


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 16, 2007

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO APPLY FOR A REIMBURSEMENT GRANT THROUGH THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE, BULLETPROOF VEST PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

ISSUE: City Council authorization to apply for a reimbursement grant from the Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program for bulletproof vests.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Authorize the City Manager to continue the City's participation as an applicant jurisdiction for the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program to permit law enforcement agencies in the City to apply for reimbursement for bulletproof vests purchased in calendar years 2007 and 2008;
- (2) Authorize all City law enforcement agencies eligible under the requirements of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program to participate and apply for reimbursement under the City's comprehensive application in each year that federal funding is available for this program; and
- (3) Authorize the City Manager to execute any necessary documents.

BACKGROUND: The Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program is administered by the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, and provides supplemental reimbursement funding for the purchase of approved body armor for state and local law enforcement agencies.

Since 1999, over 11,900 jurisdictions nationwide have participated in the BVP Program, with \$173 million in federal funds committed to support the purchase of an estimated 450,000 vests. Through the BVP Reauthorization Public Law 108-372 enacted on October 25, 2004, \$7,000,000 is appropriated annually to fund the program in 2007 and 2008. The amount of funding available to each jurisdiction is determined by City population and fiscal need. Funds are awarded on a

first-come, first-served basis, and 2007 applications are due by April 30, 2007. The application and reimbursement process is completed entirely over the Internet.

DISCUSSION: The Alexandria City Council authorized the City's participation in the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program in 1999. The Alexandria Sheriff's Office and Alexandria Police Department utilized the program in prior years, but have made no reimbursement requests since 2004. This is because the federal allocation to Alexandria in 2003 and 2004 was less than \$3,000 each year, which did not cover the administrative costs to apply for funding, submit reimbursement requests and maintain the documentation for vests actually procured. Little if any of the vests' actual costs were recovered and the City did not participate in the program after FY 2004. According to staff in the BVP Program Office as of April 12, 2007, the allocation for Alexandria is likely to be no more than 10% of the purchase cost each year.

In 2001 and 2002, the Alexandria Sheriff's Office purchased 126 ballistic vests which are due for replacement in calendar years 2007 and 2008. In addition to those vests requiring replacement, the BPV Program authorizes reimbursement for vests purchased by the locality for anticipated new hires, as determined by the agency based on historical records. The Office of the Sheriff wishes to submit an application for up to 162 vests under the FY 2007-2008 program. The estimated cost of the vests is \$93,960. It is the goal of City of Alexandria law enforcement agencies to pursue any available funding to help defray the cost to the City for the purchase of this equipment required for staff safety.

FISCAL IMPACT: The current cost of ballistic vests ranges from \$570-\$580 each. The Office of the Sheriff plans to buy 162 vests at an estimated cost of \$93,960 in FY 2008-2009. The Police Department plans to buy approximately 65 vests in FY 2008 at an estimated cost of \$37,050. The estimated reimbursement under the grant is likely to range from \$2,600 to \$9,300, according to BVP program staff. Each participating agency is responsible for budgeting for replacement vests within their annual operating budget.

The 2007 grant application must be submitted prior to the April 30, 2007 deadline.

STAFF:

Dana Lawhorne, Sheriff
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Amy Flenniken, Division Chief, Police Department