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NEWS RELEASE

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES FUNDING FOR THE CITY OF ARBYRD'S POLICE DEPARTMENT

On Thursday, May 29, 2008, the City of Arbyrd was presented with a mock check in the amount of \$7,562.00 from USDA Rural Development. The mock check represents the funding awarded to the City to assist in the purchase of a police vehicle.

U.S. Senator Kit Bond stated, "The new police car and equipment is crucial to the protection of Arbyrd residents and the police officers who risk their lives to protect them. I commend the Arbyrd community and the USDA Rural Development staff for their hard work in making this project a reality."



Pictured left to right: Representative Terry Swinger; Phyllis Minner, Rural Development; Ben Dyer, Senator McCaskill's Office; Mitch Skelton, Police Chief; Pam Anglin, Rural Development; Erma Branum, City Clerk; and Lonnie Dale Gibson, Jr., Mayor

"Police officers who put their lives on the line for Missourians should not end up in dangerous situations because of improper equipment," said U.S. Senator Clair McCaskill. "I'm pleased this federal funding will help the City of Arbyrd's finest get the right equipment to do their job."

The City of Arbyrd serves approximately 528 residents within their 10-square mile area, with a lot of pass-through travelers going from Missouri into Arkansas. The police department's only vehicle was recently involved in a collision and is no longer operable. Therefore, the officers have been forced to use their personal vehicles to respond to calls. The risk to the officer's safety is greatly increased without a properly equipped vehicle and the risk to others when responding to a call is also escalated. The funding provided by Rural Development has allowed the Police Department to purchase a 2005 Ford Crown Victoria police car complete with the basic police package. The officers will use this as their primary vehicle when responding to calls in Arbyrd.

"Our law enforcement officers need properly-equipped vehicles to keep them, and our citizens, safe. In rural areas, we can be especially hard on our police vehicles, so I am glad that this program will make a cruiser available to the first responders in Arbyrd. Rural Development has identified a way to make an investment in Arbyrd which will have a huge benefit to the community and to the officers on the force. I appreciate their involvement in this program and their support for the folks in the Eighth District who make public safety their priority," said U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson.

The funding for the vehicle is provided through USDA Rural Development's Community Facilities (CF) Program. In addition to police vehicles, the CF loan and grant program also provides funding to help rural communities finance essential community facilities, health services, and the purchase of equipment which will provide vital services to rural residents. Some examples include financing an ambulance, warning sirens, fire-fighting equipment, jaws-of-life, rescue vehicle, 911 dispatch center, justice center, abuse center, public safety building, medical clinics and hospitals.

Mayor Lonnie D. Gibson, Jr., said, “I would like to thank the staff of Dunklin County Rural Development for all the hard work and commitment to the small towns in this area. I would like to extend a special thanks to Tresia Webb for the work ethic she always puts forth. I am deeply grateful for Rural Development and also the hard working employees of the City of Arbyrd. I would encourage all towns and cities to contact your local Rural Development office to take advantage of the programs they have to offer.”

“The intent of the CF program is to assist rural communities with financial packages to enhance the quality of life for rural Missourians,” said Morris Westfall, Missouri Rural Development State Director. “Missouri Rural Development was very fortunate last year to have the opportunity to provide over \$11,200,000 in CF loans and grants. We are proud to be able to assist the City of Arbyrd’s Police Department with a reliable vehicle for the protection and safety of the residents.”

USDA Rural Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life in rural communities. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development has invested over \$76.8 billion since the beginning of the Bush Administration to provide equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure.

Further information regarding any of the USDA Rural Development programs is available by contacting the Kennett Rural Development Office at tresia.webb@mo.usda.gov or by calling 573-888-2536, ext. 4. Rural Development’s web site is: www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo.

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