

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 3, 2006

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO #63: ROVING RECREATION LEADER POSITIONS

This memorandum is in response to Councilman Smedberg's and Councilman Krupika's requests for follow-up information pertaining to the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities' request for two Roving Recreation Leader positions, which are funded in the Proposed FY 2007 base budget.

Roving Leaders have traditionally operated under the umbrella of the parks and recreation departments of the cities that were contacted by staff. The District of Columbia and the City of San Antonio, Texas both operate comprehensive Roving Leader programs through their parks and recreation departments. Representatives from these cities advised us that in their opinion recreational activities, community recreation centers and parks most often provide a neutral link for staff and potential contacts, which enables the Roving Leader to reach at-risk youth in a non-threatening, perceived "non-government" setting. From this point, a link can be made to families, and assistance can be provided through specific referrals of the individual or family to other City or non-profit services as needed.

In response to the positions' proposed salaries compare the issue of salary level, roughly to the salary for a teacher with a bachelor's degree in the Alexandria City Public Schools. In addition, the comparable salaries of another local jurisdiction Roving Leader program is listed:

Position	Entry Level Salary (without benefits)
ACPS Teacher (240Day) BA Degree Step A-G	\$40,816 - \$50,896 (proposed)
City of Alexandria Roving Recreation Leader GS-15, Step A-G	\$37,841 - \$51,741
District of Columbia Roving Recreation Leader DS-7, Step-1 to DS-11, Step-5	\$27,627 - \$45,550

As contemplated by City staff, the Roving Leader would build trust on an ongoing basis with the youth through personal contact. The Roving Leader is aimed at making contact with youth who do

not come to the City's facility-based recreation programs. This contact is guided by the Roving Leader through the use of recreation programming, other agency and social service referrals, and support mechanisms as needed provided by schools, community resource officers, and human services agencies that provide support services to the community.

A significant function of the position is to channel youth and their families toward wholesome leisure time opportunities that help break the cycle of poor conduct and mis-channeled destructive activities. In particular, but not solely, youth and families who live in communities where the quality of life is impacted by economic challenges, gang activity, substance abuse, and other nuisance activities are the primary persons that will be assisted by the proposed two new Roving Leader positions.

Responsibilities of the position include:

- Planning and coordinating ongoing activities, events, and community projects that foster collaborative efforts and make maximum use of youth outreach and recreation based programs.
- Attend meetings of community organizations, civic associations, parent-teacher associations, tenant councils and recreation councils to foster collaborative efforts, and assess the needs and interests of the community.
- Prepare and maintain casework documentation on youths, families, and the community.
- Work with other professional staff in designing and implementing the identified youth outreach recreation programs for at-risk youth and families.
- Perform outreach contact in neighborhoods that establishes positives contact with at-risk youth, "crews" and "gangs," targeting specific issues or problems in specified areas of the City.
- Provide mentoring, monitoring, and supervision of youth and others on field trips, activities, dances, and other community programs and special events.
- Through daily contact, encourage youth to participate in activities and planning for programs, events, sports, teen nights, employment training, educational programs and other programs and services provide for teens.
- Become an integral part of the City multi-agency gang prevention and intervention efforts.

Among the tools and methods that will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the program include pre/post program surveys of youth and families who have been reached by the program, surveys of residents who reside in areas that are targeted by the Roving Leaders, criminal and nuisance activity data in targeted areas, number of referrals of youths and families to services, registration and attendance in recreation and other leisure activities by youths who reside in targeted areas.