City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 25, 2005

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO #116 : 14 ADDITIONAL POLICE OFFICERS AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This memorandum is in response to Councilman Krupicka's request for information explaining (1) the budget and service impact of postponing the six February, 2006 Police Officer positions until August, 2006; and (2) various metrics for Police performance (COPS hours, community policing hours and others) are not projected to change in FY 2006. Explain or revise.

1. Postponing the Addition of 6 Police Officers

A total of 14 additional Police Officers are proposed in the FY 2006 operating budget at a total cost of $1,005,958. Of the 14, 8 are to be hired in August 2005 as part of the fall 2005 recruit class and are therefore budgeted for an entire year ($684,832); and 6 are to be hired in February 2006 for the winter 2006 recruit class ($321,126).

The 14 additional Police Officers would help to address staffing issues in the Patrol division of the Police Department. Due to the current staffing shortage in Patrol, in addition to illnesses, training and other absences, officers have been reassigned from other duties to help cover the eight shifts and all designated beats in the City. In addition, due to the shortage in Patrol staffing, officers are routinely denied normal leave which is having a negative effect on morale.

Hiring 8 additional officers in August 2005 would put those officers on the street in spring 2006. The 6 officers to be hired in February 2006 would be on the street in winter 2006. If the 6 officers to be hired in February 2006 are postponed until August 2006, they would not complete recruit school or be on the street until spring 2007, two years from now. Therefore, a staffing shortage still would exist through FY 2006 and well into FY 2007 but to a lesser degree due to the hiring and completion of recruit school of the first 8 police officers.

Postponing the hiring of the 6 officers until August 2006 would decrease the FY 2006 operating budget by $321,126 (salary, benefits, equipment and 3 cruisers). However, this amount would need to be added in the context of the FY 2007 budget process plus the cost of living adjustments (COLA) for the 6 officer positions and any increase in equipment costs due to inflation.

2. Metrics for Police Performance

The Police Department, as a matter of practice, has not projected changes to performance measures based on proposed supplemental budget requests. It is impossible to project 18 months in advance how Police services will actually be delivered, so the Police Department projects a reasonable continuation of current services until there is 6 to 12 months of experience and data with the new staffing. In addition 8 of the proposed 14 officers would not be on the street until spring 2006 and, if approved, the following 6 officers would not be on the street until November 2006. Therefore, the impact on performance measures would be minimal in the first fiscal year (FY 2006). In addition, since all of the proposed Police officers would be Patrol officers, their primary function would be handling calls for service, not community support or foot patrols. The Police Department anticipates some increase in foot patrols as needed, but relatively little impact on Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) or Residential Policing (RPO) functions.