City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 28, 2005

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 13 : POLICE CHIEF'S EMAILS CONCERNING COMPENSATION

Attached are two emails sent last week to Police staff by the Police Chief. Also included is the comparison of police pay changes being contemplated by other jurisdictions that the Chief had prepared by Sergeant Seskey.

Attachments:
1. March 24 "Police Pay Update" email from Chief Samarra to Police employees
2. March 25 email from Chief Samarra to Police employees
3. "Area Proposed Budget Items" memorandum from Sergeant Seskey

Charles Samarra/Alex
03/24/2005 10:17 AM

To Police Staff
cc
bcc
Subject Police Pay Update

Commanders: Please post and provide copies to staff members that do not have email

Background

Since becoming the Chief of Police in 1990, I have taken the position that pay and benefits are a function of city government and not the chief. However, I have always stated that should employee compensation become a major factor in providing quality services to the community—then I would have no choice but to speak out. I now find myself at that point. Alexandria police officers are generally the lowest paid at each and every rank and position. As the leader of outstanding people, in an organization with extraordinary accomplishments—**I feel compelled to bring this to the City Manager's attention. In an increasingly tightened job market, my people deserve to be appropriately compensated.** I realize that I have little to say with the present pay philosophy, but I see no reason that the areas best law enforcement officers should not be paid accordingly.

Findings of Police Study

Police Officer Starting Salaries:

Listed are the minimum starting salaries for the city's comparator jurisdictions.

1	Fairfax County	$39,771
2	Montgomery Co	$39,305
3	Prince George's Co	$38,478
4	Arlington Co	$38,126
5	**Alexandria City**	**$37,099**
6	Prince William Co	$37,076

Average Starting Salary: $38,309

I wish to also bring to attention additional information as to starting salary data of two agencies outside of the designated primary labor market that should be considered due to their proximity to Alexandria and the fact they also attend the Northern Virginia Regional Training Academy. These agencies were not included in the above average calculation.

Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority: $37,634
Metro Transit Police $38,866

Police Sergeant

Listed are Sergeant's pay by range showing the minimum pay and top ending pay. Please note that in some cases a Sergeant in Alexandria may not be equivalent to a Sergeant in other jurisdictions. As an example, a Sergeant in Alexandria by job description is equivalent to a 2nd Lieutenant in Fairfax County. In Prince William County they have a Sergeant and 1st Sergeant rank. A more comprehensive analysis of these differences will be needed; however in order to provide a quick and broad overview of how we compare I have listed what I believe to be the comparable pay to our rank of Sergeant.

1	Montgomery Co	$52,638 - $83,864
2	Arlington Co	$50,209 - $83,023
3	Fairfax County	$48,038 - $78,249
4	Prince William Co	$48,509 - $77,615
5	Prince George Co	$48,806 - $77,025
6	**Alexandria City**	**$47,347 - $76,583**

Average Minimum/Top Pay: $49,258 - $79,393

Police Lieutenant

Listed are Lieutenant's pay by range showing the minimum pay and top ending pay. As noted above there are differences in Lieutenants between the jurisdictions. Using Fairfax County as an example, they have two ranks of Lieutenant (1st and 2nd). A police Lieutenant in Alexandria is comparable to a 1st Lieutenant in Fairfax. I again have listed what I believe to be the comparable pay to our rank of Lieutenant.

1	Montgomery County	$62,616 - $96,992
2	Arlington Co	$55,962 - $92,530
3	Fairfax County	$53,343 - $86,891
4	Prince William Co	$53,520 - $85,633
5	Prince George Co	$53,687 - $84,727
6	**Alexandria City**	**$52,197 - $84,428**

Average Minimum/Top Pay: $55,221 - $88,533

Police Captain

Listed are the Captain's pay by range showing the minimum pay and top ending pay. A Police Captain in Alexandria is comparable to a Major in Prince George's County.

