

ORDINANCE NO. 3399

AN ORDINANCE to amend Title 12 (EDUCATION, SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELFARE) of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended, by adding a new Chapter 10 (COMMISSION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT).

WHEREAS, on November 24, 1987, the Alexandria City Council established the Early Childhood Development Task Force to study and recommend a full-day, high-quality, comprehensive early childhood development program for Alexandria's at-risk four-year-olds; and

WHEREAS, the task force met on a monthly basis for one year, consulted experts in the field of early childhood development, followed the Early Childhood Programs study of the General Assembly and gathered data from local centers and family day care providers; and

WHEREAS, the task force has recommended: (a) that a full-day, full-year, high-quality, comprehensive early childhood development program for at-risk children be available in the City of Alexandria; (b) that an administrative structure be established to promulgate early childhood development policy for the city and to ensure collaboration among concerned public and private agencies for a high-quality program with an emphasis on parental involvement; (c) that existing public and private early childhood developmental programs for at-risk preschoolers be utilized so that by 1994, at the latest, all at-risk four-year-olds in the city will be served; and (d) that federal, state and private sector contributions to early childhood development programs be supplemented with city allocations as needed; and

WHEREAS, the task force has recommended that the city council establish a Commission for Early Childhood Development which would be given the responsibility to draft and recommend to council and the Alexandria school board an early childhood development plan for the city, including funding recommendations, and to monitor the coordination of activities which would implement any plan adopted by council and the school board; and

WHEREAS, the city council has determined that it is in the interests of the public welfare to create a Commission for Early Childhood Development; now, therefore,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

Section 1. That Title 12 of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended, be and the same hereby is amended by adding a new Chapter 10 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 10

Commission for Early Childhood Development

Sec. 12-10-1 Creation of commission.

There is hereby established a commission to be known as the "Commission for Early Childhood Development of the City of Alexandria, Virginia," hereafter referred to in this chapter as the commission.

Sec. 12-10-2 Composition; appointment; chairperson and vice chairperson.

(a) The commission shall consist of 18 members, each of whom shall be a resident of the City of Alexandria. Of the 18 members, five shall serve ex officio, six shall be appointed by the school board and seven shall be appointed by city council. The term of each member appointed by the board or council shall be three years. The terms of such appointed members shall be staggered so that each year the board appoints two members and, in every three-year period, council appoints two members in each of two successive years and three members in the third year.

(1) Ex officio members. Ex officio members of the commission shall be the incumbent of the following positions, or the incumbent's representative: the city manager, the superintendent of schools, the director of human services, the director of the Alexandria health department and the president of the Alexandria chamber of commerce.

(2) Members appointed by the school board. School board appointees shall be: one school board member, one early childhood teacher working in an Alexandria preschool, one early childhood teacher working in an Alexandria day care center, one child psychologist and two parents of at-risk children.

(3) Members appointed by city council. City council appointees shall be: one developmental pediatrician representing Alexandria Hospital, one member of the economic opportunities commission, one member of the social services advisory board, one Alexandria representative of the Northern Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children, one representative of the Alexandria Chapter of the Northern Virginia Family Day Care Association and two members at large.

(b) The commission shall elect from among the appointees of the school board and city council a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, who shall serve in the absence of the chairperson, and a secretary, who shall be responsible for the keeping of the minutes.

(c) The commission may establish such committees as it deems necessary to execute its duties and responsibilities.

Sec. 12-10-3 Meetings--Quorum; rules of procedure; annual report to council.

The commission shall meet at least once each month from September through June, and may meet in July and August. All meetings of the commission and its committees shall be open to the public to the full extent required by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. All members of the commission shall be entitled to vote, and the decisions of the commission shall be determined by a majority vote of the members present and voting. A quorum, which shall be at least 50 percent of the non-vacant seats on the commission, shall be required for the commission to transact business. A member present but not voting shall be considered in counting a quorum. In matters concerning the procedure for meetings not covered by this chapter, the commission may establish its own rules, provided these are not contrary to the mandate or spirit of this chapter. Otherwise, the rules of procedure set out in Robert's Rules of Order shall apply. The commission shall render to the city council each year, by June 30, a written report of its activities under the provisions of this chapter, along with any comments and recommendations it may choose to make.

Sec. 12-10-4 Functions.

The functions of the commission shall be the following:

(a) to develop an Early Childhood Development Plan ("ECDP") for the city and propose it to city council and the school board with funding recommendations, which plan shall include, at a minimum, those elements required by the Virginia Council for Child Day Care and Early Childhood Programs for funding its early childhood development programs;

(b) to prepare a yearly report on the status of early childhood development programs in the city, which report shall assess the achievement of the objectives set forth in the ECDP;

(c) to monitor the coordination of activities required to implement the ECDP, such as the provision of support services to individual programs;

(d) to advise the department of human services, office for early childhood development, on matters pertaining to its child day care responsibilities;

(e) to determine and propose curricula and evaluation standards for preschool early childhood development programs in the city;

(f) to determine and propose standards to be used for assessing the qualifications of teachers and staff in public and private preschool programs and of family day care providers;

(g) to develop and propose an evaluation design to measure the effectiveness of preschool early childhood development programs;

(h) to seek sources of additional funding for early childhood development programs in the city;

(i) to encourage and facilitate communication among early childhood programs, family day care providers, parents of young children and appropriate city and private agencies;

(j) to monitor the coordination of preschool activities with the department of recreation, parks and cultural activities, the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority, the city's public schools and other appropriate agencies;

(k) to monitor the coordination of preschool activities with the Alexandria Interagency Coordinating Council for Public Law 99-457 (Education for the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1986) (services to developmentally delayed infants and toddlers);

(l) to conduct public hearings on matters under its purview; and

(m) to utilize media resources to raise public awareness and provide information on early childhood development issues.

Sec. 12-10-5 Staff assistance.

The director of human services and the superintendent of schools shall be jointly responsible for providing staff support to the commission to assist it in the exercise of its functions.

Section 2. That this ordinance shall become effective upon the date and at the time of its final passage.

JAMES P. MORAN, JR.
Mayor

Final Passage: September 16, 1989