

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 19, 2005

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMAN, CITY MANAGER *J*

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO #72 : QUESTIONS REGARDING THE CREATION OF A YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION COORDINATOR

This memorandum responds to a request from Councilman Gaines to provide the feasibility and costs, if any, associated with creating a Youth Violence Prevention Coordinator to coordinate the City's gang prevention efforts, and costs, if any, associated with promoting gang prevention programs Citywide.

During federal fiscal 2005, Congressman Wolf was able to secure several million dollars for the jurisdictions in Northern Virginia for gang resistance activities. The federal dollars for this project are being managed by the Town of Herndon. The funds will be used for the Northern Virginia Regional Court Service Units to fund gang specialist positions to coordinate local and regional gang intervention and prevention efforts.

On November 10, 2004, the City Manager convened a Senior City Policy Group on Gangs which meets monthly and is a support mechanism for the Alexandria Gang Prevention Community Task Force (described below). The Senior Policy Group is made up of senior staff from City departments that are involved in gang suppression, prevention and intervention activities, along with the State agencies located in Alexandria that are also involved in these types of activities. The Senior Policy Group is chaired by Assistant City Manager Michele Evans.

On December 10, 2004, Resolution 2128 (attached) was adopted which establishes, identifies the general make-up of, and provides a charge for a new 13-member Alexandria Gang Prevention Community Task Force. This task force will receive information on regional and local gang activity, the City's efforts in gang intervention, prevention and suppression, and potential programs and activities that are being developed to address gangs. The task force will also make recommendations to Council on needed changes in legislation and policy and the funding that might be required to address gang concerns.

The City's FY 2006 Proposed Budget contains recommended supplemental budget funding for a Gang Intervention Coordinator, who will coordinate local and regional gang intervention and prevention efforts. Federal grant monies will be available for the salary and benefit portion of this position only in the amount \$65,000. The FY 2006 Proposed Budget contains an additional \$28,571, for additional salary and benefits. The FY 2006 Proposed Budget also contains \$5,000 in non-personnel expenditures to provide additional support for gang prevention activities.

There is a significant workload associated with coordinating all gang intervention, prevention and suppression efforts. In the interim, until grant funding for the new position is available on July 1, Linda Odell, Court Services, and Deborah Warren, Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse are assisting with the many tasks that must be accomplished. These include planning for conducting a community assessment on gang activity, preparing an inventory of community resources, seeking funding for added programs including a fall community summit on gangs sponsored by the community task force, and expanding our capacity for community evaluation. Once hired, the person in the new position will serve as the City's liaison to the regional task force on gang prevention and will be the key staff person to coordinate City anti-gang efforts among City departments.

Attachment

RESOLUTION NO. 2128

WHEREAS, the local governments of the Washington, D.C., metropolitan region are working together to address gang activity in the region; and

WHEREAS, this fall several members of City Council participated in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' regional forum to address ways to alleviate gang activity in the Washington metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria City Council is concerned about the increasing incidents of gang-related activity in the metropolitan area, and wishes to improve education and communication regarding gangs among City agencies, between the City and others in the region, and within the Alexandria community; and

WHEREAS, although to date the City of Alexandria has experienced a relatively low amount of criminal activity by gang members, in part due to the effective suppression efforts of the Alexandria Police Department, gangs are a regional problem and, as such, could impact Alexandria at any time (for instance, if gang members from other jurisdictions come into the City to recruit members or commit crimes); and

WHEREAS, numerous City and state departments and agencies serving Alexandria have an interest in gang suppression, prevention and intervention; and

WHEREAS, City Council wishes to establish an Alexandria Gang Prevention Community Task Force to address gang issues;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alexandria City Council hereby establishes an Alexandria Gang Prevention Community Task Force which shall be appointed by the mayor and shall consist of the following 13 members:

- Two members of the Alexandria City Council
- One member of the Alexandria School Board
- One representative of TC Williams High School
- One representative of City Middle Schools
- One representative of Alexandria Elementary Schools
- One representative of the private schools in Alexandria
- One representative of the Alexandria Tenant and Workers Support Committee
- One representative of the Alexandria Branch of the NAACP
- One representative of the Alexandria Youth Council
- One representative of the Alexandria Interfaith Council
- Two representatives from the City at large

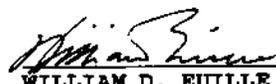
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that advisors to the Task Force shall include, as needed, the City Manager, the Commonwealth's Attorney, the Police Chief, the Sheriff; and the Directors of Court Services, Human Services, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse, Adult Probation and Parole, and the Office on Women.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Task Force shall continue for a period of 18 months from the date of its first meeting, and shall at that time dissolve unless authorized to continue by the City Council; and that at least 30 days before the end of its first year, the Task Force shall inform the Council whether it believes it should be authorized to continue in existence and, if so, it shall recommend the length of time it believes it should continue.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the charge to the Task Force shall be to undertake the following:

- (1) to receive briefings on the status of gang suppression, prevention and intervention programs and activities in the City and, insofar as directly relevant to the City, the status of similar programs and activities in the metropolitan region;
- (2) to assist in informing and educating the Alexandria community about the gang suppression, prevention and intervention programs and activities that are occurring in the City and in the region;
- (3) to assist in identifying programs and activities that will address specific gang-related problems or issues in the City, with a particular emphasis on programs and activities that will prevent individuals from joining gangs and/or that will intervene with individuals who are members of a gang to facilitate their withdrawal from such membership;
- (4) to assist in identifying opportunities to obtain funding for programs and activities that will address such gang-related problems or issues in the City; and
- (5) to assist in identifying state or local laws that should be enacted or amended to enable the City, and possibly other local governments, to better address problems and issues arising from or related to gangs.

ADOPTED: December 14, 2004


WILLIAM D. EUILLE MAYOR

ATTEST:

Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC City Clerk