1	Prince George Co	$70,069 - $110,851
2	Montgomery Co	$70,855 - $110,800
3	Prince William Co	$66,048 - $105,667
4	Arlington Co	$61,239 - $101,252
5	Fairfax County	$61,347 - $99,928
6	**Alexandria City**	**$60,417 - $97,723**

Average Minimum/Top Pay: $64,996 - $104,370

Command Staff Salaries:

The current available information pertaining to Command Staff Salaries above the rank of Captain are as follows.

Arlington Co	Deputy Chief	$71,448 - $118,131
	Chief	$58,660 - $171,819
Fairfax County:	Major	$68,612 - $111,762
	Deputy Chief	$75,482 - $122,955
	Chief	$86,454 - $144,089
Prince William Co	Major	$71,705 - $114,729
	Chief	$87,157 - $139,452
Alexandria	**Deputy Chief**	**$69,750 - $112,819**
	Chief	**$80,738 - $130,591**

In summary, you can see that with the exception of a $23 starting deficit for recruit officer's, starting salary and maximum pay for **ALL** Alexandria City Police Officers rank last when compared to the City's designated comparator labor markets.

To further exacerbate this, several of the listed jurisdictions are asking for additional pay increases and/or pay incentives. Example, Prince William Co. is negotiating a $3000.00 signing bonus for all recruits graduating their academy and a 3% annual retention bonus paid to all sworn members each year from 1 to 9 and a 5% annual for all staying more than 10 years. We are in the process of collecting this information along with benefits information that I will forward shortly.

Our City Manager's Proposed FY 2006 Budget recommends that City employees be given a 2% COLA and that a new step be added at the end of the pay scale, all of which is subject to approval of Council.

Information on City's Compensation Philosophy

The philosophy was designed to reflect the importance public employees play in the delivery of services and programs in the community; that compensation is a clear measure of that importance; and that there is fair and equitable treatment of all employees. The document further establishes the commitment and necessity to maintain comparability with jurisdictions that are most likely to affect recruitment and retention of employees.

The City's compensation philosophy states that pay programs are intended to be competitive at a minimum with the ***average pay of comparator*** *organizations* **(based on a mathematical formula)** *in the primary labor market. The primary labor market is identified as the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, Montgomery and Prince George's.* **In fact, the City's mathematical policy formula may well indicate that the city is in compliance with its pay policy--however, it is equally obvious that the intent of the policy would not support or defend such a finding. It is my position that it is critical that starting salaries and salary ranges, which are so important in our recruitment and retention efforts, be considered to be just as important as average pay. As this report shows, we have fallen behind our comparator jurisdictions' police salaries.**

It is my intent to further discuss this issue with the City Manager and solicit his assistance.

Source Information Listings:

Fairfax County: Agency Website, Dept. of Human Resources, Pay Plan O, FY 2005
Montgomery Co: Agency Website, Human Resources, Montgomery County Police Bargaining Unit Salary Schedule, FY 2005
Arlington Co: Agency Website, Dept. of Human Resources, Classification and Salary Listings
Prince George's Co: Courtesy FOP Lodge 89, Salary Schedule L FY 2005
Prince William Co: Agency Website, Human Resources, FY 2005 PS Annual Salary Schedule
Metro Transit: Police Recruiting Section, Salary Schedule, PO-1 through PO-3
Airport Authority: Agency Website MWAA, Police, Officer Staring Salary

Charles Samarra/Alex
03/25/2005 03:43 PM

To Police Staff
cc
bcc
Subject

COMMANDERS: PLEASE SHARE THIS WITH ALL EMPLOYEES

As promised earlier this week, attached is a report prepared for me by Sgt. Seskey summarizing the proposed police budget increases for our Comparator Jurisdictions. It must be noted that none of these have been adopted at this time and their outcome rest with decisions yet to be made. I must also repeat that our City Manager has recommended a 2% COLA for us and that its' approval also rests with a Council decision not yet made.

