

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Washington County, Florida
Special Board Meeting
1331 South Blvd., Chipley, FL 32428

DISTRICT 1 Alan Bush	DISTRICT 2 Charles Kent	DISTRICT 3 Tray Hawkins Chairman	DISTRICT 4 Todd Abbott Vice-Chairman	DISTRICT 5 Steve Joyner
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I. PROCLAMATION

- A. Call to Order – Chairman Hawkins
- B. Invocation/Pledge – Jeff Massey offered the invocation, which was followed by the pledge.

The Washington County Board of County Commissioners met for a special board meeting at 9:00 a.m., on Friday, March 2, 2018.

Present were Chairman Hawkins, Vice-Chairman Abbott, and Commissioners Bush, Kent, and Joyner. Also present were Jeff Massey, County Administrator, Attorney Milton, Fuqua & Milton, PA – County Attorney, Shawna Faison, Executive Assistant to Lora C. Bell, Clerk, and Risha Brantley, Deputy Clerk.

Chairman Hawkins advised the purpose of the special called meeting is for the board to fund the sheriff’s office to put (3) three additional school resource officer at the schools.

II. ADOPT THE AGENDA – **Commissioner Bush offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kent and carried to adopt the agenda.**

- III. NON-AGENDA AUDIENCE - Effective October 1, 2013, Florida Statute 286.0114 mandates that “members of the public shall be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a proposition before a Board or Commission.”

Each individual shall have three (3) minutes to speak on the proposition before the Board.

IV. AGENDA ITEMS

- School Resource Officers

Joe Taylor, Superintendent of Washington County Schools addressed the board. The school board receives \$109,000.00 in school safety funds. The school board pays the sheriff's office \$125,000.00.

He expressed concern about the funding source.

Chairman Hawkins advised that the sheriff has provided a figure of \$72,000.00/\$73,000.00 for the cost to fund the school resource officer positions throughout the remainder of the school year.

The board is willing to implement those funds today. If the funding is not approved through the state agency the issue will be readdressed during next year's budget process. The current budget year ends September 30.

Mr. Taylor advised that school ends May 31 and the school board's budget year begins July 1.

He expressed his excitement as well as concern from the school district in the event the funding is pulled in the future by the board.

He requested a commitment from the board that the (3) entities will continue to work together.

Chairman Hawkins as well as Commissioner Bush spoke on continuing to support the expense of the school resource officers.

Mr. Taylor expressed concern about the unknown funding coming from the state as well as to which entity will receive the funds.

There has been discussion that the school boards safe school monies may be increased, advising that he is not obligating the safe school monies because there are other needs that must be addressed, which include cameras and additional security.

Chairman Hawkins advised Mr. Taylor that it is his understanding that the funds will come through the safer schools. The hope is that the resource officers would be a priority and that would alleviate the commissions funding source if the monies were implemented.

Mr. Taylor advised that he does not know that he can tell the board in addition to what is taken from their general fund if the funds can withstand the addition of (3)three; there is the question of the technical college being a public school.

He cannot obligate anything.

Commissioner Kent advised that he supports the board funding the expense currently as well as in the future. He is willing to continue the funding from the board if the plan does not come through or work out.

Commissioner Joyner advised that he would like to know the needs of the sheriff and the school board, commenting that the board is here to provide

support.

Mr. Taylor addressed the board. If the board's decision is being made upon if the governor increases the safe school monies the responsibility will shift back to the school board. That is a conversation that the school board needs to have.

He advised the board that he does not want any confusion between the school board and the board.

Chairman Hawkins advised Mr. Taylor that the board is comfortable continuing to cover the expense of the school resource officers.

Sheriff Crews advised that it is early and he expects mandates to be attached to the safe school funds.

Commissioner Abbott addressed Mr. Taylor. The current situation is an emergency and the board would like to fund the school resource officers whether it is on a permanent or temporary basis.

Mr. Taylor asked the board if they are obligating something that he does not have.

Commissioner Bush commented yes.

Chairman Hawkins advised the funding for the school resource officers will remain if it needs to stay in the county, unless the governor mandates the funds to be used to have a school resource officer in each school. Until that time, Washington County and the board is dedicated to funding the sheriff's

office to ensure that each public school in Washington County has a school resource officer.

Mr. Taylor clarified with the board that if the funds from the state come with options, the board expects the funds to be used to fund (6) six school resource officers.

If he has an option to use a portion of the funds for cameras, additional fencing, and more controlled access and his hands are tied because he has a respect back to the board to fund (6) six school resource officers, he does not want that disagreement between the (2) two entities.

County Attorney Milton clarified that the school resource officer is based on an annual contract, which would mean it is an issue that would have to be discussed every year.

Continued discussion was held by Commissioners Bush, Kent, Hawkins, Abbott, and Joe Taylor.

Chairman Hawkins advised Mr. Taylor that he has held previous discussions with each of the school board members who had the same sentiment; understanding the importance of having a school resource officer at each of the schools.

Chairman Hawkins advised Sheriff Crews to put the school resource officers on and the board will support it, providing the funding as he sees fit for the school resource officers.

Sheriff Crews advised the board the positions have been advertised in

house, with (3) three deputies indicating they would like the positions.

Currently there are (6) six K – 12 schools with the locations being in Vernon and Chipley, in which (3) three deputies are between. It is currently unknown where the technical school falls and the W.I.S.E. program is its own entity. Depending on the mandates (7) seven resource officers may be required.

Commissioner Bush offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Joyner and unanimously carried to utilize \$80,000.00 from the franchise fees to secure the funds for the sheriff's department for school resource officers through the county's fiscal year, which will be readdressed at the next budget.

- V. **ADJOURN – Commissioner Kent offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bush and carried to adjourn.**

Deputy Clerk Brantley

Date Board Approved