

**IN LIEU OF THE
DIRECTORS' MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2007**

I. MAYOR

1. NEWS ADVISORY. Public Works and Utilities Department Applying New Anti-Icing Mixture to City Streets.
2. NEWS RELEASE. 21 Educational Access to Air London Parade Featuring Lincoln High Band.
3. City Council Members to Ring Bells for the Salvation Army, December 21, 2007
4. Washington Report, December 14, 2007.
5. Washington Report, December 20, 2007.

II. DIRECTORS

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

1. Memo from Clint Thomas Regarding Street and Alley Vacation No. 07008, South 46th Street, South of "O" Street.

III. CITY CLERK

IV. COUNCIL REQUESTS/CORRESPONDENCE

Jon Camp

Correspondence from Mike Cline Regarding Early Retirement Incentives to City Employees.

V. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Letter from Coby Mach, LIBA Regarding Early Retirement Incentive Program for City Employees.

VI. ADJOURNMENT



NEWS ADVISORY

MAYOR CHRIS BEUTLER

lincoln.ne.gov

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

555 South 10th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508, 441-7511, fax 441-7120

DATE: December 20, 2007

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Diane Gonzolas, Citizen Information Center, 441-7831

The Public Works and Utilities Department has received the materials and equipment for a new anti-icing mixture for City streets. Crews began applying the material to emergency snow routes and major arterials today. The salt brine mixture is intended to prevent ice from forming on road surfaces. For more information, contact Roger Tiedeman at 441-7701.



NEWS RELEASE

MAYOR CHRIS BEUTLER

lincoln.ne.gov

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Citizen Information Center, 555 South 10th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508, 441-7375, fax 441-8653

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 20, 2007

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Bill Luxford, 21 Educational Access, 5 CITY-TV, 441-6688
Terry Rush, Lincoln High School, 436-1301
Dan Kirkby, +44 1580-201906, dan@dkpr.co.uk

21 EDUCATIONAL ACCESS TO AIR LONDON PARADE FEATURING LINCOLN HIGH BAND

When the Lincoln High School marching band is parading through the streets of London, England New Year's Day, family and friends back home will be able to watch it live on 21 Educational Access (Time Warner Cable channel 21 in Lincoln). The 22th annual parade will be sent via satellite beginning at 6 a.m., Tuesday, January 1, 2008. The parade will be re-aired at 7:30 p.m. on January 3 on channel 21.

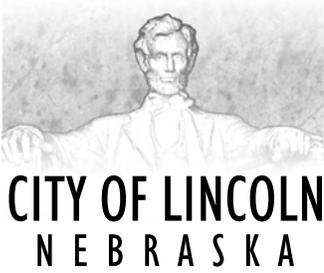
Bill Luxford, operations manager for 21 Educational Access and 5 CITY-TV, said the channel carried the Southwest High performance at the same parade two years ago. He said Nebraska Educational Telecommunications (NET) is again helping with the satellite feed.

"It's pretty rare to carrying an international event live on a local cable access channel," said Luxford. "Our first experience two years ago went very well, and I want to thank Lincoln High, NET and the parade organizers for giving us this exciting opportunity."

Lincoln High Band Director Terry Rush said 170 students will march in the parade, and 68 others will accompany the band on the week-long trip.

"For many of the students, this is a once in a lifetime experience," said Rush. "This is the third time in ten years that a Lincoln High Band has performed in this parade, and the trip has proven to be a wonderful cultural experience. I'm proud of the students for working so hard, both on their performance and on their fund-raising efforts."

The parade features more than 8,000 performers from many nations, and about 450,000 spectators turn out in London to watch it. The parade route includes such landmarks as the Parliament building, Westminster Abbey, 10 Downing Street and the National Gallery.



