City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 12, 2005

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 40 ALEXANDRIA COMMUNITY POLICY MANAGEMENT TEAM (ACPMT) AND COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES ACT (CSA) EXPENSES

This memo is in response to Councilman Gaines, who asked "what ACPMT/CSA expenses are mandatory v. discretionary, and also for an explanation of how and under what circumstances expenditures are made and/or required."

Mandatory v. Discretionary

Each year localities may protect a specific amount of the total State pool to provide services to the targeted non-mandated and other eligible populations. In Alexandria, the ACPMT has identified the non-mandated population primarily as adolescents under the Juvenile Domestic Relations Court purview. The services to this population are usually substance abuse assessment and treatment, sexual offender evaluations and some home-based services.

In FY 2004, the latest available full-year data, the total annual program costs were $7.8 million. Only $70,000, or less than one percent, was spent on non-mandated services.

How and under what circumstances expenditures are made and/or required

The Alexandria Community Policy and Management Team (ACPMT) is charged with overseeing the implementation of the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) for At-risk Youth and Families. The Act is targeted towards emotionally and/or behaviorally disturbed children who are in, or at risk of going into, out-of-home placement, and their families. The ACPMT is responsible for developing interagency policies and procedures that will govern the provision of services to at-risk youth and families, coordinating long-range planning to ensure the development of resources and services for this population, and establishing Family Assessment and Planning Teams (FAPTs) that determine the service needs of troubled youth and their families on a case-specific basis. FAPT determinations are reviewed periodically by members of the ACPMT. The reviews of all cases costing over $3,000 per month are reviewed at least quarterly. Some cases are reviewed more frequently based on the intensity of the placement (i.e. hospital).

The mandated target population are children placed for purposes of special education in approved private school educational programs (private day or residential); children for whom foster care services are being provided to prevent foster care placement; and children entrusted or committed to social service agencies.

Children typically in foster care have experienced abuse and/or neglect and often have a mental health diagnosis. Their parent(s) may also have a mental health diagnosis or substance abuse disorder. Children in this population often require intensive services to include child protective services, therapeutic foster care, residential placement, acute psychiatric care services or outpatient services. Many of these children have experienced significant behavioral problems, adjustment disorders and have special education needs. Other services which may be necessary for the foster child or child at-risk of foster care is a broad spectrum of services including special education (not funded by the Schools), medical, legal or vocational services. Reunification services include services to the parent, such as parent training, substance abuse treatment and home-based services.

The special education mandated child services are limited to those services provided to a student whose Individual Education Plan (IEP) calls for a private day special education placement or a private residential special education placement. Some services to prevent a more restrictive and expensive special education placement may include behavioral aides/paraprofessionals, case management, in-home counseling, respite care, student supervision, tutoring and alternative education.

Foster care services include room and board, clothing, day care, and mental health treatment including residential psychiatric care. Foster care prevention services include home-based counseling and housing assistance. Special education services include private day special education programs, residential special education programs, and educational support services such as counseling and occupational therapy.

Current trend analysis indicates annual total program costs in FY 2006 to be $8.0 million, which is a decline in the projected total for FY 2005 of $8.4 million. As a result of a recent review of spending trends through March 31, and after partial refunds from Medicaid and other small adjustments, the adjusted total program costs are estimated to be $7.8 million in FY 2006, with the City's share of 53.9 percent estimated at $4.1 million.

The FY 2006 Proposed Operating budget contains the sum of approximately $4.0 million. The shortfall of $63 thousand between the estimated share of the City's adjusted total expenses and the amount in the FY 2006 budget is not significant given its small magnitude. As always, treatment choices and expenditures will be closely monitored throughout the year.