u>3 weeks pay</u>
<u>6 to 10</u>	<u>4 weeks pay</u>
<u>11 to 15</u>	<u>5 weeks pay</u>
<u>16 or more</u>	<u>6 weeks pay</u>

REEMPLOYMENT AND RECALL LISTS

All employees who are affected by the RIF action will be placed on a Recall List for their position/classification for a period of one year from separation. All future vacancies in these classification will be filled by the recall of the individual with the longest period of satisfactory service with the City (seniority) for the duration of the Recall List. Individuals recalled to fill the same classification from which they were removed (vacated) will be restored to regular employment and at the same step/grade. Individuals recalled to a classification other than that in which they have been previously employed will be required to satisfactorily complete a new one-year probationary period. If any employee accepts an alternative city position (one which they may have applied for and were selected), will be removed the recall list.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY

Any employee laid off and placed on a Recall List will be responsible for notifying the City Human Resources Department of any change in address or telephone number. Employees will be notified to return to work by registered mail. Any employee who fails to report to work as directed (within ten working days) following receipt of notification to return to work, will forfeit all further recall rights.

AID TO EMPLOYEES

Individuals who are laid off under this Administrative Regulation shall be entitled to Unemployment Compensation as provided by the Code of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The City Human Resources Department will provide assistance to aid in filing for such unemployment compensation. Laid off employees will be paid for any earned annual leave or compensatory time (if eligible for payment) on the next pay day following their lay off. Upon re-employment within six months, all earned but unused sick leave will be reinstated if not reduced to zero by a sick leave payout at termination. The employee's annual leave accrual rate at the time of the lay off will be restored upon reemployment in a benefited position.

All recalled employees shall be subject to the provisions of AR 6-18, for purposes of reemployment and RIF. For the duration of any lay off, laid off employees will be given priority consideration for any employment opportunity for which they apply and are qualified.

GRANT FUNDED OR PARTIALLY GRANT FUNDED POSITIONS

A grant funded position is considered restricted when the grant and required match is funding only the scope of the position outlined in the grant. This position would not be expected to backfill other duties in the City or assist in a different capacity for the general City benefit as in doing so would be outside the scope of expectations outlined in the grant. Under this scenario, the employee occupying this position is not eligible for the benefits or the RIF policy.

A grant funded position is considered unrestricted when the grant and its required match supports a greater level of service or benefit to an existing City service/benefit, or when the grant covers a broad range of duties not intended in its award to be directed to a specified position or number of positions. The employee(s) occupying this position is eligible for benefits under the City's RIF policy.

Positions created to perform restricted grant functions that aren't fully supported by the grant are eligible for the benefits in the City's RIF policy. Existing positions that are subsequently assigned in whole or in part to restricted grant functions are eligible for the benefits of the City's RIF policy. Using the aforementioned definition, the Human Resources Department in conjunction with Office of Budget and Management will create lists of employees who are eligible and not eligible for benefits under the City's RIF policy.

APPEAL

Any employee who believes that the City did not follow the prescribed RIF process as specified in this Administrative Regulation shall have access to an administrative hearing with the Director of Human Resources, utilizing the procedure contained in A.R. 6-20. A reduction in force implemented under the Reduction in Force regulation is not grievable pursuant to A.R. 6-21, Grievance Procedure, (IV)(B)(6).

James K. Hartmann
City Manager

Debt Ratio Policies
Debt Related Financial Policies

City Council passed a set of debt-related financial policies on June 9, 1987. During FY 1998, the Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee (BFAAC), a City Council appointed citizen committee, analyzed these debt-related financial policies, examined the City's financial condition in comparison to other jurisdictions with superior credit ratings (other double-triple A rated jurisdictions). The BFAAC and the City Manager recommended that City Council reaffirm the updated debt-related financial policies, incorporating BFAAC's recommended updates to the policies to establish a consistent set of appropriate relationships between debt targets and limits. Because three of the six debt indicators measure the debt capacity of the City in relation to the size of the City and its economy, BFAAC recommended that these indicators should not produce debt capacity limits that vary greatly from each other.

City Council reaffirmed its commitment to sound financial management and adopted the updated debt-related financial policies on December 9, 1997. City Council amended the policies on October 26, 1999, to allow priority consideration for an increase in the designation of fund balance for capital project funding.

On June 24, 2008, City Council adopted the City Manager's recommendation, endorsed by BFACC, to revise the target limit upward reflecting the ratio of debt as a percentage of personal income.

These updated policies are as follows:

Debt as a Percentage of Fair Market Real Property Value
Target = 1.1 percent; Limit = 1.6 percent

This ratio indicates the relationship between the City's debt and the full value of real property in the City as assessed annually at fair market value. It is an important indicator of the City's ability to repay debt because real property taxes are the primary source of the City's revenues used to repay debt. A small ratio is an indication that the City will be better able to withstand possible future economic downturns and continue to meet its debt obligations.

Debt as a Percentage of Total Personal Income
Target = 3.2 percent; Limit = 4.5 percent

This percentage is a measure of the capacity of citizens to finance tax-supported debt. A lower percentage means that taxes required to repay debt represent a smaller portion of the average citizen's income.