NEWS RELEASE

MAYOR CHRIS BEUTLER

lincoln.ne.gov

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
2740 "A" Street, Lincoln, NE 68502, 441-7847, fax 441-8706

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 17, 2007

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Ken Svoboda, 430-9430

Leta Powell Drake, 474-6263, ext. 105

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS TO RING BELLS

Members of the Lincoln City Council will ring bells for the Salvation Army from noon to 2 p.m. Friday, December 21st at the food court inside Westfield-Gateway, 61st and "O" streets.

"This is the fifth year the Council has participated in the Salvation Army's holiday fund-raiser," said Council Member Ken Svoboda. "We invite everyone to join us on Friday and support a great cause in our community."

Salvation Army spokeswoman Leta Powell Drake said the goal of the campaign is to raise \$505,000. She said volunteer bell-ringers are still needed through December 24. Individuals and groups can sign up to ring bells online at www.ringbells.org or by calling 474-6263.



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Washington Report

Archived at:
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archive.html](http://www.capitaledge.com/archive.html)

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CONGRESS CLOSER TO FY08 BUDGET DEAL

BUDGET

Whirlwind week on tap for Congress. Heading into its final workweek before recessing for the holidays, Congress has yet to finalize a number of must-pass bills. Most importantly, with FY 2008 ten weeks old, 11 of the twelve FY 2008 appropriations bills have yet to become law.

In addition, with the IRS well past its deadline for printing 2007 tax forms, Congress and the Administration remain deadlocked on legislation to provide a one-year patch for the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) and to extend an array of expiring tax provisions. The congressional leadership also hopes to complete work on a comprehensive energy conservation bill (HR 6) and the Senate is poised to pass legislation (HR 2419) to reauthorize farm, nutrition and rural development programs (see related stories).

Before heading home for the weekend, lawmakers cleared the third stopgap spending bill of the fiscal year. It will keep the government operating until December 21, enough time, lawmakers hope, to complete work on an omnibus appropriations bill combining the 11 pending FY 2008 bills. Only the Defense Department measure has been signed into law.

According to most reports, the congressional leadership has agreed to limit FY 2008 overall discretionary spending, including Defense, to the President's proposed level of \$933 billion, \$23 billion less than the \$956 billion supported by congressional Democrats. The omnibus appropriations bill will also likely include approximately \$70 billion in emergency supplemental funds (not counted towards the discretionary cap of \$933 billion) for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In another concession to the President, the war funding will not be tied to a timetable for troop withdrawals.

There are reports that appropriators have been instructed to reduce one and one-half percent from the previous totals of their bills in order to get from \$956 billion to \$933 billion in total FY 2008 discretionary spending. However, the final bill will include earmarks for specific projects.

The final bill will also reportedly include \$3.7 billion more for veterans' programs than the President requested, but that congressional Republicans are insisting that the additional funding for veterans' programs be offset elsewhere in the bill. As a result, most domestic discretionary programs of interest to local governments will face a squeeze as appropriators draft the omnibus appropriations bill this weekend.

House leadership indicated that they hoped to complete drafting of the omnibus spending bill over the weekend and take it up early next week.

ENERGY

Senate strips tax title, moves comprehensive energy bill. After two unsuccessful attempts to bring comprehensive energy legislation (HR 6) to the Senate floor, the Democratic leadership decided to strip a \$21 billion tax component from the measure to ensure its passage. The Senate then quickly approved the stripped down package 86-8.

The energy bill as approved by the Senate does continue to contain the creation of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program (EECBG), which would distribute \$2 billion by formula annually from FY 2008 through FY 2012 for the design or implementation of state and local energy

efficiency programs. As reported in last week's Washington Report, 68 percent of the funds would be allocated directly to eligible cities and counties using a formula based on population and factors such as square footage of commercial and industrial space.

Among the eligible uses of EECBG funds are: energy efficiency strategies; residential and commercial energy audits; financial incentive programs for energy efficiency improvements; grants to nonprofits for energy efficiency retrofits; programs to conserve energy in the transportation sector; zoning guidelines that promote energy efficient development; building codes that promote energy efficiency and conservation; technologies to reduce, and capture and use methane gas and other greenhouse gases produced by landfills.

