

Comment Board Postings

Ad Hoc Retirement Benefit Advisory Group

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the work of the Ad Hoc Retirement Benefit Advisory Group, and I thank all of the members for their time and dedication to this important topic. After reading through the reports and documents available, it appears that a great deal of research and study has been done regarding retirement benefits for full time employees. However, it does not appear that the same level of research and attention has been given to retirement benefits for permanent part time employees. Specifically, in the following documents:

1. Retirement Plan Summary – General Schedule Employees dated 3/24/2011

No information is included regarding retirement benefits for permanent part time employees. This may lead readers to the erroneous assumption that permanent part time employees receive the same, though pro-rated benefits as their full time colleagues. In my experience, I have found this assumption to be true.

2. Benefits Overview of city Retirement Benefits with examples dated 4/4/2011

There are no examples for permanent part time employees. Given that permanent part time employees are not currently covered under VRS, the value of their retirement benefits under the Supplemental Retirement Plan is very low. I would recommend doing a comparison of retirement benefits for a part time and full time employee that have worked in the same type of position for 30 years. The result would be eye opening.

3. Local Comparators Retirement Benefits dated 4/4/2011

No information is included from local comparator jurisdictions as to the retirement benefits they offer their permanent part time employees.

4. In Resolution #2432 which describes the Group's tasks, it indicates the following:

Section 3: Tasks of the Advisory Group

b. iii To provide an opportunity for City employees to save for and have a secure retirement.

This statement does not differentiate between full time and part time City employees, yet in practice there are great disparities in their retirement benefits. This Group has not yet taken the time to look into this issue and develop proposals to resolve the disparities. In the current structure, permanent part time employees will not have a secure retirement.

I would suggest that part time employees are no less dedicated to their public service than their full time colleagues, and they should be compensated equally. Lastly, it does not appear that General Service Employees have had an opportunity to make a presentation to the Group. I believe their presentation was cancelled due to the earthquake. I think this is important information that needs to be available to the public before any deadline for public comment.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Ludington, a 25 year City Employee

[Debbie Ludington \(257\)](#) | User | September 2, 2011 - 10:20 AM

I concur with Debbie's comment. I worked 20 years part time for the city and had no VRS retirement during that time. I had to buy back 99 months when I came back full time and still will not have full benefits when I retire.

[Anne Levy \(258\)](#) | User | September 2, 2011 - 11:40 AM

I believe that regional comparisons ranking Alexandria's employee benefits are deeply flawed. The truth is that general employees are heavily penalized for retiring before 30 years of service, so substantial levels of personal savings are essential. I served Alexandria for 22 years full-time. Sworn and school employees have far more generous pension benefits than general employees, and higher salary scales. Their pensions therefore have correspondingly higher costs on a per-employee basis.

[Amy Flenniken \(255\)](#) | User | September 2, 2011 - 5:21 PM

I am writing regarding the comments from Debbie Ludington submitted on September 2. I apologize to Debbie that your comments were accidentally hidden from view for a couple days. They are now restored. The fact that your comments were hidden is not indicative of a reaction from City staff or members of the Ad Hoc Retirement Benefit Advisory Group. We appreciate you taking the time to share your comments.

Theresa Nugent
Pension Administration Division
Staff Support for the Ad Hoc Retirement Benefit Advisory Group

[Theresa Nugent \(248\)](#) | City Staff | September 6, 2011 - 2:35 PM

Ad Hoc Retirement Benefits Advisory Group Comments

The [Ad Hoc Retirement Benefits Advisory Group](#) is charged with evaluating the current structure and status of the retirement benefits programs offered to the City's employees. The City Council asked the Group to make its evaluation using the criterion of: protection of established benefits, competitiveness with neighboring jurisdictions, encouragement of employee retirement savings, the advantages and disadvantages of defined benefit versus defined contribution retirement plans as well as present and future fiscal sustainability of any existing or recommended retirement benefit program(s).

As part of its tasked duties, the Group must provide the City Council with a written report of its recommendations by November 2011. The Group has been completing this [Discussion Guide](#) to help summarize and review the retirement plans. This document is intended only as a guide for discussions at Advisory Group meetings and does not reflect any decisions made or conclusions reached by the Advisory Group.

In preparation for drafting its report to the City, the Advisory Group is seeking public feedback primarily based on the City Council's evaluation criterion and the [Discussion Guide](#). The Group will consider all feedback; however, feedback that takes the evaluation criterion and the Discussion Guide will be most useful to the report's development. Because the Group's report is due to City Council by November 2011, all public comment and feedback must be submitted by September 4, 2011.

The City of Alexandria encourages public comments on the issues presented on our sites. Please be sure that your comments relate to the topic of the board on which they're posted. Please do not post any comments that attack or threaten another person, misrepresent the source, are obscene or use profanity, give out someone's personal information, promote unlawful discrimination, contain irrelevant references to commercial businesses, are illegal, or duplicate your previous comments on the same board.

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