

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 24, 2001

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO# 25: CONSIDERATION OF MATCHING CITY FUNDS FOR A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO) UNDER THE FEDERAL COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES (COPS) GRANT PROGRAM

ISSUE: City Council future consideration of a grant application, in the amount of \$125,000, from the U.S. Department of Justice, COPS in Schools Program. This grant would enable the Police Department to add one School Resource Officer (SRO) for City elementary schools for a 3-year period. The local match required in FY 2002 would be \$32,685 and can be funded by the FY 2002 Proposed Budget for the Police Department.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Consider at a future meeting the grant application to the U.S. Department of Justice for a total of \$125,000 in federal funds for a 3-year period. The City share of funding is approximately \$64,037 over the same period, to fund part of salary and benefit costs and one vehicle;
- (2) Consider the addition of one Police Officer position if the grant is approved; and
- (3) Use savings realized through the extension of the Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP) grant into FY 2002 to fund the City share of the first-year cost of the COPS grant in the amount of \$32,685.

It should be noted that the City would be required to continue this program for a fourth year or one full budget cycle after the grant ends. This is a condition of the federal application process for all COPS grants.

DISCUSSION: This proposed grant is to be submitted under a new federal Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program is called "COPS in Schools." The City has aggressively pursued COPS grants since their inception in 1994 because the 3-year federal share of grant funds has paid for approximately 50 percent of the salary and benefit costs for each additional police officer. We have received several COPS grants since 1994 to implement and expand our community policing, school resource officer, domestic violence intervention, and gang intervention program efforts. Without these grants the City would not have been able to add 14 police officers and provide the level of services that we do today.

In early March 2001, staff received the new COPS in Schools grant application package. This program offers up to \$125,000, or 75 percent, of the funding for a police officer position for 3 years, which would represent the largest percentage of federal funding under the COPS grant program the City has ever received. Currently the City has assigned an SRO in the City's high school, 2 middle schools and the 9th grade center. All four of our current SROs were grant-funded and have been gradually absorbed as the grant funding ended.

This grant would provide a fifth SRO. The SRO would work at multiple elementary school sites in conjunction with the DARE program officer and School officials. Police Department staff has prepared a memorandum of understanding for program partnership with the Schools. School officials strongly support this grant request.

FISCAL IMPACT: President Bush has proposed to eliminate the COPS program and instead focus on school safety officers. The federal Office of Community Oriented Policing Services has stated that this elimination of future funding will not affect current COPS funding that the City is receiving; however, they were ambiguous as to whether this will affect the funding of this particular grant. They did recommend submitting the grant application, as funding may be available.

In the event of a grant award, the federal government would provide approximately \$125,000 for up to 75% of the salary and fringe benefit costs for a 3-year period for one police officer. The grant-funded position would replace a veteran officer to be assigned as the elementary school SRO. The City share of approximately \$64,037 would pay for 25% of the salary and fringe benefit costs over three years, plus one cruiser, issued equipment and uniforms in the first year of the grant program.

The grant is likely to begin in early FY 2002 if awarded. The fiscal impact for FY 2002, the first year of the grant, is approximately \$32,685 for the City share. Funding for the City's share of the first year of the grant could be provided with the savings realized through the extension of the Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP) grant that has now been extended. During the proposed budget process, staff was under the assumption that funding for the DVIP grant would end in March 2001. Therefore, \$328,551 in new City funding was added to the Police Department FY 2002 Proposed Operating Budget to continue the program through FY 2002. However, the Police Department was recently notified by the Violence Against Women Grants Office that the DVIP grant would be extended into FY 2002. Therefore, the Police Department should realize enough savings to cover the FY 2002 \$32,685 local match for this new SRO position.

In addition, the City is responsible for the normal administrative costs associated with this grant. These costs include financial and reporting oversight provided by the administering agency, as well as by the Office of Management and Budget and by the Finance Department.

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

STAFF:

Michele Evans, Assistant City Manager

Charles Samarra, Police Chief

Tim Dickinson, Lieutenant, Crime Prevention Section

Juan Torres, Sergeant, School Resource Officer Program

Amy Flenniken, Division Chief, Fiscal Management, Police

Alfred Coleman, Budget/Management Analyst, OMB