While Democratic leaders were less than pleased with the removal of the tax provisions from the bill, they insisted that the two provisions they wanted most remain: the first increase in automobile fuel economy standards since 1975 and a requirement to produce more biofuels.

The House is expected to take up the revised version of HR 6 next week, and the President is expected to sign it into law.

EMINENT DOMAIN

Senate rejects eminent domain limits. The Senate this week rejected, 35-78, an amendment to the farm bill (HR 2419) that would have limited the use of eminent domain. Offered by Senator Larry Craig (R-ID), the amendment would have penalized state and local governments for using eminent domain on farm or grazing land for recreation or conservation purposes by withholding all federal funding from them for five years.

The Craig Amendment was one of several considered this week by the Senate as they debated the bill, which would reauthorize agriculture, rural development and nutrition programs. On a less positive note for local governments, the Senate also rejected, 32-63, an amendment offered by Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and John Sununu (R-NH) that would have shifted \$2 billion from farm subsidies to conservation programs.

After considering these two and a slew of other amendments, the Senate voted, 78-12, to limit debate on the bill, paving the way for its final passage today. In addition to setting a timetable for passage of the bill, the vote to limit debate also means that Senators can no longer offer non-germane amendments to the bill. This means that there will not be additional efforts, like those this week, to attach legislation mandating collective bargaining for police and firefighters to the bill (see related story below).

Before wrapping up consideration of the bill, the Senate may consider additional amendments to shift funds from farm subsidies to conservation or nutrition programs. After the Senate's final vote, the bill will head to a House-Senate Conference Committee, where negotiators will try to resolve a slew of disagreements covering everything from caps on subsidy payments to farmers, to eligible criteria for subsidized school lunches. As is traditional with farm bills, many of the disagreements break along regional lines and are much more difficult to reconcile than traditional partisan disagreements.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Attempt to bring up public safety collective bargaining measure fails in the Senate. Sponsors of legislation that would mandate state and local government collective bargaining for police, fire, and emergency services personnel attempted to offer their bill as an amendment to the Farm Bill legislation being debated in the Senate this week.

The House approved similar legislation earlier this year, and Senate supporters of the measure have been attempting to find the 60 votes necessary to overcome a planned filibuster in that chamber. Under an agreement regarding amendments to the Farm Bill, no proposals could be filibustered, but they would need 60 votes for approval. After Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY) filed several "second degree" amendments to the collective bargaining proposal in an attempt to make it unattractive to wavering Senators, the proposal was dropped.

Local government organizations such as the National League of Cities have been working vigorously in opposition to the collective bargaining legislation on the grounds that it represents a federal intrusion into affairs traditionally handled on the local level. There are some reports that supporters may try to attach the bill to the omnibus appropriations measure that should be completed next week (see related story above), but Senate rules would make it difficult.

Opponents of the measure are certain that attempts will be made to bring the bill up next year, however.

FINANCE

Hotel tax issue remains a concern. As appropriators prepare an omnibus appropriations bill to finalize the FY 2008 budget, local government organizations remain concerned about an attempt by online travel companies such as Hotels.com, Expedia, Travelocity and Orbitz to obtain immunity from local government lawsuits related to hotel occupancy taxes.

Specifically at issue is the practice by online travel companies of paying the hotel occupancy tax on the wholesale price they pay for a hotel room, not on the retail price paid by their customers. Several local governments have filed suit to challenge this practice and to collect taxes due. According to sources involved in the litigation, one or more of the online travel companies have hired a high-powered Washington lobby firm and are seeking language in the omnibus appropriations bill that would retroactively grant the online travel companies immunity from such lawsuits.