While I continue to work with Sgt. Seskey to identify deficiencies with sworn police salaries (in comparison with comparator jurisdictions) I have not forgot our non-sworn staff. Beginning Monday, I will be working with Off. Sean McGowan to review the salary classes of our civilian members. This review will not be tasked with looking at individual employee issues---rather, it will be a review of entire employees classifications to see that appropriate comparisons are being made under the current pay philosophy. Example: Are our senior dispatchers, PEO's, clerks, analyst, supervisors, etc. being compared with equally situated employees in the other jurisdictions (comparing apples to apples)?

Many of you have asked, "What is going to happen with all of this information?" The answer is--I have sent Mr. Hartmann copies of our findings and he has agreed to discuss the issues with me. However, you must be aware that it is Council and not the Manager or Chief that has the final say as to what pay and benefits will ultimately be. As always, I will keep you informed of the issues as they move forward.

---- Forwarded by Charles Samarra/Alex on 03/25/2005 02:17 PM ----

Joseph Seskey/Alex
03/25/2005 02:03 PM

To Charles Samarra/Alex@Alex
cc
Subject Area Proposed Budget Items

Here is an email copy. JS

Budget Items Compare.wpd

DATE: **March 24, 2005**

TO: **Charles E. Samarra**
Chief of Police

FROM: **Sergeant Joseph Seskey**

SUBJECT: **Proposed Budget Items for Area Police Jurisdictions**

The following is a summary of proposed budget items being considered by area police jurisdictions for the FY 2006. Source data was obtained from the actual proposed budgets released by each agency.

Fairfax County Police

Market Rate Adjustment
3.07 percent based on the annual market index. In FY 2006, non-public safety pay scales are increased by this amount with no fiscal impact on salaries. For all **uniformed public safety** personnel, the 3.07 percent will be applied as a salary adjustment to maintain consistency with neighboring jurisdictions and to remain competitive in the local employment market at a cost of $8.3 million.

Across The Board Public Safety Adjustment
4.0 percent across the board for all uniformed Police and Fire and Rescue personnel on the O and F pay scales to maintain competitiveness in the local labor market at a cost of $8.9 million.

Authorized Positions
Authorized positions for all funds increased by a net of 166 positions, primarily to support new facilities. Although there is a net increase, the number of positions per citizen continues to decrease to 11.10 per 1,000 citizens.

(Fairfax Con't)

FY 2006 Funding Adjustments

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2005 Revised Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2006 program:

Employee Compensation $2,258,263
An increase of $2,258,263 in Personnel Services associated with salary adjustments necessary to support the County's compensation program including merit increases and pay for performance. ***Funding also provides for an increase in the shift differential rate to $0.85 for the evening shift and $1.10 for the midnight shift and includes an increase in holiday pay to compensate employees according to their actual holiday shift hours worked.***

Salary Adjustments Based on Public Safety Pay Study $4,197,884
An increase of $4,197,884 in Personnel Services based on an adjustment of 4.00 percent is included for employees on two public safety pay scales (F and O), effective the first full pay period of FY 2006. In addition, it should be noted that the FY 2006 net cost to fund this for the Police Department is $5,037,881. The net cost includes $839,997 in fringe benefits funding, which is included in Agency 89, Employee Benefits. For further information on fringe benefits, please refer to the Agency 89, Employee Benefits, narrative in the Nondepartmental program area section of Volume 1. 231

Court Overtime $881,750
An increase of $881,750 in Personnel Services for an additional hour of guaranteed court overtime pay. Currently, officers required by subpoena to attend court on their days off are entitled to claim two hours of overtime for any attendance which is less than two hours. Given that a majority of officers live outside of the County, and to account for the time necessary to travel to and from court, **three hours of guaranteed overtime pay** will ensure officers are adequately compensated for their mandatory court attendance.

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY

D. FY 2005 Supplemental Salary Funding - In FY 05, a supplemental of $250,000 was added to the Police Department budget to compensate existing sworn personnel who were hired above a step one in the salary scale due to qualification preferences. This amount is now included in the Police Department FY 06 base salary and benefits budget.

