



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of September 15, 2012**

DATE: August 21, 2012

SUBJECT: Authorization for application and acceptance of a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant from the U. S. Department of Homeland Security.

C. M. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Authorize the County Manager or her designee to apply for the SAFER grant.
2. Authorize the County Manager or her designee to enter into an agreement(s) associated with this grant, subject to approval as to form of the agreement by the County Attorney.

ISSUES: Applying for a SAFER grant to fund 12 additional firefighter positions allows the Fire Department to have four person staffing with all companies as well as place a uniformed presence in the Emergency Communications Center at all times. The County would need to pay the full cost of these new positions after the two-year grant period.

SUMMARY: This is a grant to provide desired staffing levels on the remaining two front line fire apparatus (companies) currently staffed with only three firefighters and provide the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) with full time firefighters with operational experience. The SAFER grant funds salaries and benefits for two (2) years. Unlike SAFER grants in prior years, jurisdictions are not obligated to retain the SAFER grant funded positions after the conclusion of the granting period.

BACKGROUND: The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1710 identifies a minimum staffing level of four firefighters on Engine, Rescue and Truck companies. Currently, the Department staffs 12 of its 14 companies with four Firefighter/EMT's. The fourth firefighter on these two remaining companies brings the department in compliance with NFPA 1710 and reaches the County Board goal to staff all front line companies with staffing levels of four Firefighter/EMT's.

County Manager:

BMD/mjs

County Attorney:

[Signature]

MNC

27.

Staff: Thomas Gardiner, Fire Department

The grant will also provide positions for assignment to the Emergency Communications Center (ECC). The Fire Department has determined the complex work of the ECC is improved with a uniformed presence in the center at all times. The operational understanding brought to the communications job by an experienced fire officer aids in decision making, resource allocations and communications support to field units. The Department proposes to use four positions from the SAFER grant to staff ECC with one person per shift.

DISCUSSION: The purpose of the SAFER grants is to award grants directly to fire departments to help increase the number of firefighters thus assuring communities have adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards. The department is proposing to apply for 12 full time Firefighter/EMT positions. Eight of these positions will be used to provide a fourth person on the two remaining companies currently staffed with only three personnel. The remaining four positions will be used to staff the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) with four full time fire department personnel.

FISCAL IMPACT: The grant fully pays for normal salary and benefit costs. Jurisdictions are responsible for the remaining costs associated with the additional positions which include personal protective equipment, physicals, transportation for the recruits while in training and overtime and callback once the recruits graduate. It is estimated that the County cost would be \$121,500 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 if Arlington County were to receive the full SAFER grant request. If Arlington County is awarded the SAFER grant, due to the timing of the grant notification and award (beginning fall 2012) it is recommended that the costs for FY 2013 be funded with one-time monies identified at close-out of FY 2012 or allocated from the County's General Fund General Contingent. County and grant funded expenses estimated for four years are shown below.

	Grant funded	County funded	Total
FY 2013	70,977	121,499	192,476
FY 2014	936,158	87,876	1,024,034
FY 2015	892,594	216,408	1,109,002
FY 2016		1,143,915	1,143,915