Although House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and a number of key Senate appropriators, including Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Daniel Inouye (D-HI), are reportedly opposed to including the immunity language in the omnibus appropriations bill, the online travel companies continue to press their case with Senators from Washington State, home of Expedia.com.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Department of Justice (DOJ)

The Office of Violence Against Women is accepting applications for the Enhanced Training and Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women Later in Life program. This program offers funding for communities to improve their abilities to prevent and address cases of abuse involving victims who are over the age of 50. There is a maximum award of \$500,000 for new applicants and a maximum of \$150,000 for requests to continue existing programs. Letters of intent to apply are due January 17, 2008 and applications are due February 7, 2008.

For more information, see:

<http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/fy08eldersolicitationdec2007-2.pdf>.

Department of Housing and Urban Development

HUD has announced the Public Housing Neighborhood Networks (NN) Program for FY 2007. The purpose of this program is to provide money for public housing authorities (PHAs), to update and expand existing NN community technology centers, and/or establish new centers. The program was created to assist public housing residents to achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency. There is a total of \$10 million available and applicants can apply for funding within the range of \$150,000 to \$600,000. PHAs are required to match at least 25 percent of the total amount requested. The deadline for all applications is February 15, 2008. For more information see December 11th *Federal Register* pages 70458-70470.

Department of Transportation

The DOT in partnership with the Departments of Interior and Agriculture has issued a notice of funding availability for the Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands Program for FY 2008. The purpose of this program is provide funding to programs for planning for alternative transportation systems such as buses and trams. The program expects to receive \$25 million for FY 2008, but it is subject to congressional appropriations which are waiting to be finalized. The deadline for all applications is February 29, 2008. For more information see December 13 *Federal Register*, pages 70929-70931.



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Washington Report

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CONGRESS COMPLETES FY08 BUDGET; ADJOURNS

BUDGET

Democrats relent to Bush spending caps, Congress finally adjourns for the year. After a protracted battle between Democrats and the White House over FY 2008 spending, congressional leaders finally abandoned their quest to push for additional spending for priority programs and sent the President a massive budget bill this week that combines funding for every federal agency except the Defense Department and stays within the President's budget caps.

The budget bill also includes \$70 billion in emergency spending for overseas military operations, but no language regarding troop withdrawal from Iraq.

It was a frustrating end to the stalemate for Democrats, who believe that they were given the majority in Congress by an electorate eager to end the war in Iraq and concentrate more resources on domestic matters such as veterans' health care and children's health insurance. However, with the backing of a majority of Republican Members of Congress, the President dug in his heels on these matters early on and never let up. Without a veto-proof majority, Democrats had little choice but to back down.

Instead of reducing all federal programs in FY 2008 by a percentage that would close the \$22 billion spending gap, congressional leadership gave each Appropriations Subcommittee the authority to reduce funding for programs under their jurisdiction as they saw fit. As a result, some subcommittees used the across-the-board method while others specified specific programs for reductions while others were spared.

Unlike the FY 2007 appropriations process, where funding for congressionally-directed projects were eliminated, the FY 2008

omnibus appropriations measure contains just under 9,000 earmarks totaling \$7.4 billion. While some Republicans and conservative think tanks decried the return of earmarks, the carved-out projects represent less than one percent of the \$933 billion FY 2008 budget and total funding for earmarks reportedly was down by 40 percent from FY 2006 levels.

The President is expected to sign the omnibus appropriations bill into law, enacting a budget for the fiscal year that began officially on October 1.

Meanwhile, Congress quickly adjourned for the year after approving the budget. The House is scheduled to begin the Second Session of the 110th Congress on January 15, while the Senate will return a week later, on January 22.

ENERGY

President signs \$10 billion local grant program into law. Soon after the House and Senate cleared a compromise version (see last week's Washington Report for details of the compromise) of comprehensive energy legislation (HR 6), President Bush signed the measure into law. As enacted, HR 6 authorizes \$10 billion over five years for a new Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program (EECBG). The EECBG is the first program in several years that authorizes direct funding to local governments at significant levels.

