City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 19, 2007

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE VIRGINIA
            DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FOR ALEXANDRIA
            CITIZENS CORPS COUNCIL PROGRAMS

ISSUE: City Council consideration of applying for a grant in the amount of $60,231 from The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) to support the Alexandria Citizens Corps Council efforts.

RECOMMENDATION:

(1)   Authorize the City Manager to apply for Citizens Corps Program Funding through the State Homeland Security Program grant funds in the amount of $60,231; and

(2)   Authorize the City Manager to execute all the necessary documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: The Virginia Department of Emergency Management has received $834,038 in State Homeland Security Program grant funds for Citizens Corp programs in the Commonwealth. These funds will be passed to the Virginia jurisdictions and their approved local Citizens Corps Councils through a competitive process. The deadline for submitting applications for this grant is close of business on April 3, 2007.

DISCUSSION: The grant application has been developed by the Alexandria Citizens Corps Council and the City's Office of Emergency Management to support three projects. The first project is the creation of an Alexandria Pet Corps in cooperation with the Animal Welfare League. As a post-Katrina requirement the federal government now requires localities to have a pet management emergency plan as well as have plans to shelter pets in the case of an emergency. The Pet Corps Program will purchase equipment to be utilized in the operation of a pet shelter which would be opened in conjunction with an emergency shelter which the City would open in case it needed to do so for a major emergency. The pet shelter would be in the same building or an adjacent building to the shelter used by pet owners, allowing them to stay near their pets and avoiding some of the major pet owner problems that occurred in the Gulf Coast during Hurricane Katrina. The grant will provide $23,611 to purchase equipment and a trailer to operate a pet shelter capable of housing 85 dogs and 125 cats. All seven major Northern Virginia jurisdictions have purchased, or are planning on purchasing trailers to operate

a pet shelter. The plan is also for all of these jurisdictions to purchase the same make and model trailer, so this equipment can be easily shared.

The second project involves a new plan to distribute emergency planning documents to each household and every business license holder in the City. Updated material printed in several languages will be direct mailed to each household. Working with the City's Multicultural Services Initiative, the Citizens Corps Council will insure that each household gets the material. Additionally, business license holders will receive an electronic copy of emergency planning documents specifically designed for businesses. This grant would provide $31,470 to purchase material to be sent by mail to every household and business license holder in Alexandria. Additionally these funds will be utilized to translate preparedness information into several languages and distribute it in partnership with the Alexandria Multicultural Services Initiative Coordinator.

The third project would support the second annual community preparedness event to be held in the fall of 2007 at Market Square. In coordination with many voluntary organizations, the Citizens Corps Council sponsors this event to promote preparedness and volunteerism in the community. This event promotes volunteer opportunities in the City. The grant amount of $5,150 would be used to purchase supplies and materials for the event.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no match requirement for these grant funds. City staff will be responsible to administer the grant.

STAFF:
Russell Middleton, Acting Fire Chief
Mark Penn, Emergency Management Coordinator