1. Description - Compensation increases totaling $1,900,858 are requested to support a 3.0% Pay Plan increase ($1,199,418), a pay for performance increase ($438,232), a projected 5.4% Anthem and 10.64% Kaiser Health Insurance rate increase ($167,755), an 8% Delta Dental increase ($10,826), and a 3.0% Sunday and Holiday Pay increase ($35,516) and a Retiree Health increase ($49,110).

C. All Programs - Police Recruitment and Retention Initiative

1. Description - This request is a multi-faceted Recruitment and Retention Initiative for uniform personnel in the Police Department and the Department of Fire and Rescue. Sustained market pressures in the Police and Fire and Rescue professions are impacting the Police Department's ability to recruit and retain qualified staff. In law enforcement, market pressures stemming from local, regional and federal salary and benefits incentives coupled with major hiring initiatives in the region are impacting the Police Department's ability to recruit candidates and retain qualified officers. The investment in time and resources to recruit and train police officers is significant and this investment is lost if an officer leaves the Department.

The department has experienced an increase in the voluntary separation of employees, which adversely affects service delivery to the community. The rate of turnover for sworn employees increased from 5.4% in 2003 to 12.8% in 2004. As of February 15, 2005, the department had 22 vacancies. Prince William will be recruiting one hundred new sworn employees over the next five years. When the impact of retirements and attrition are also included, this is a significant number of new personnel needed in the near future. To compete effectively in the market, the County must have an attractive recruitment and retention package. To address these market and profession driven issues, the Police Department and Department of Fire & Rescue are proposing a targeted Recruitment and Retention Initiative. There are five components to the Police Recruitment & Retention Initiative. They include: Recruiting Bonus; Signing Bonus; Retention Supplement; Tuition Reimbursement; and Language Stipend.

a. Recruiting Bonus - The County will provide a $500 bonus to any County employee who recommends a candidate that is successful in completing the Criminal Justice Academy. Staff whose job description is to recruit new employees will be exempt from this program. The estimated cost of this initiative for the Police Department is $7,500 and funds have been identified within the base budget.

b. Signing Bonus - A $3,000 signing bonus will be paid to all recruits upon successful completion of the academy. The FY 06 estimated cost of this initiative for Police is $75,000, with an annual estimated cost thereafter of $150,000. Funds for this initiative have been identified within the base budget.

(Prince William County con't)

c. Retention Supplement - Beginning with their first hire date anniversary following release from probation, police officers will receive an annual additional pay percentage based on their grade and step on the anniversary of their date of hire, and annually thereafter based on their grade and step as of their date of hire anniversary. These percentages, 3% and 5%, will be based on years of service as shown below:

Years of Service Incentive Percent

1st Anniversary of Date of Hire Following
Release from Probation through Nine years 3.0%
Ten Years Plus 5.0%

The Retention Supplement will be for all sworn personnel through the rank of Major. The incentive is capped at $4,000 annually for any one individual. The estimated cost of this initiative for Police is $1,120,166 and will require general fund support.

d. Tuition Reimbursement - The Police Department activated the tuition reimbursement policy (Personnel Police 20.4, Education and Training) in mid FY 05. Funds have been allocated in the base budget to support this program, however, it had never been enacted. The Police Department has set an annual cap of $50,000 to be available for this program. It will be evaluated in future years to determine if additional funds are needed to support the demand.

e . Language Stipend - In FY 05, the Police Department, and all County agencies, will implement a Language Stipend for Spanish speaking employees. A County contractor will test proficiency to determine eligibility in the program. Eligible employees will be paid $1,560 annually, or $60 per pay period, and agree to provide support when needed. Employees who are hired to provide Spanish interpretation services will not be eligible for this stipend. The estimated Police Department cost for this initiative is $31,200 and funds have been identified within
the base budget. The FY 06 general fund requirement for this initiative for the Police Department is $1,120,166; the requirement for Fire and Rescue is $848,696, for a total general fund requirement of $1,968,862. Funding for this initiative will increase with Police and Fire staffing plans and in accordance with annual County pay plan adjustments. The goal of this initiative is to increase retention, decrease turnover, and increase the number of qualified new recruits