If funded by Congress, EECBG will distribute \$2 billion annually from FY 2008 through FY 2012 for the design or implementation of state and local energy efficiency programs. As reported in last week's Washington Report, 68 percent of the funds will be allocated directly to eligible cities and counties using a formula based on population and factors such as square footage

of commercial and industrial space.

Among the eligible uses of EECBG funds are: energy efficiency strategies; residential and commercial energy audits; financial incentive programs for energy efficiency improvements; grants to nonprofits for energy efficiency retrofits; programs to conserve energy in the transportation sector; zoning guidelines that promote energy efficient development; building codes that promote energy efficiency and conservation; technologies to reduce, and capture and use methane gas and other greenhouse gases produced by landfills.

With this achievement under their belt, local government organizations and officials will now turn their attention to securing an appropriation for EECBG in FY 2009.

HUMAN SERVICES

Omnibus spending bill finalizes FY 2008 HHS budget. Final FY 2008 funding levels for selected programs at the Department of Health and Human Services include (with change from FY 2007 levels in parentheses):

- Community Health Centers: \$2.1 billion (+\$77m)
- Maternal and Child Health Care Block Grant: \$666 million (-\$27m)
- Healthy Start: \$100 million (-\$2m)
- Ryan White AIDS: \$2.14 billion (+\$29m)
- Environmental Health: \$294 million (+\$6.5 m)
- Terrorism Response: \$1.5 billion (+\$873m)
- Mental Health Block Grant: \$399 million (-\$7m)
- Substance Abuse Block Grant: \$1.68 billion (+\$137m)
- Children's Vaccine: \$2.76 billion (-\$143m)

- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program: \$1.98 billion (same)*
- Refugee Assistance: \$655 million (+\$68m)
- Child Care and Development Block Grant: \$2.1 billion (same)
- Social Services Block Grant: \$1.7 billion (same)
- Head Start: \$5.5 billion (+\$14m)
- Community Services Block Grant: \$653 million (+\$23m)
- Administration on Aging Programs: \$1.4 billion (+\$30m)

* There is also an additional \$250 million in "emergency" spending set-aside for the LIHEAP program, but the legislation is not clear if those funds will be distributed through the formula program or placed in to a contingency fund.

JOB TRAINING

Labor Department spending bill includes rescission for job training programs. The final version of the FY 2008 Department of Labor budget includes language that rescinds \$250 million in unexpended balances from the youth training, adult training, and dislocated worker formula programs. Local government and workforce development organizations have argued that the unexpended balances do not necessarily exist, citing administrative problems on the state and federal levels in administering the programs.

Funding levels for selected programs at the Labor Department for FY 2008 include (with change from FY 2007 levels in parentheses):

- Adult Training: \$861 million (-\$2.6m)
- Youth Training: \$924 million (-\$16 million)
- Dislocated Workers: \$1.183 billion (-\$6m)

- Prisoner Re-entry: \$73.5m (+\$4.8m)
- Community Service Employment for Older Americans: \$521 million (+\$38m)
- Job Corps: \$1.61 billion (+\$32m)
- Youthbuild: \$60 million (+\$9.4m)

HOUSING AND CD

CDBG program cut in final FY 2008 HUD budget. The formula grant portion of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program suffered a setback this week when Congress chose to reduce the program by \$117 million over the FY 2007 level. The reduction represents a 3.2 percent reduction, although cuts to jurisdiction's allocations may be more than that if new communities enter the program in FY 2008.

Both the House and Senate had recommended increases for the CDBG program in their respective HUD budget proposals earlier this year, and a House-Senate conference committee on the HUD budget in November suggested an \$80 million boost. However, President Bush vetoed that legislation because it exceeded his spending limits. The \$117 million reduction in the omnibus appropriations bill is the result of Congress having to reduce programs to meet the White House spending limits, combined with the desire of Congress to include \$180 million in earmarked projects in the Community Development Fund, the account from which CDBG formula program is funded.

