

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 14, 2014
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
THROUGH: RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER 
FROM: NELSIE L. SMITH, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET 
SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO #20: RESPONSE TO COUNCIL QUESTIONS

Every Friday, the Office of Management & Budget issues Budget Memos to answer questions posed by members of City Council. We prepare the memos in a question and answer format. Below are answers to some of the questions posed thus far.

CITY HALL SECURITY(J. Chapman)

Question: “What are the service level implications if we do not increase security at City Hall?”

Response: The FY 2015 Proposed Operating Budget includes the addition of a second contract security guard for City Hall. Currently, one contract guard provides security services at City Hall from 5 p.m. to 12 a.m. Monday through Friday. At the current level of service, the contract security guard greets visitors at the front desk and observes entry and exit from the facility. The guard also performs periodic walkthroughs of the facility to observe any potential security issues. The current one guard security detail does not provide for continuous observation of visitor entry and exits, nor does it provide consistent checks throughout the facility, which generally maintains a high level of use by the public and City staff even after 5 p.m. A 2009 Alexandria Police Department Community Relations Unit Safety and Security Assessment of City Hall indicated that this level of service is not adequate for a facility with the design characteristics and use patterns of City Hall.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funds will provide added security at City Hall through the use of control point card readers on elevators and in stairwells to limit after-hours access to floors three through five. The first and second floors will continue to remain open access due to the highly used meeting spaces on those floors. These improvements are scheduled to take place in FY 2015. The installation of security systems will help in reducing the potential exposure to security issues on floors three through five, but will not provide the continuous

monitoring of first floor visitor entry and exits and consistent checks of posts on other floors of City Hall.

While all the issues in the 2009 Alexandria Police Department Community Relations Unit Safety and Security Assessment of City Hall cannot be addressed in FY 2015, these two initiatives identified in the assessment are two of the most impactful improvements that can be implemented with the funding available. A copy of the full security assessment can be provided at your request.

INMATE WORK DETAILS (T. Lovain)

Question: “Please let us know what the two inmate work crews have been able to accomplish so far this FY and what the 3 crews did in FY 2013. Remind us of the cost (one FTE?) to support an additional crew. Were there any considerations in striking the second crew?”

Response: Below is a table of various project types completed by the Inmate Work Detail (IWD) in FY 2013 and through the first nine months of FY 2014.

	FY 2013	FY 2014*
Avg. # of Inmates on IWD	4	8
Litter Patrol Visits	63	57
Litter Patrol Trash Bags Collected	251	254
Barricades Delivered/Collected	621	609
Park Grass Mows	85	166
Other Projects	26	31

**Through March 31, 2014*

Typically each work crew has up to four or five inmates per crew. During most of FY 2013, one inmate work detail deputy was out on extended medical leave. Coincidentally, during this same time, the number of qualified inmates was low, averaging only four inmates over the year. As a result, there were only enough inmates for one work crew during this time. Currently in FY 2014, there are eight inmates on the program, enough for two crews. However, the number of participants can fluctuate each month due to the limited number of qualified participants.

The Sheriff’s Office is also responsible for maintaining the grounds around the Public Safety Center year round. This responsibility utilizes the majority of time for one work detail crew. If IWD crews were not used for this the Sheriff’s Office would have to hire a contractor to complete this work. Reducing the program to one work crew as proposed in the FY 2015 budget will significantly reduce our ability to do community service projects.

The cost to restore one entry level work detail deputy position for a second IWD crew is \$68,092.

POLICE ENTRY PAY (J. Wilson)

Question: “The attached (Public Safety Work Group Police Career Ladder FY 2015 Proposals Summary) was circulated to the Work Group by HR, as analysis of a few proposals for addressing the Starting Pay concerns within Police. Can I get some analysis of these numbers as it relates to FY 2015? Alternatively, is there a possibility of utilizing Career Ladder money allocated to Police to address this issue? What would it look like?”

Response: Analysis by the Department of Human Resources shows that the base pay of an entry-level Alexandria police officer during their first year of service is behind the market by a minimum of \$1,351 and a maximum of \$5,466. Alexandria trails the comparator average by \$3,432 which is the target used when benchmarking pay adjustments. In addition to trailing the market in Year 1, Police Officers continue to be behind the average of the market for years two through 10. During the first 10 years of their career, an Alexandria police officer will be behind the average of the market between \$403 and \$5,178 per year.