ARLINGTON COUNTY

The Arlington County FY2006 is very difficult to decipher as compared to other budgets. I could not find any compensation expenditures expressed as a percentage. The closest was a reference to 10.9 million being set aside for a Compensation Contingent. I contacted a representative from Arlington County who advised that the COLA has not yet been determined and will be set by the Arlington County Board in mid to late April. They further expect no additional incentives of benefits to be included. Their last benefit to increase was last year when they raised the shift differential to .50 cents for evenings and $1.00 for midnights.

The FY2006 Arlington budget states "In addition, the base budget contains a contingent set aside for the County Board to make additional compensation and staff program support decisions. $10.9 million has been set aside in the base budget."

	Proposed	% Change
Compensation Contingent	$10.9 million	
Retirement increase	$4.0 million	30%
Health Care	$2.4 million	10%
Employer of Choice Contingent	$4.5 million	2%

I asked about the Employer of Choice Contingent and what that refers to. A portion of this number represents cost associated with a stipend paid to county employees for certain skills or certifications they posses. It is referred to as a **Value-Added Pay Program** - Employees are eligible for additional pay based on the following skills. The maximum value added premium received by an employee is $1.00 per hour.

Forensic Science Academy ($.50 per hour)

Back-up Polygraph ($.25 per hour)

Back-up Computer Forensics ($.25 per hour)

Back-up Surveillance ($.25 per hour)

Breathalyzer Operator ($.25 per hour)

State Certified Instructor ($.50 per hour)

Truck Inspector ($.25 per hour)

ERU Team ($.50 per hour)

ERU Negotiator ($.50 per hour)

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

B. COUNTY GOVERNMENT SALARY AND WAGES

GENERAL WAGE ADJUSTMENT: The Executive recommends the following general wage adjustments effective the first full pay period after July 1, 2005: 3.0 per-cent for employees in the Fire and Rescue bargaining unit and Fire and Rescue uniformed managers; 2.75 percent for all employees in the Office, Professional, and Technical (OPT) and Service, Labor, and Trades (SLT) bargaining units; 2.75 percent for all employees in the Police bargain-ing unit and Police uniformed managers; and 2.75 percent for all unrepresented employees, including Management Leadership Service (MLS) employees. The Executive recommends an additional 1.0 percent general wage adjustment effective the first full pay period after January 1, 2006 for employees in the Fire and Rescue bargaining unit and Fire and Rescue uniformed managers. Recommended salary schedules are at the end of this section.

INCREMENTS: The Executive recommends service increments of 3.5 percent for all eligible employees.

Police Bargaining Unit:
Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 35: The current agreement expires June 30, 2007. In FY06, the County will be in the second year of a three-year agreement. The salient economic terms of the agreement include:

A general wage adjustment of 2.0 percent effective the first full pay period after September 1, 2004, 2.75 percent in July 2005, 3.0 percent in July 2006, and 1.0 percent in January 2007.

A service increment of 3.5 percent for eligible employees.

The placement of certain unit members on a uniform pay plan beginning January 2005, and all others in January 2006.

A five percent increase in the clothing allowance.

A $100 increase each year in tuition assistance.

A $0.10 increase in the shift differential effective July 2005.

PRINCE GEORGE"S COUNTY

Info not available via website at this time. Prince George's County police are guided by a collective bargaining agreement with FOP Lodge 89. The current agreement expires in June of this year. The Budget for FY2006 is not yet available on line. The following is an excerpt from a news article regarding the FY2006 Budget. It was all that was available at this time.

"Johnson also stressed his continuing efforts in public safety. Included in the FY2006 budget will be money to hire at least 150 new police officers as well as additional firefighters , public safety dispatch operators, Sheriff's deputies and corrections officers."