

Legislative References

Relevant Budget Legislative References.....	23-2
Debt Ratio Policies.....	23-5
Ordinance 4291 (BFAAC).....	23-9
Resolution 2256 (Establishing the Processes to be Used to Plan and Adopt Operating Budgets and Capital Improvement Programs).....	23-12
Resolution 2257 (Setting Guidance to FY 2009 Budget Preparation).....	23-17

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. 5.07: The City Manager may at any time transfer any unencumbered appropriation or portion thereof within the accounts of an office, department or agency. The City Council when advised of the details by the City Manager may, by duly docketed resolution, transfer any unencumbered appropriation balance or portion thereof from one office, department or agency to another.

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.

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.

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 Per Capita as a Percentage of Per Capita Income
Target = 2.25 percent; Limit = 3.25 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 Per Capita
Target = An amount equal to 2.25 percent of per capita income
Limit = An amount equal to 3.25 percent of per capita income

This ratio indicates the per capita debt burden and is a general indicator of the City's debt burden. A smaller ratio indicates a lighter burden. The debt per capita target is set on sliding scale so that growth in per capita income allows a gradual and equivalent increase in debt per capita.

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.

The 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 2007 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, is repeated here:

City of Alexandria, Virginia
Computation of Legal Debt Margin
as of June 30, 2007

Assessed Value of Real property, January 1, 2007	\$34,243,031,000
Debt Limit: 10 Percent of Assessed Value	3,424,303,100
Amount of Debt Applicable to Debt Limit:	
General Obligation Bonds	<u>\$278,525,000</u>
 Total General Obligation Debt	 <u>(278,525,000)</u>
 LEGAL DEBT MARGIN	 \$ 3,145,778,100

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.

City Ordinances and Resolutions

**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. 2256

**Budget Resolution Establishing the Processes To Be Used To Plan For and 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. 2008, 2150, and 2166 and previously adopted by City Council have now expired; and

WHEREAS, City Council believes there should be more flexibility in 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 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, residential real estate taxes have borne an increasing share of the burden of paying for City and School services; and

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

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to assisting Alexandria City Public Schools in achieving its mission and being among the best in Northern Virginia; 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 focus on managing for results, 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 and objectives outlined in the City Council's adopted 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, repeal Resolution 2205, adopt this resolution in lieu thereof, 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 objectives, potential discretionary supplemental increases crucial to achieving City Council's strategic objectives, 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 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 an appropriate cost-of-living adjustment for City and School staff), (c) the outlook for additional requests for City operating needs in the upcoming fiscal year and succeeding 5 fiscal years, (d) 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 five years, (c) the outlook for Federal and State grants, and (d) the outlook for 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 citizen 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 and that such a resolution would contain (a) a maximum real estate tax rate (b) a maximum target for City General Fund expenditures (including any market rate adjustment (MRA) for City staff and cash capital and debt service), and (c) a target for a budget transfer to the Alexandria City Public Schools (including the cost of any MRA for School staff). The City Manager must include this amount in the proposed budget to be submitted in accordance with section 9 below.

(6) City Council shall establish for the City Manager and the Schools what preliminary minimum percentage MRA should be included in the guidance established in sections 5(a), 5(b) and 5(c) above.

(7) That City Council plans to adopt such a budget resolution during the month of November.

(8) That the Board of the Alexandria City Schools is requested to approve an Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program by no later than January 31, prior to the upcoming fiscal year. Such budget, if it shall exceed the Council approved budget guidance for the Operating Budget transfer given to the Alexandria City Schools, shall clearly identify what operating programs and activities would be funded if additional funding were provided above that guidance.

(9) 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 in February, that does not exceed the guidance for the rate of change in the real estate tax rate, and the guidance for General Fund expenditures established by City Council. Such budget shall clearly identify what operating program and activities and capital projects would be recommended if additional funding were provided, and/or what other tax rate and fee changes could be enacted with whatever additional revenues might be available above the revenues needed to meet the expenditure guidance and still provide a structurally sound budget, including a proposed real estate tax rate necessary for financing the budget provided for that rate, as well as provide tax, fee and other revenue options necessary for financing the budget, as appropriate, so long as the real estate tax rate proposed does not exceed that allowable under section 5(a) above.

(10) That the City Manager shall endeavor to produce a budget that substitutes other taxes, fines, fees and charges for real estate taxes, as well as reductions in programs and activities through efficiencies and reduced service levels in order to balance the budget as required by section 6.05 of the City Code. To the extent that the City Manager deems additional expenditures in excess of those included in the proposed budget within the guidance provided by section 5(a) of the resolution, but within the guidance provided by sections 5(b) and (c) of this resolution, the City Manager shall separately specify as a recommended "add" to the proposed budget the additional recommended expenditures by program and activity and the reasons therefore, and the required real estate tax rate necessary to balance the budget.