Debt Service as a Percentage of General Government Expenditures
Target = 8.0 percent; Limit = 10 percent

This ratio is a measure of the City's ability to repay debt without hampering other City services. A small ratio indicates a lesser burden on the City's operating budget.

Unreserved General Fund Balance as a Percentage of General Fund Revenue
Target = Not applicable; Limit = 10 percent

Undesignated General Fund Balance as a Percentage of General Fund Revenue
Target = 5.5 percent; Limit = 4.0 percent

Unrestricted Net Assets as a Percentage of General Revenues
Target = 5.5 percent; Limit = 4.0 percent

These ratios indicate the ability of the City to cope with unexpected financial problems or emergencies. The Unreserved General Fund Balance represents the funds legally available to the City. It is desirable that the City maintain Unreserved General Fund Balance that is comparable to the ratio maintained by other double triple A rated jurisdictions, but not to fall below the limit of 10 percent. The Undesignated General Fund Balance corresponds to the checkbook balance of the City. Both balances are important to consider. The unreserved balance includes designations that the City Council has made but presumably could change.

Net assets corresponds to stockholders' equity for publicly traded companies. The larger the undesignated General Fund Balance or unrestricted net assets, the greater the City's ability to cope with financial emergencies and fluctuations in revenue cycles.

The ratios for undesignated general fund balance and unrestricted net assets are calculated after adjusting for the effect of subsequent year's expenditures, and funding for future equipment replacement and capital projects, grants and contributions restricted to specific programs, and extraordinary and special items.

The City will not issue tax or revenue anticipation notes to fund ongoing governmental operations. The City of Alexandria will manage its cash in a fashion that will prevent any borrowing to meet working capital needs.

The City will not issue bond anticipation notes (BAN's) for a period of longer than two years. If the City issues a BAN for a capital project, the BAN will be converted to a long-term bond or redeemed at its expiration, but will not be rolled over.

The City will continue to rely on current revenue, including its fund balance, to finance its short-lived and maintenance-oriented capital improvements. The City believes in funding a significant portion of capital improvements on a pay as you go basis; therefore, the City will continue to finance short-lived and maintenance oriented capital improvements with current revenues, and its fund balance. The priority to consider when additional General Fund revenues become available at the end of the fiscal year would be a designation within the General Fund fund balance for pay as you go capital.

The City will not establish a trend of using General Fund equity to finance current recurring operations. The City's General Fund equity has been built over the years to provide the City with sufficient working capital and to enable it to finance equipment replacement, capital projects, and unforeseen emergencies without borrowing. To conserve the General Fund equity balance and to avoid reliance on this balance, the City will not finance recurring operations from the General Fund equity balance for periods longer than two years as confirmed by the audited financial statements. If the audited financial statements confirm that recurring operations have been funded from the General Fund equity balance for a period longer than two consecutive fiscal years, then the City will adopt in its next ensuing budget a balanced budget in which the operating revenues meet the operating expenditures without any consideration of the General Fund equity balance. City will annually prepare a six-year capital improvement program. In accordance with the City Charter and in order to meet the debt ratio targets, to schedule debt issuance, and to systematically improve the capital structure, each year the City will prepare and adopt a six-year capital improvement program. This capital improvement program will identify the source of funding for all capital projects. The debt issuances that are a part of the capital improvement program will be structured to meet the City's debt policies and debt ratio targets.

The City Manager will prepare each year and submit a set of six-year scenarios of possible future revenues and expenditures that match the six-year Capital Improvement Program time horizon with the proposed budget to be considered by the City Council. Those scenarios will be updated to reflect the decisions of the City Council and issued with the approved budget. In order to improve financial planning and decisions, the City Manager also will annually prepare with the approved budget a set of six-year scenarios of possible future General Fund revenues and expenditures and their effects on the debt-related financial policy ratios outlined above, including the effect of planned borrowing under the approved CIP.

In accordance with the Government Finance Officers Association budget review requirements, this table, taken from the City's FY 2009 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, is repeated here:

City of Alexandria, Virginia
Computation of Legal Debt Margin
as of June 30, 2009

Assessed Value of Real property, January 1, 2009	\$34,379,163,000
Debt Limit: 10 Percent of Assessed Value	3,437,916,300
Amount of Debt Applicable to Debt Limit:	
General Obligation Bonds	<u>\$383,950,000</u>
Less Total General Obligation Debt	<u>(383,950,000)</u>
LEGAL DEBT MARGIN REMAINING	\$ 3,053,966,300

Limitations on the Incurrence of General Obligation Debt:

There is no requirement in the Virginia Constitution, the Virginia Statutes or in the Charter of the City of Alexandria that the issuance of general obligation bonds of the City be subject to approval of the electors of the City at referendum.

Under the City Charter, the City Council has full authority to authorize and issue general obligation bonds. The authorizing procedure consists of the passage on first reading of an ordinance authorizing the issuance of the bonds followed by a notice of public hearing at a subsequent meeting and the final passage on second reading following the public hearing.

The only constitutional limitation on the issuance of general obligation bonds is contained in Article VII, Section 10 of the Virginia Constitution, which states that: No city or town shall issue any bonds or other interest-bearing obligations which, including existing indebtedness, shall at any time exceed ten percent of the assessed valuation of real estate in the city or town subject to taxation, as shown by the last preceding assessment for taxes.