ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of March 13, 2010

DATE: February 23, 2010

SUBJECT: Acceptance and appropriation of an Office of Commonwealth Preparedness public safety 2009 Interoperability regional grant.

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

1. Accept and appropriate $102,000 Interoperability regional grant in FY 2010 from the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness (101.364900) to the Fire Department (101.34401) for the development of a regional public safety interoperability technical blueprint.
2. Authorize the County Manager or her designee to sign the grant agreement when approved as to form by the County Attorney.

ISSUE: There are no issues with the acceptance of this grant.

SUMMARY: This is a continuation of the Interoperability grant that provides funds to develop a strategic communications interoperability plan for the Northern Virginia (NOVA) public safety agencies. Arlington is the recipient and steward of this grant on behalf of the public safety agencies in the region.

BACKGROUND: Significant investment has been made in NOVA information technology (IT) projects to strengthen public safety interoperable communications and all hazards capabilities. While advances have been made in voice interoperability, jurisdictional/agency IT environments include a vast array of technologies, systems and applications that can't communicate with each other. The department received a 2008 Interoperability regional grant that is being used to develop a roadmap for a comprehensive regional public safety interoperability framework that will align emergency support processes, IT software and hardware, local and wide area networks, people, operations and projects within the region. This is a continuation of that grant.

DISCUSSION: NOVA is comprised of the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park; counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William; and the towns of Dumfries, Herndon, Leesburg, Purcellville and Vienna. The NOVA region, covering 1,380 square miles with a population of two million people, is one of the most densely populated regions in the U.S. and has an estimated total infrastructure exposure of $181 billion. The region is vulnerable to a wide range of natural disasters (floods, tornadoes, hurricanes and winter storms); and with its proximity to the nation's capital is a high risk terrorist target area. Recent events have emphasized the urgent need for public safety agencies and other agencies including

County Manager: BMO/MTS
County Attorney: ceh
Staff: James Schwartz, Fire Department

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police, firefighters, transportation and public health to communicate reliably and effectively during a crisis.

This grant provides funding to develop an interoperability technical blueprint that will provide sound documentation of all public safety technology initiatives in the region, existing standards and standard operating procedures and define the process by which a detailed technology plan for supporting interoperable communications will be identified. This project will allow the consolidation and summarization of data on technical activities occurring across NOVA. With that picture, a more directed and focused technology plan can then be developed to link technology efforts across the region.

FISCAL IMPACT: The grant funds will be used to pay for consulting staff through a state contract to gather documentation of all public safety technology initiatives in the region and the development of a blueprint for achieving interoperable communications across the NOVA region ($101,719) and supplies ($281). No County funds will be required or used.