(11) The City Manager may recommend, and Council may adopt, a different percentage MRA in his proposed budget than that established by City Council under section 6 above, but such a recommendation shall not change the guidance established by sections 5(a), (b) and (c) above. The proposed Operating Budget shall include as a line item of expenditure (instead of as a designation of fund balances) the cost of any other market-based salary adjustments proposed to maintain the City's ability to attract and retain any class or classes of employee. The City Manager may separately list all or a portion of the minimum market rate adjustment as one of those additional expenditures that would need to be added to the proposed budget to be paid for by an increase in the real estate tax rate under section 10 above. If that expenditure is so listed it would also reduce the Schools target specified in section 5(c) above by the amount of the minimum market rate adjustment for Schools employees.

(12) 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 Office of Management and Budget 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 Undesignated 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 such motion or amendment would have the effect of increasing any specific budget outlays above the level of such outlays contained in the proposed budget specified in Section (b) of this resolution, or would have the effect of reducing any specific revenues below the level contained in the proposed budget specified in Section (b) of this resolution, unless such motion or amendment makes at least an equivalent reduction in other specific budget outlays, identifies an equivalent increase in other specific revenues, or an equivalent combination thereof.

(2) In the Alexandria City Council, any appropriation from the Undesignated 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 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 Undesignated Fund Balance. As specified in Section c (2), any appropriation from the Undesignated 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.

(4) It shall not be in order for any member of the Alexandria City Council to initiate any amendment to the proposed budget of the City of Alexandria which would increase any specific budget outlay by more than \$50,000, unless written public notice of the member's intent to offer such an amendment, and a general description of the proposed amendment, is given to the City Manager and City Clerk at least one week prior to the spring budget public hearing.

Resolution No. 2257

Budget Resolution Setting Guidance for FY 2009 General Fund Operating Budget

WHEREAS, the City Council of Alexandria passed Resolution 2256 on November 27, 2007, that established the process to be used for formulating the budget during the remaining term of this Council and requires that City Council set budget guidance for the City Manager and the School Board for the FY 2009 budget;

WHEREAS, the City Council held a public hearing on the FY 2009 budget on October 13, 2007; and

WHEREAS, the City Manager and the Alexandria City Public Schools Superintendent have presented to City Council at its October 27, 2007, 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 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, residential real estate taxes have borne an increasing share of the burden of paying for City and School services; and

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

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to exploring all possible non-real estate tax revenue options in order to minimize the impact of rising municipal costs on homeowner real estate taxes; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to assisting Alexandria City Public Schools in achieving its mission and being among the best in Northern Virginia; 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 focus on managing for results; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to maintaining its top AAA/Aaa credit ratings; 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 CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA:

1. **In the Initial Budget Proposal Keep the Existing Real Property Tax Rate:**
That the City Manager shall submit a proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program to the City Council no later than February 12, 2008, that contains a proposed real estate tax rate of \$0.83 cents per \$100 assessed valuation.
2. **Seek Out Alternative Revenue and Efficiency Options Prior to Consideration of Increase in Real Property Tax Rates:** That the City Manager shall endeavor to produce a budget that substitutes other taxes, fines, fees and charges for real estate taxes, as well as reductions in programs and activities through efficiencies and reduced service levels, in order to balance the budget as required by section 6.05 of the City Code. To the extent that the City Manager deems additional expenditures in excess of those included in the proposed budget within the guidance provided by section 1 of this resolution, but within the guidance provided by sections 3 and 4 of this resolution, the City Manager shall separately specify as a recommended "add" to the proposed budget the additional recommended expenditures by program and activity and the reasons therefore, and the required real estate tax rate necessary to balance the budget.
3. **Hold City Budget Growth to Five Percent:** That the City Manager's proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget shall not exceed \$377.2 million for General Fund expenditures (5% growth over the previous year's budget). The guidance includes the cost of whatever market rate adjustment is to be provided to City employees. This guidance does not include the operating budget transfer to the Alexandria City Public Schools.
4. **Hold School Transfer Growth to Five Percent:** That the School Board of the Alexandria City Public Schools is requested to approve a FY 2009 Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program by no later than January 31, 2008. Such budget shall seek not to exceed a target of \$168.2 million for the operating budget (5% growth over the previous year's budget) transfer provided to the Alexandria City Public Schools. This guidance includes the cost of whatever market rate adjustment is to be provided to Schools employees. Such budget, if it shall exceed the Council approved budget guidance for the Operating Budget transfer, shall (as specified in section (8) of Resolution 2256) clearly identify what operating programs and activities would be funded if additional funding were provided above that target. The City Manager must include this guidance amount in the proposed budget to be submitted on February 12, 2008.

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK