

City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 18, 2001

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: RECEIPT OF NEW FEDERAL OLDER AMERICANS ACT FUNDS

ISSUE: Receipt of \$36,014 in new Federal Older Americans Act Funds in the Department of Human Services, Division of Community Programs, Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS).

RECOMMENDATIONS: That City Council:

1. Receive the additional \$36,014 and authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary documents, and;
2. Approve the conversion of one part-time Community Services Specialist to full-time and one part-time Case Aide to full-time. These grant funded positions would terminate upon the expiration of the grant and the individuals who fill these positions were notified of this condition of employment at the time they were hired and have signed an agreement of understanding with regard to this condition of employment.

DISCUSSION: The City receives Federal Older Americans Act funds through the Virginia Department for the Aging to operate or contract for services for older Alexandrians. In November 2000, the U.S. Congress passed and the President signed budget authorization to increase Older Americans Act funds for home-delivered meals and in-home services, and to establish a new National Family Caregiver Support Program.

The Virginia Department for the Aging uses a fixed funding formula to allocate these funds. Alexandria's share of the additional funds includes \$6,029 for in-home services, \$3,014 for home-delivered meals, and \$26,971 for a new Family Caregiver Support Program.

The goal of the National Family Caregiver Support Program is to provide assistance to families to enable them to care for aging loved ones for as long as possible without institutionalization. To accomplish this goal in Alexandria, the Department of Human Services is using the funds to launch

a new initiative called “No Place Like Home.” The program offers case management services to older Alexandrians and their families who need advice, assistance and planning to allow older persons to remain in their own homes as long as possible. While many services are already available to older Alexandrians, this new initiative would allow staff to respond more quickly to calls for assistance.

OAAS currently offers free basic case management assistance to all citizens regardless of income.¹ Two part-time Community Services Specialists (currently one half-time and one three-quarter time) do the initial home visits. A family calling for assistance must currently wait two weeks or more before an OAAS staff person can make a home visit to assess their needs and work on a plan of action.

To address this problem, the Department of Human Services proposes increasing the currently three-quarter time Community Services Specialist position to full time, which will help reduce the amount of time families must wait to receive a case management visit. Increasing the hours of the Case Aide from half-time to full time will allow this position to perform the additional support to the Social Workers and Community Services Specialists who are already performing simple service tasks such as helping a client get a prescription, shop, or go to a medical appointment. These services are usually performed on an occasional basis for a client or family in crisis.

Using this opportunity to initiate and publicize the No Place Like Home program will increase the visibility of Alexandria’s aging services and further integrate aging and social service programs, as the department began two years ago. The No Place Like Home theme is the Virginia Association of Area Agencies on Aging’s way to publicize the new funds statewide so that all older Virginians know they have access to new or better services for family caregivers.

FISCAL IMPACT: Receipt of \$36,014 in new additional Federal Older Americans Act funds in the Department of Human Services. It should be noted that there are no additional monies available in the City budget to continue this expanded program once the grant monies are expended. The grant funded positions would terminate upon the expiration of the grant and the incumbent staff in the positions have been notified of this condition of employment.

ATTACHMENTS: None.

STAFF: Bob Eiffert, Director, Office of Aging and Adult Services, Human Services
Jack Powers, Director, Division of Community Programs, Human Services
Meg O’Regan, Director, Department of Human Services
Lori Godwin, Assistant City Manager for Operations
Carol Moore, Acting Deputy Director, Office of Management and Budget

¹ The Older Americans Act Funds prohibit fees.