Final funding levels for selected HUD programs include (with change from FY 2007 levels in parentheses):

- HOME: \$1.629 billion (-\$61m)
- Homeless assistance grants: \$1.586 billion (+\$144m)
- Public Housing Capital Grants: \$2.44 billion (same)
- Public Housing Operating Grants: \$4.2 billion (+\$336m)

- HOPE VI: \$100 million (+\$1m)
- Housing for Persons with AIDS: \$300 million (+\$14m)
- Elderly Housing Assistance: \$735 million (same)
- Disabled Housing Assistance: \$237 million (same)
- Section 8 Assisted Housing: \$23.3 billion (+\$1.4b)

TRANSPORTATION

Highway, aviation programs receive increases in FY 2008 budget. The final version of the FY 2008 Department of Transportation budget largely follows the guaranteed levels for highway and transit programs from the 2005 SAFETEA-LU law. The one exception is the New Starts rail program at the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), which received \$1.569 billion – a \$3.1 million increase over FY 2007, but \$131 million below the SAFETEA-LU level.

Federal-aid highway programs would be funded at \$41.216 billion in FY 2008, an increase of \$1.24 billion. However, that amount includes a \$1 billion set-aside for structurally deficient bridges on the interstate system. The measure includes \$9.387 billion in new budget authority for transit programs at FTA, a \$412 million increase over FY 2007.

Largely intact are the New Starts and Bus and Bus Facilities Program earmarks that were included in the House-Senate conference version of the DOT budget approved last month but not presented to the President because of a veto threat. However, in order to bring overall spending in line with the President's budget limits, all transportation earmarks in the measure will be subject to a two percent reduction.

Furthermore, the spending bill includes a number of transit-related policy provisions that will limit FTA to spending no more than 10 percent of any unallocated Bus and Bus Facilities Program funds on any departmental congestion reduction initiatives; prevent the FTA from implementing the final rule on the New Starts/Small Starts Program, and deny

funds for the DOT pilot program under which 100 Mexican trucks would be able to travel without restrictions within the United States to make cargo deliveries.

Also, since Congress was unable to reauthorize programs at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) this year, language was included in the omnibus appropriations bill to extend the authority of the FAA to collect taxes and expend money from the Aviation and Airway Trust Fund through February 29, 2008. The omnibus appropriations bill provides \$3.5 billion for the FAA Airport Improvement program (AIP) in FY 2008, the same amount as in FY 2007.

Amtrak received a \$31 million increase – to \$1.325 billion – in FY 2008. In addition, Congress provided \$30 million for a new program to assist with funding of state intercity passenger rail programs

Finally, \$400 million is included in the FY 2008 Department of Homeland Security budget for public transportation and rail security assistance, a \$125 million increase.

HOMELAND SECURITY

Omnibus provides modest increases for local programs. Appropriators largely spared Department of Homeland Security programs of interest to local governments as they looked for cuts to meet the President's demand for constrained domestic discretionary spending.

The State Homeland Security Formula Grant Program will see the largest funding increase, nearly doubling from \$525 million in FY 2007 to \$950 million in FY 2008. The Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) will also receive a significant increase, growing from \$770 million in FY 2007 to \$820 million in FY 2008.

Other highlights (with change from FY 2007 funding in parentheses) include:

- \$750 million for Firefighter Assistance Grants, including \$198 million for hiring grants (+\$88m)

- \$400 million for Rail and Transit Security Grants (+\$225m)
- \$400 million for Port Security Grants (+\$190m)
- \$300 million for Emergency Management Performance Grants (+\$100m)
- \$220 million for Flood Map Modernization (+\$21m)
- \$114 million for the National Pre-Disaster Mitigation Fund (+\$14m)
- \$41 million for Metropolitan Medical Response Systems (+\$8m)
- \$33 million for Urban Search and Rescue (+\$8m)

In addition, there will be \$50 million available in FY 2008 for interoperable communications grants. Congress did not provide funding for a similar program in FY 2007.

