



Date: September 12, 2019

To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager
Through: W. Bowman Ferguson, Deputy City Manager
From: Robert Zoldos III, Fire Chief
Subject: Duke Energy Storm Resiliency Grant Award

Executive Summary

In June 2019, the Durham County Emergency Management department (DCEM) applied for the Duke Energy Storm Resiliency grant on behalf of the Durham Fire Department (DFD). In August 2019, DCEM was notified that they were awarded a storm resiliency grant in the amount of \$25,000. The Duke Energy Storm Resiliency grant is intended to provide equipment, supplies, and materials for the DFD Swift Water Rescue Program in that it will place needed personal protective equipment on each primary response apparatus within the Fire Department.

Recommendation

The Fire Department recommends that City Council adopt the Duke Energy Storm Resiliency Grant Budget Ordinance in the amount of \$25,000.

Background

In June 2019, DCEM applied for the Duke Energy Storm Resiliency grant on behalf of the DFD. Only three DFD Fire Stations have the equipment required to safely perform water rescues. In August 2019, DCEM was notified that they were awarded a storm resiliency grant in the amount of \$25,000. The Duke Energy Storm Resiliency grant is intended to provide equipment, supplies, and materials for the DFD Swift Water Rescue Program in that it will place needed personal protective equipment on each primary response apparatus within the Fire Department. This grant will provide the equipment needed for trained firefighters on the first arriving apparatus to immediately begin water rescue operations.

Issues and Analysis

The Duke Energy Storm Resiliency Grant was established to help North Carolina communities increase their response capabilities for future severe weather events with advance preparation and planning.

The Storm Resiliency Grant included projects that focused on:

- Specialized training for first responders for severe weather scenarios
- Organized planning initiatives for communities to prepare for extreme weather

- Equipment necessary for severe weather rescues to preserve human life
- Community storm preparedness trainings, materials, kits or shelters
- Emergency communication tools for severe weather scenarios
- Improved outcomes for low-income communities experiencing extreme weather

The Fire Department intends to use these grant funds to purchase personal protective equipment (PPE) to place on each fire apparatus within the department as an enhancement of our Swift Water Program.

The Swift Water Program is a subset of the Technical Rescue Program. The Technical Rescue Program provides specialized rescues that may involve high/low angle, trench, swift water, vehicle, structural collapse, and confined space rescue emergencies. The Swift Water Program conducts search, rescue, and recovery operations for humans and animals in swiftwater, swiftwater/flood, stillwater, and stillwater/flood environments.

The Fire Department's Swift Water Team consists of 50 firefighters who are trained to locate, rescue, and recover missing, stranded, or lost persons along the waterways within our city. This team is also trained to aid neighboring jurisdictions during a crisis regardless of the conditions or terrain.

The Swift Water Team:

1. Searches for and rescues individuals who may be injured or in need of medical attention;
2. Provides emergency medical care including Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Life Support (ALS);
3. Transports humans and animals to the nearest location for secondary air or land transport;
4. Provides shore-based and boat-based water rescue;
5. Provides animal rescue;
6. Supports helicopter rescue operations and urban SAR in water environments;
7. Operates in environments with or without infrastructure, including those with compromised access to roadways, utilities, transportation, and medical facilities, and with limited availability of shelter, food, and water.

Although other firefighters may have the required training, or could be trained to perform water rescues, they do not have the required equipment to perform those rescues until the swiftwater rescue team arrives. This grant will provide the equipment needed for trained firefighters on the first arriving apparatus to immediately begin rescue operations.

Alternatives

City Council could choose not to accept the Duke Energy grant.

Financial Impact

The Duke Energy grant will provide the Fire Department with \$25,000 to purchase equipment for the Swift Water Program.

Equal Business Opportunity Summary

This is a grant award that was not reviewed by the Equity & Inclusion Department for compliance with the Ordinance to Promote Equal Business Opportunities in City Contracting.

Attachments

Grant Award Letter

Grant Budget Ordinance