

City of Alexandria, Virginia

18
4-22-03

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 15, 2003

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: SUBMISSION OF TWO GRANT APPLICATIONS TO THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (VDEM) FOR FUNDING TO PURCHASE EQUIPMENT FOR WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION INCIDENTS

ISSUE: City Council consideration of the following two grant applications to VDEM: An individual sub-grant totaling \$100,000 and a cooperative sub-grant totaling \$228,640 (a cooperative project with Arlington County).

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Approve these two grant applications to VDEM, totaling \$100,000 and \$228,640, which would allow the City to purchase equipment and supplies that would help public safety agencies handle weapons of mass destruction (WMD) incidents; and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to execute all documents that may be required.

DISCUSSION: Alexandria's public safety agencies have discussed their concerns about providing and transporting equipment and supplies to needed areas if a WMD incident were to occur. A Weapons of Mass Destruction incident could include chemical and biological incidents, dirty bombs, nuclear attacks or limited anthrax exposure. The City could be faced with addressing the ancillary impact of an incident that could occur in another jurisdiction, on the Wilson Bridge or in the Potomac River. No City vehicle is currently available that could transport a large amount of equipment and supplies to various locations throughout the City or to neighboring jurisdictions under our current mutual aid agreements. To address this concern, the Alexandria Office of Sheriff, along with the Police and Fire Departments are proposing a City grant application totaling \$100,000, to purchase a trailer and necessary supplies and equipment. In addition, our City's Fire Department and Arlington County's Fire Department are proposing an application for a grant totaling \$228,640, for the purchase of a Mass Casualty Medical Supply Unit (MSU) that would serve Arlington and Alexandria.

The request to purchase equipment and supplies for the City would allow the City to improve

response to and protection against a WMD incident. In the event of an incident in Northern Virginia, Alexandria's three public safety agencies, Police, Fire, and Sheriff, would have access to equipment and supplies that could be retrieved quickly and transported easily from location to location. The equipment includes a trailer that would transport protective suits, gloves, boots, and canisters to be used by first responders, as well as escape hoods and disposable blankets that could be provided to citizens escaping the area of the mass destruction incident.

Included in this request is a fit tester to be used with the Police Department's and the Alexandria Office of Sheriff's self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). Since these two agencies have acquired additional equipment since September 11, 2001, it is necessary to meet the statutory requirement that the equipment be tested on an annual basis (the Police Department has 300 SCBA units and the Alexandria Office of Sheriff has 83 SCBA units). Since the Fire Department has used this equipment for years and already has a testing facility at Fire Station 207 on Duke Street, firefighters on the SCBA-Mask Team will lead the effort to train and have police officers and deputy sheriffs involved in fit testing their own SCBA equipment.

The joint grant with Arlington County will provide for the purchase of a Mass Casualty Medical Supply Unit (MSU) for the Alexandria Fire Department and the Arlington County Fire Department. This unit will help the two jurisdictions respond to and mitigate a WMD incident. The MSU could supply items that are currently not available to a large number of patients such as patient self treatment kits and sufficient medical supplies to treat large numbers of patients as was needed at the Pentagon on September 11.

This cooperative grant demonstrates our interoperability with Arlington County. The supplies carried on the MSU have been pre-approved by EMS agencies in the Northern Virginia region, and all items are currently used by EMS providers in both Alexandria and Arlington. Stocking the MSU with familiar equipment would improve the likelihood of quick response and good medical treatment in the event of a WMD incident.

FISCAL IMPACT: None. There is no match requirement for this grant. Funds must be spent by July 31, 2004 and a report of expenditures must be submitted to VDEM by October 31, 2004.

The Fire Department has submitted this grant to the State in order to meet the deadline of March 31, 2003, with the understanding that subsequent City Council authorization would be required to accept this grant award.

ATTACHMENTS: None. This grant application may be reviewed in the Office of Management and Budget, Room 3600, City Hall, during normal business hours.

STAFF:

James Dunning, Sheriff

Charles E. Samarra, Police Chief

James T. Gower, Interim Fire Chief

Arthur Dahlberg, Code Enforcement Director, Alexandria Fire Department