Many of these increases come at the expense of disaster relief, with Congress foregoing a proposed increase of \$300 million for emergency assistance programs and instead cutting it by \$87 million. Should disaster relief expenses exceed \$1.4 billion, Congress will almost certainly agree to provide emergency supplemental funding to meet those needs.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Omnibus slashes local law enforcement assistance. Faced with the need to make cuts in proposed funding in order to meet President Bush's lower domestic discretionary spending cap, appropriators looked to local law enforcement assistance programs.

Overall funding for state and local law enforcement assistance will decline from \$1.237 billion in FY 2007 to \$1 billion in FY 2008. Byrne Justice Assistance Formula Grants will see the most devastating cut. The Omnibus Appropriation bill provides only \$166 million for the beleaguered program, down from \$238 million in FY 2007 and a fraction of the \$523 million provided for the Local Law Enforcement Block

Grant less than a decade ago.

Other programs fared better. Funding for the COPS Program will grow from \$542 million in FY 2007 to \$587 million in FY 2008. However, the final bill includes only \$20 million for hiring grants, considerably less than the \$100 million included in earlier versions. Funding for Juvenile Justice Programs will grow from \$338 million in FY 2007 to \$400 million in FY 2008. Violence Against Women will also see a modest increase, from \$383 million in FY 2007 to \$400 million in FY 2008.

Other highlights include \$15 million for Drug Courts, a \$5 million increase and \$32 million for Weed and Seed, an \$18 million decrease.

ENVIRONMENT AND RECREATION

EPA programs suffer in FY 2008 budget. The Department of Interior and Related Agencies portion of the omnibus appropriations bill approved this week in Congress reduced overall funding at the Environmental Protection Agency by over \$250 million.

Bearing the brunt of that reduction was the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund program, which was slashed by \$311 million in the measure. The Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund program was received an \$8 million cut from FY 2007, down to \$829 million. Other EPA programs of interest include the Brownfields program, up by about \$4 million to \$142 million and the Superfund program, which remained at its FY 2007 level of \$1.25 billion.

Also included in the Interior title of the omnibus bill is \$70 million for the Historic Preservation program at the National Park Service, which represents an increase of over \$4 million from FY 2007. The Land and Water Conservation Fund stateside grant program will receive \$25 million, a \$5 million decrease from FY 2007.

Programs at the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment of the Humanities were each funded at \$144.7 million, which represents an increase of \$20 million for NEA and \$3 million for NEH.

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Beutler
& City Council Members

FROM: Clinton W. Thomas

DEPARTMENT: City Council Office

DEPARTMENT: Housing Rehab & Real Estate Division

ATTENTION:

DATE: November 28, 2007

COPIES TO: Teresa J. Meier
Marvin Krout
Dana Roper
Byron Blum, Bldg & Safety
Jean Walker, Planning

SUBJECT: Street & Alley Vacation No. 07008
South 46th Street, south of O Street

A request has been made to vacate a portion of South 46th Street lying south of O Street. This request came about during the negotiations for additional right-of-way for the O Street Widening Project, 42nd and 52nd Streets. During negotiations, it was agreed that if the City would vacate the portion of South 46th Street lying adjacent to the owner's property and surplus a small segment of the adjoining park, the owner would be willing to trade it for the right-of-way needed for the street widening project.

Considering there are numerous utilities within the street right-of-way to be vacated and the owner has agreed to redevelopment restrictions on the portion of park land proposed for surplus, the value of the street right-of-way to be acquired is considered to be equal to, or greater than, the value of the street right-of-way and adjoining park land to be vacated and surplus to the owner. Therefore, it is recommended if the street right-of-way be vacated it be traded to the abutting property owner "even up" for the street right-of-way needed for the O Street Widening Project.

