

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 18, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER *J*

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF A VIRGINIA OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES GRANT WITH FUNDS PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY THROUGH THE STATE HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM THAT WILL PROVIDE TOUGHBOOK COMPUTERS NEEDED FOR EMS DATA COLLECTION ON PRE-HOSPITAL PATIENT CARE REPORTS

ISSUE: Consideration of a Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) Grant for funding to the Fire Department to provide Panasonic Toughbook Computers that will use software approved by the Virginia OEMS for Pre-hospital Patient Care Reports (PPCR).

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Authorize the submission of the OEMS grant application, up to \$25,550; and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to execute the necessary documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: The Fire Department seeks \$25,550 in Virginia OEMS funding for the purchase of seven new Panasonic Toughbook computers for use with the City's current PPCR software. This software is used to collect data at the bedside of a patient to allow for real-time charting of EMS incidents. This software is already in use in our Department and allows us to collect EMS data for analysis of our EMS system. These new computers would replace the current computers that are over three years old. The City would be required to pay an additional upgrade fee of \$250 per computer for a total City cost of \$1,750. This upgrade provides the necessary touch screen capability that allows for rapid input of EMS data.

The grant guidance is available on the Virginia OEMS website. Applications are due to OEMS by June 1, 2009. The grant was announced on April 1, 2009. Department staff contacted the Virginia OEMS with two specific questions regarding this grant;

1. Can the computers be upgraded to include the touch screen capability; and
2. Can any state approved EMS PPCR software be used on these computers or must a jurisdiction use the new State sponsored software?

On May 11, 2009 both questions were answered and Department staff made arrangements to forward the application for approval.

DISCUSSION: This grant was established to promote the use of electronic PPCR through the Virginia OEMS. The Virginia OEMS has procured new software that will be provided at no cost to localities that qualify for this grant. The City's EMS staff has evaluated this new software and has elected to maintain the current PPCR software. The Virginia OEMS has approved this request for all localities that are currently using an electronic version of a state approved PPCR program.

The Department has been using its current program on Panasonic Toughbook computers for three years. The current computers are scheduled for replacement during FY 2010. The Department has 10 Panasonic Toughbook computers for use on EMS units. The State will allow for a grant funded computer for each licensed EMS transport vehicle registered with the State. The Department currently has seven vehicles registered as EMS transport vehicles. The upgrade fee and purchase of three additional Panasonic Toughbook computers would be funded through the depreciation account already set up when this program began.

The current EMS PPCR software utilized by the Department far exceeds the minimum requirements needed for the Virginia OEMS. The Department has also developed a number of quality assurance measures and standardized reports which would require further development with a new EMS PPCR. Maintaining the current EMS PPCR would not require additional funds for training staff on a new reporting system.

FISCAL IMPACT: The Virginia OEMS Grant of \$25,550 will require City funds to pay for the upgrade of each computer totaling \$1,750. City staff will administer the grant. Three additional Panasonic Toughbook computers would be purchased to update all 10 required computers for our EMS response vehicles. All current computers are scheduled for replacement during FY2010 through an already established depreciation account. This account would be utilized to provide the additional matching funds.

STAFF:

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James Burke, IT Director
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