



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** JANUARY 6, 2016

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

**FROM:** MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

**DOCKET TITLE:**

Consideration of a Grant Application to the Federal FY 2015 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG) Through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for Funding for Firefighter Training Classes.

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**ISSUE:** Consideration of a grant application to the Federal FY 2015 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG) through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for funding for firefighter training classes.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council:

- (1) Approve the submission of a grant application for \$249,137 in federal funding for firefighter training classes; and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to execute the necessary documents that may be required.

**BACKGROUND:** Last year, the Alexandria Fire Department (AFD) began implementation of a plan to move from single-role medics to a dual-role Firefighter/Medic capability. Dual-role providers have both Medic and Firefighter competencies, and will be able to staff any unit in the City. This staffing model is used by other surrounding metropolitan region Fire Departments. In the first year of transition, 10 medics have begun training or converted from single to dual-role.

The dual-role cross-training process will occur incrementally over the next several years, and requires additional funds for training interested personnel to become dual-role providers. Two of the base certifications required for medics looking to become cross-trained are the Virginia Firefighter I & Firefighter II certifications. Training relevant personnel to the Firefighter I and Firefighter II standards is a high funding priority for this year's AFG. Thus, AFD is requesting funds to conduct both Firefighter I and Firefighter II training classes for

personnel interested in transitioning to dual-role providers. If awarded, this grant will allow for 9 providers to enroll in a ten-week course. Upon completion of this course, personnel would receive Firefighter I and Firefighter II certifications.

Cross-training of both medic and firefighters allows for the maximization of current resources. Once this transition is complete, the number of Advanced Life Support (ALS) staff will increase, engines, ladders and the heavy rescue company will all be staffed with 4 persons, and AFD will be able to continue staffing the recently put in service engine at fire station 210 within the Department's current authorized position count.

**DISCUSSION:** Federal FY 2015 AFG application period opened on December 7, 2015 and will close on January 15, 2016. The purpose of the AFG program is to enhance the health and safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards by providing direct financial assistance to eligible fire departments for critically needed resources to equip and train emergency personnel to recognized standards, enhance operational efficiencies, foster interoperability, and support community resilience. Each year the AFG sets different priorities of how it will consider funding proposals. As previously mentioned, training for providers to receive Firefighter I & Firefighter II certifications is considered a high priority in this year's grant. This grant process is highly competitive.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** AFD is requesting \$249,137 of federal funding. The grant requires a 10% local cash match (\$27,682), meaning that a total of \$276,819 would be used for the purpose of the firefighter certification course. If awarded, this grant will allow for 9 providers to enroll in a ten-week course that will result in their receiving Firefighter I and Firefighter II certifications. The grant funding will pay for the instructor costs (\$30,142), training materials (\$11,101), and the overtime backfill to cover shift work of medics while they are in training for ten weeks (\$235,576). If awarded, Funding for the match would come from the City's annual Aid to Localities allocation from the Virginia Department of Fire Programs.

**ATTACHMENTS:** None

**STAFF:**

Robert Dubé, Fire Chief