



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of December 15, 2007

DATE: December 15, 2007

SUBJECT: Virginia Department of Health Cooperative Agreement Increase

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

1. Appropriate \$21,000 from the 2008 Virginia Department of Health (VDH) (101.364101) to the Department of Human Services (101.55000) for public health services.
2. Reallocate 0.8 FTE from a permanent grant-funded position to a permanent County-funded position.
3. Authorize 0.2 FTE increase for a permanent County-funded position in the Department of Human Services (101.55301.) to provide rodent and mosquito control services.

ISSUES: Should \$21,000 be accepted and appropriated for specific activities? Should a 1.0 FTE increase in rodent and mosquito control services be approved?

SUMMARY: VDH contracts with Arlington County to operate a local public health department. VDH awarded \$3,106,637 for the FY 2008 Cooperative Agreement which is an increase of \$164,522 over the FY 2008 Cooperative Agreement revenue estimate. The increased revenue will be used to enhance public health services and fund a new Community Inspector position. The 0.2 FTE will be added to an existing 0.8 FTE, creating a full-time Community Inspector position to better respond to citizen complaints regarding rodents.

BACKGROUND: Arlington County became a locally administered public health department in July of 1998. Arlington County and VDH share the cost for mandated public health programs. VDH pays for its share via a VDH Cooperative Agreement.

DISCUSSION: Revenue from the FY 2008 Cooperative Agreement was estimated to be \$2,942,115. That amount was appropriated in the FY 2008 budget. The actual FY 2008 Cooperative Agreement award was \$ 3,106,637, an increase of \$164,522 over the FY 2008 Budget revenue estimate.

County Manager: _____

County Attorney: _____

Staff: Tom Maddox, DHS, Public Health Division

In FY 2006, as a result of the Local Public Assistance Cost Allocation Plan (LPACAP) revenue reductions, one Community Inspector FTE was eliminated. This has significantly reduced the time spent on activities to decrease rodent populations. The drop in prevention activities is likely to lead to a higher rodent population in the county. One additional Community Inspector FTE would allow Environmental Health Bureau to resume surveys of commercial and neighborhood areas, place bait stations, in addition to conducting more complaint investigation field visits.

The FY 2008 Adopted budget included full year funding for a 0.8 permanent grant-funded FTE (currently vacant) that was funded by the Mothers Resource Grant. Subsequent to budget adoption, Arlington County was informed that the Mothers Resource Grant would not be received in FY 2008. Since a full year expense appropriation has already been included in the FY 2008 budget, it is not necessary to appropriate the excess Cooperative Agreement revenue to fund the reallocated 0.8 FTE and the additional 0.2 FTE. The excess Cooperative Agreement revenue is sufficient to fund the new 1.0 FTE in FY 2008 and will replace the loss of revenue from the Mothers Resource Grant. In FY 2009, the Community Inspector position will be fully funded (\$80,816) by the ongoing increased revenue from the VDH Cooperative Agreement.

\$21,000 in new revenue VDH Cooperative Agreement revenue will be used to purchase new and replacement operating equipment for the following public health activities:

- \$8,000 to replace Environmental Health laptops used in restaurant inspections;
- \$2,500 for replacement of mosquito traps;
- \$1,500 for new lab furniture for Environmental Health Arbovirus program;
- \$500 for a television for training videos in School Health;
- \$5,000 for replacement of clinical equipment for Family Health services;
- \$1,500 for an additional computer at the Fenwick Center clinic; and
- \$2,000 to replace a laboratory refrigerator at 3033 Wilson Blvd.

The Rodent Control Unit was created in FY 2000 to centralize rodent control activities. The unit was housed in the Vector Control Program in the Environmental Health Bureau. There are three parts to an effective rodent control program: rat complaint investigation, neighborhood rat surveys and community education. In order to establish an effective rodent control program, at least 5.0 community inspector FTEs are necessary. Three community inspector FTEs were funded to focus primarily on rat complaint investigation. In FY 2006, one Community Inspector FTE was eliminated as part of LPACAP cuts.

The Vector Control Program field staff – two FTEs dedicated to rodent control and one FTE dedicated to mosquito control – are cross-trained to focus resources more appropriately during peak periods of mosquito and rodent activity. This includes insecticide spraying to control West Nile virus infected mosquito activity. While cross-trained staff are able to react during periods of peak rodent and mosquito activity, compensatory time earned by staff responding to acute situations (e.g., spraying for West Nile infected mosquitoes in a community with a human case of West Nile encephalitis) has significantly reduced the time spent on activities to decrease rodent populations, especially in the off-season months.

Staff receive over 650 complaints per year. The initial complaint investigation is addressed by phone through education and referral to the county website. More than half of these complaints required a visit to the consumer and 90 percent of these consumer visits required multiple follow up visits to achieve rodent control. In addition, staff present to approximately ten neighborhood groups on effective rodent control. Since the LPACAP cuts, staff have conducted limited to no neighborhood or commercial surveys (which take three to five days each) to deal proactively with rodent control. One additional Community Inspector FTE would allow us to resume surveys of commercial and neighborhood areas, place bait stations, in addition to conducting more complaint investigation field visits.

FISCAL IMPACT: In FY 2008, DHS received an additional \$164,522 from the Virginia Department of Health Cooperative Agreement. Of that amount, \$21,000 will be used to purchase new and replacement operating equipment in FY 2008 and the remaining revenue will be used to offset the loss of other grant revenue (described above) and reduce net tax support. In FY 2009, \$80,816 of these funds will be used to fund a full-time Community Inspector position.

The 1.0 FTE for this Community Inspector position will be created in FY 2008 through the re-allocation of a Public Health Nurse position (0.8 FTE) and the authorization of an additional 0.2 FTE. The 0.8 FTE portion of this position will change from a grant-funded position to a county-funded position (funded by the VDH Cooperative Agreement). However, this position will still be paid for by non-County funds and net tax support will not increase in order to fund this position. (Many positions in the Public Health Division are funded through the Virginia Department of Health Cooperative Agreement and are typically classified as County-funded positions.)