


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** MARCH 7, 2012

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER 

**SUBJECT:** CONSIDERATION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE RESCUE SQUAD ASSISTANCE FUND GRANT PROGRAM, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

**ISSUE:** Consideration of a grant application to the RSAF (Rescue Squad Assistance Fund) Grant Program, Department of Health, Commonwealth of Virginia.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council:

- (1) Approve the submission of the grant application (due March 15, 2012); and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to execute the necessary documents that may be required.

**BACKGROUND:** On February 1, 2012, the Virginia Department of Health opened the grant application period for the 2012 RSAF (Rescue Squad Assistance Fund) Grant Program. The RSAF is a multi-million dollar matching grant program that provides financial assistance for Virginia governmental and non-profit Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies and organizations based on demonstrated need. The primary goal of this program is to financially assist governmental and non-profit EMS agencies for the purchase of EMS equipment and vehicles and to provide needed EMS programs and projects.

**DISCUSSION:** The Alexandria Fire Department (AFD) was loaned several AutoPulse machines for a pilot program period of six months. The AutoPulse devices had to be returned to the vendor after the loan period was over. AFD personnel have performed lifesaving activities using the Autopulse and have verified that it works easier and better than manual chest compressions.

For victims of Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA), chest compressions are required. The AutoPulse is a non-invasive cardiac support pump that moves more blood, more consistently than is possible with human hands. The machine operates by squeezing the entire chest resulting in victims receiving more consistent, high-quality compressions than those delivered by simple automated CPR devices, which means improved blood flow. The AutoPulse also minimizes no-flow time, which means it allows rescuers to provide compressions while performing other life-saving activities, or while transporting a victim down the stairs or in the back of a moving ambulance. The AutoPulse cardiac support pump delivers improved blood flow without interruptions caused

by fatigue and provides rescuers better access to the patient resulting in the possibility of improved survival for cardiac arrest victims. AFD personnel are subject to being injured while doing chest compressions in the back of moving medic units. The AutoPulse is a safer and more effective way to assist cardiac arrest victims in these emergency situations.

The AFD is also applying for funds for new stretchers (cots). The AFD currently has 11 Ferno 93ES Stretchers that were purchased in 2003. Although the AFD has maintained an aggressive preventive maintenance program, the stretchers are in desperate need of replacement. When researching new cots, the AFD's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) leadership looked at and piloted manual and automated cots and decided that an automated cot would be the preferred device. Automated cots would improve functionality and comfort for the patient and would require less lifting for Medics while moving a patient. Surrounding jurisdictions have reported a reduction in lifting injuries shortly after beginning use of an automated cot in their transport units.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The total cost of eight AutoPulse devices – one for each of the AFD's seven medic units, plus one for training- is \$119,000. The cost of ten stretchers (one for each Medic Unit plus the reserve units) is \$145,000. The total request is \$264,000 and the 50 percent required match will be paid out of the AFD's FY 2013 operating budget, which includes the full \$145,000 for ten stretchers. City staff will administer the grant. The City is responsible for the normal administrative costs associated with this grant, including financial and reporting oversight provided by the Fire Department, as well as the Office of Management and Budget, and the Finance Department.

The City applied for and was awarded a grant from this program in 2010.

**STAFF:**

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