However, over the course of a 30-year career, an Alexandria Police Officer IV will earn \$33,970 more in base pay than the average of the five comparators. In terms of cumulative earnings, this means Alexandria police officers are paid slightly above the market. The result of the cumulative earnings analysis also indicates that adjustments to the Police Pay Scale are not necessary. To the contrary, a scale-wide adjustment (i.e. Market Rate Adjustment) would address police officer entry pay while also placing Alexandria further ahead of the market in cumulative earnings from Year 15 to the end of their career. In addition a scale-wide adjustment would impact other sworn positions in the department that have yet to be fully studied by the PSWG.

The ACOPS Local 5 options developed by the Police Public Safety Work Group did balance the need to increase entry pay with overall cumulative market alignment, while avoiding pay compression. The option that is estimated to cost \$276,000 would reallocate the Police Officer I and II positions to PS Grade 10 (an approximately 5% pay increase for employees in these positions). This would increase Police starting pay to \$45,802 from \$43,618. In addition, this option called for adjustments to the Police Officer career ladder to facilitate a faster rate of ascension from the Police Officer I to Police Officer II position. This proposal would reduce the number of years that Alexandria employees are behind the comparator market from 10 to four years. In terms of cumulative earnings, the City is currently \$23,194 ahead of the market average over 25 years (\$1,933,632 as compared to \$1,910,438). The entry pay increase would widen that gap to \$56,124 (\$1,966,562 compared to \$1,910,438).

The proposal did not consider adjustments for the Police Officer III and Police Officer IV rank for several reasons:

- According to the Cumulative Earnings Model, employees are only marginally behind the market during their time as a Police Officer III rank (between \$403 and \$1,318 per year). The proposal to adjust Police Officer I and II significantly reduces the number of years Police Officer III's are behind the market which negates the need to make a specific reallocation for the Police Officer III position.
- By the time an Alexandria employee reaches the Police Officer IV position (Year 10), the City has surpassed the comparator market in annual earnings.
- Reallocation upwards of the Police Officer III and/or Police Officer IV would create pay compression between full-performance Police Officers and first-line supervisors (Police Sergeants).

Police Department resources intended for funding career ladder elevations could be used to fund these adjustments, however there is only \$196,000 budgeted for career ladders in the Police Department for FY 2015, and using those funds to adjust starting pay would have several consequences that would need to be considered. First and foremost, eliminating this career ladder funding would essentially reinstate the budget-related "slot limits" that the City has worked to eliminate over the past two fiscal years (including the funding allocated by City Council in FY 2013 to address "backlogged" career ladder elevations). In addition, eliminating career ladder funding further erodes Alexandria's position in the comparator market by hindering an employee's rate of ascension to the full-performance Police Officer (PO IV) position. A slower rate of ascension results in more years in which the employee is below the comparator market in annual earnings.

See attachment 1 for the FY2015 Police Career Ladder.

Attachment 1

Police Career Ladder FY 2015 Proposals Summary

		FY 2013/2014 (Current Pay/Promotion Rules)		FY 2015 Proposal (ACOPS Local 5)		FY 2015 Proposal (S. Lasher Model)	
Rank		Grade	Years in Grade	Grade	Years in Grade	Grade	Years in Grade
Ladder Structure	Police Officer I	9	3	10	1	9-C	3
	Police Officer II	9	3	10	3	10	3
	Police Officer III	11	4	11	4	11	4
	Police Officer IV	12	Final Level	12	Final Level	12	Final Level
Cumulative Earnings (25 Years)							
Alexandria		\$1,933,632		\$1,966,562		\$1,981,024	
Avg. of Comps.		\$1,910,438		\$1,910,438		\$1,910,438	
Delta		\$23,194		\$56,124		\$70,586	
Years Behind in Annual Earnings							
Year 1 Amt.		(\$3,432)		(\$1,247)		+ \$1,039	
Minimum Amt.		(\$403)		(\$403)		(\$246)	
Maximum Amt.		(\$5,178)		(\$1,247)		(\$246)	
Years Behind		10 of 25 First 10 Years of Career		4 of 25 Sporadic (Years 1, 4, 7 & 8)		1 of 25 Year 5	
Cost to Implement							
Salary Difference		N/A		\$181,638		\$1,032,005	
Benefits Roll-Up (52%)				\$94,452		\$536,642	
TOTAL COST		N/A		\$276,090		\$1,568,647	
Notes							
		No changes to current structure.		Reallocation of Police Officer I and Police Officer II job classification to PS Grade 10. Reducing minimum years in grade needed to elevate to Police Officer II/Police Officer III. Elevation from Police Officer I to Police Officer II becomes automatic increase, once officer is 'cut-loose' from Academy/Field Training.		Reallocation of Police Officer II job classification to PS Grade 10. New policy that Police Officer I's will be hired at PS Grade 9-C. Cost includes two step bump to all Police sworn employees to avoid compression issues that may be caused by policy of hiring Police Officers I at PS Grade 9-C.	