

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** JUNE 21, 2012

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER *RM*

**SUBJECT:** CONSIDERATION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FOR ACQUISITION OF EQUIPMENT TO BE USED BY THE FIRE DEPARTMENT IN RESPONSE TO A MAJOR SECURITY EVENT

**ISSUE:** Consideration of a grant application to the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) for equipment that would be used in response to a major security event within the City or region.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council:

- (1) Authorize the submission of a grant application to VDEM for grant funding totaling \$49,200; and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary documents that may be required.

**BACKGROUND:** On May 7, 2012, VDEM announced the availability of funds from the FY 2012 State Homeland Security Grant Program to support Homeland Security efforts in local jurisdictions throughout the Commonwealth. Funds for the program are provided by the National Preparedness Directorate, U.S. Department of Homeland Security under the State Homeland Security Grant Program. Allowable expenditures include equipment, exercises and training. The application is due July 20, 2012.

**DISCUSSION:** These funds will assist the City and region to prepare for potential chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive threats. The requested equipment will enhance the City's response capability for a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear event. The equipment will meet current National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards for response to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and hazardous materials incidents. The Fire Department's request is in conformance with Goal 2 of the VDEM funding priorities, i.e., Enhance capability to effectively respond to Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and

Explosive in a coordinated effort to protect the public. The Fire Department proposes to use grant funds to purchase:

- Specialized HAZMAT Personal Protective Equipment, i.e., the purchase of 12 TrelleborgVP1/VPS Chemical Protective Ensembles at approximately \$3,000 per unit for a total cost of \$36,000. These Ensembles would replace eight (8) units that were purchased and placed in service in the 2001-2002 time period. The recommended shelf life for these suits is 10 years as listed in the manufacturer's literature. This purchase would better cycle replacements of these protective ensembles so that the costs will be manageable in the future. These units also add the capability of Flash Protection, which we do not have in a large portion of our current inventory. In the event of a significant WMD type event, a large number of these ensembles will be contaminated to a point where replacement would be the only option. Adding these numbers to our current inventory and being able to cycle out the older units will allow us to sustain the ability to protect the public in the event of a significant WMD/CBRNE event in the National Capital Region.
- Detection Equipment, i.e., the purchase of a Jerome J405 Mercury Vapor Detector at a cost of \$10,000 for one unit. Mercury found in thermometers and in energy efficient lighting poses a significant hazard for the citizens of Alexandria. AFD personnel have found isolated instances where there have been significant levels of mercury in storage. For example, 32 liquid ounces of mercury was found in a residence in Old Town Alexandria during one response. There are other significant incidents in which mercury was found in other types of occupancies. The newer instrument has much lower detection ranges which will assist the Fire Department in protecting life and property from the chemical hazards presented by this material. Replacing this piece of equipment sustains the all-hazards mission of the Department's Hazardous Materials Response Team.
- Leak and Spill Control Equipment, i.e., for the replacement of the Fire Department's Edwards and Cromwell Leak and Spill Control Kits at a cost of \$3,200. The current kits were purchased approximately 20 years ago. The equipment has been utilized for many years and some kits are no longer manufactured or can be updated, or are difficult to find. These kits have also been used in training classes for responders. Replacement of these kits will allow the Hazmat Team to control leaks and spills in all different sizes and types of containers. Additionally, the request adds several kits not in the Fire Department's current inventory that will enhance abilities to stop leaks in small and large size containers of hazardous materials.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The Fire Department is requesting grant funds in the amount of \$49,200 for the purchase of Detection and Monitoring Equipment and Specialized HAZMAT Personal Protective Equipment. City staff will administer the grant. The City is also responsible for the normal administrative costs associated with this grant, including financial and reporting oversight provided by the Fire Department, as well as the Office of Management and Budget, and the Finance Department. There is no cash match requirement.

The City has applied for and has been awarded this grant in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011.

**STAFF:**

Adam K. Thiel, Fire Chief