

Police Seek Additional Funding Through the 2009 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Local Formula Program

June 8, 2009

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Preliminary Application Narrative for Albemarle County, Virginia

Supporting More Community Policing

In keeping with the Justice Assistance Grant Program intentions for prevention and control of crime, Albemarle County plans to use these funds to support overtime activities for community policing projects and activities. Many of these activities and projects would not occur without this funding. Budgeting and funding for the Police Department is quite restricted due to the current economic climate.

Overtime is closely monitored and often restricted. In addition, staffing is short due to expanding needs for services and the shrinking of local government employment due to revenue shortfalls. Vacant positions generally become frozen positions.

One of the effects of this staffing shortage has been to eliminate the staffing within the Neighborhood Resources Unit of the Community Support Division and reassign the officers to Patrol. The problem solving projects and activities that had been the responsibility of this Unit ceased for the most part. Patrol Officers do what they can, but developing intervention strategies often requires coordination, focused effort for a considerable time, and follow-up. Now such special assignments require overtime funding. Problem solving, crime prevention and safety enhancement activities are the planned uses for these grant funds.

The County has used previous Justice Assistance Grants to provide the following community support projects and activities.

- Operation Safe Holiday with increased patrol, assistance and enforcement in shopping malls and high traffic areas from Thanksgiving to New Years;**
- Shop-with-a-Cop which has Officers, in collaboration with local merchants, having a meal and toy shopping with needy youngsters before Christmas;**
- Toy Lift to assist with the safety and collection of donated toys for needy children at a high profile community event;**
- The BOO House on Halloween that was constructed and staffed by Police personnel to thrill and sweeten the kids in a safe environment;**

- Several ongoing Neighborhood Coalitions including a trailer park, 3 Section 8 housing subdivisions, and a community of rural poverty, that bring together residents, community and government services, police, property managers and owners to improve the quality of life in these neighborhoods;
- Cultural Bridges Program to work with and educate both the police and the local Latino population about crime, crime prevention, laws and regulations, and community services;
- National Night-Out where groups of Police personnel visited several Neighborhood Watch get-togethers with equipment and K9 demonstrations along with educational literature;
- Bike Patrol activities in neighborhoods and shopping malls, at the County Fair, at Foxfield Horse Races, at parks and on walking paths, at parades and festivals, and bicycle rodeos;
- The SUD (Stop Underage Drinking) Campaign to increase alcohol education and enforcement among the 18 until 21 age group;
- Community Supervision Program for monitoring people on restricted probation or parole;
- Operation Spring Cleaning as a concerted effort to serve criminal warrants;
- Park Leash Law Enforcement to reduce the nuisance of loose dogs in County parks;
- Gun Violence Project working with ATF Agents to reduce the presence and use of illegal weapons in high incident areas;
- Southwood Safety Project to improve the safety and community resources available in a poorly maintained trailer park;
- Citizens' Police Academy to educate the citizenry about the police and police work;
- Working with apartment managers to provide training towards developing a neighborhood safety certification program with annual inspections;
- Operating DUI and traffic safety checkpoints to improve the safety on the roads; and
- Organizing and participating in numerous community events providing safety and prevention information and referrals along with equipment displays and demonstrations.

Such services will be diminished or ended without supportive external funding such as this grant program.

We welcome any comments or questions about this preliminary application for the use of these grant funds. Please contact Dr. Jonathon Earl with the Albemarle County Police Department at 972-4036 or earlj@albemarle.org with any questions, comments or suggestions.