Recent information from the Law Department indicates it may not be possible to surplus any of the park land. If that is the case, a new agreement may be forthcoming with the abutting property owner.

Respectfully submitted,



Clinton W. Thomas
Certified General Appraiser #990023



Jon Camp
<campjon@aol.com>
12/18/2007 03:09 PM

To tgrammer@lincoln.ne.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Fwd: InterLinc: Council Feedback

For Packets.

Jon Camp
Lincoln City Council
City Council Office: 441-7515
Haymarket Square Office: 474-1838

-----Original Message-----

From: WebForm <none@lincoln.ne.gov>
To: Jon Camp <jcamp@lincoln.ne.gov>
Sent: Tue, 18 Dec 2007 2:39 pm
Subject: InterLinc: Council Feedback

InterLinc: City Council Feedback for Jon Camp Name:
Mike Cline Address: 4524 elk ridge road City: Lincoln, NE
68516 Phone: 402.420.5161 Fax: Email:
mikecline07@gmail.com Comment or Question: Dear Council Man
Jon Camp, I was watching the council meeting yesterday on TV
(yes, occasionally people do watch and find it interesting)
and I wanted to thank you for actively delaying what seemed to
be a Christmas giveaway by offering early retirement incentives
to city employees. I am all for a more efficient and less
costly city government. I am opposed to incentives for
employees to retire early. There are many problems with such
plans such as; losing more experienced employees, not achieving
necessary target goals to break even, and future employees
holding on to see if another incentive will be offered later.
Do what you do better than most. Scrutinize the proposal. Ask
questions. What's best for the city of Lincoln. I'm like the
representative from the Chamber who was agreeable to what ever
you decide. I hope the mayors office will realign,
right size, down size, or what ever the correct term is today
and make the tough decision to make the necessary reductions
needed in personnel and services to meet our budget shortfalls.
Respectfully, Mike Cline 4524 Elk Ridge Road Lincoln, NE

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RECEIVED

DEC 20 2007

CITY COUNCIL
OFFICE

To: Mayor Chris Beutler
Lincoln City Council Members
Re: Early Retirement Incentive Program
Date: December 20, 2007

In an effort to address the City's forthcoming budget shortfalls, the Mayor introduced an early retirement incentive program for city employees. We appreciate this proactive approach to addressing the City's financial issues. However, having only a limited time to review the facts and figures associated with this program, the Lincoln Independent Business Association (LIBA) Board of Directors is not endorsing or opposing its adoption.

LIBA is concerned about the actual amount of money that will be saved, particularly in the first year. Since the City did not calculate in the formula the number of retirees who we would normally expect to retire in a given year (based on previous years), coupled with extensive insurance benefits and sick leave payouts, we are concerned that we have not seen numbers that truly reflect the City's potential gain or loss of such a program.

After the last retirement incentive, sixty percent of the retirements were refilled. We are concerned that if numerous positions vacated this year by retirees are not eliminated from the department structure but rather simply refilled with other employees, the City is unlikely to see significant savings. We firmly believe that for this program to be successful, most, of the vacated positions must be eliminated, thus allowing for the restructuring of City government and leading to potential significant savings.

Finally, we believe that this is a temporary solution to a long-term issue. We recommend City departments undergo a complete restructuring and in doing so, address issues such as capping sick leave and reducing the 200% retirement match to a generous 100% match. We hope these issues are addressed in the next round of negotiations. If the early retirement incentive program is adopted, we will expect to see true savings or offers to provide necessary cuts to make up for lost revenues.

Despite these misgivings, we believe the program may have some merit because such programs have demonstrated success for others. We appreciate Mayor Beutler for approaching this issue and will not oppose this package.

Highest regards,

Coby Mach
For the Board

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