

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 3, 2007

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: SUBMISSION OF TWO GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR A TRAINING MINI-GRANT AND A COMPUTER HARDWARE GRANT FROM THE VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES BOARD

ISSUE: Approval of two grant applications for a training mini-grant and a computer hardware grant, previously submitted to the Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB).

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council approve the submittal of two grants (due August 31, 2007 and September 30, 2007), and if awarded, accept up to \$10,125 from the Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB) for the following:

- (1) VFSB funding in the amount of \$9,125 to purchase three laptop computers, two desktop computers, two podiums, and three mid-sized CRT TVs for the Fire & EMS Training Academy at Lee Center;
- (2) VFSB funding in the amount of \$1,000 to purchase computer hardware for fire incident reporting, which mirrors the national reporting format required by the Commonwealth to report injuries and losses of life or property caused by fire and similar hazards; and
- (3) Authorize the City Manager to execute all the necessary documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: In August 2000, the VFSB adopted a policy to administer mini-grants from the interest earned from the Virginia Fire Program Fund. The purpose of these mini-grants is to fund training projects and programs to improve the educational efforts in the fire service throughout the Commonwealth. The grant provides a maximum of \$10,000 and is awarded to Virginia jurisdictions on a competitive basis.

Since August 2000, a second grant program was also initiated by the VFSB to offset the cost of fire-incident reporting by awarding \$1,000 grants to purchase new computer hardware. This grant was initiated as part of a national effort to standardize data collected from local, state, and federal jurisdictions and to improve data analyses related to fire injuries and losses of life and property from all 50 states.

Fire Department staff did not submit this docket item for Council consideration in September due to an oversight regarding due dates. The Department is instituting new procedures to track grant applications that are being prepared by staff for submittal to grant agencies. This will ensure that in the future such applications are presented to Council prior to submission.

DISCUSSION: The application requests funds to purchase three laptop computers, two desktop computers, two podiums, and three TVs for the Fire & EMS Academy. The Fire & EMS Academy currently has three laptop computers, but they are outdated, slow, and unreliable. Two additional desktop computers are needed to accommodate instructors and other personnel assigned to the academy: Podiums will be added to two classrooms for use by academy instructors. Mid-sized CRV TVs are needed in three classrooms, since all three of the academy's classrooms currently share two small TVs.

These classrooms are scheduled daily with local, regional, or recruit-school classes, and coordinating and moving the necessary training equipment for each class has been a challenge.

FISCAL IMPACT: These two grants have no cash-match requirements; however, the VDFP requires grantees to electronically report, for three continuous years, injuries and loss of life or property caused by fire and similar hazards. The City is also responsible for the normal administrative costs associated with each grant, including financial and reporting oversight provided by the Fire Department, as well as the Office of Management and Budget, and the Finance Department.

STAFF:

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