



## ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

### County Board Agenda Item Meeting of October 15, 2011

**DATE:** September 20, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Authorization and appropriation of Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force (NVRGTF) funds to purchase services from a contractor to continue the Adult Reentry Program.

**C. M. RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Authorize the County Manager to accept \$31,250 in non-competitive grant funds from the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force (NVRGTF).
2. Appropriate \$31,250 in grant funds from NVRGTF (101.374964) to the Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court (JDR) (101.20601) for costs associated with the Adult Reentry Program.

**ISSUES:** NVRGTF has allocated grant funds that it is making available to localities to support gang intervention and prevention efforts. No issues have been identified.

**SUMMARY:** The Steering Board of NVRGTF has allocated grant funds to be distributed to Arlington to contract with Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) to assist young adult offenders, age 18 to 35, who re-enter the community after incarceration.

**BACKGROUND:** Since 2005, Arlington has been a member of the NVRGTF, which uses federal grant money to coordinate prevention, intervention and suppression efforts at the local and regional levels. The NVRGTF has based much of its work on the Comprehensive Gang Model developed by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Office. It provides a research-based structure that local communities can use to confront and deal with the problem of gangs. There are five areas of focus: community mobilization, opportunities provision, social intervention, suppression, and organizational change and development.

In Arlington, the Gang Task Force is comprised of representatives from the Police Department, Sheriff's Office, Schools, Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources and the Court Services. Arlington's Gang Task Force has provided the arena for all stakeholders to collaborate to solve the gang problem by combining resources and breaking down barriers

County Manager:

County Attorney:

30.

Staff: Rick Strobach, Deputy Director, JDR Court Services Unit

Activities sponsored by the Gang Task Force have included suppression of gang activity, mentoring, counseling for youths and their family members, and local and regional soccer tournaments for at-risk and gang involved youth.

Although youth and families benefit from these services, there is a growing need to provide other services to young adults with similar needs. During the summer of 2010, JDR contracted with Arlington Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) to develop a pilot project for adult reentry, with \$4,800 of Gang Task Force funds. These funds were to be used between June and August 31, 2010. OAR met with stakeholders and referral sources to create a reentry program specifically targeted to clients at risk for continued gang involvement. This pilot project was extended to run between September 1, 2010 through August 31, 2011. A total of 27 offenders received targeted services to prevent further gang involvement after incarceration. At the end of the grant period, the overall recidivism rate for clients was 7.7%. This contrasts with a statewide recidivism rate of 44.1%. (based on the number of offenders who recidivated within the first year of release).

**DISCUSSION:** The Arlington Gang Task Force will use \$31,250 to contract with Arlington Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) restart the Adult Reentry Program, called Vita Nova, which ended at the end of the previous grant period. The FY12 grant period goes from October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012.

The program is designed to provide the means for ex-offenders with a history of gang affiliation and gang-related charges to focus on positive life goals and end their gang involvement. The ultimate goal for the initiative is that participants in the program find stable, sustainable employment and pursue educational opportunities, thus reducing the rate of recidivism. Gangs and ex-gang offenders will be assigned to an OAR case manager who will provide a structured and focused path to achieve individual goals.

All of OAR's existing reentry services will be accessible to the participants, including assistance with housing, employment, referrals to social services, and reconnecting to families and the community. Once enrolled in the program, staff will closely and pro-actively track progress based on a service plan and encourage clients to press towards interim and ultimate goals.

The Gang Task Force and OAR will to seek grant funding to supplement this program in FY12 and to continue services in FY13 and beyond.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** Under this award the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force will provide JDR with \$31,250 in grant funds, with no local match required, to be expended by September 30, 2012.