



Town of Dumfries
Council Meeting

Meeting Date:

April 2, 2013

Agenda Item#

VIII - A

AGENDA ITEM FORM

TYPE OF AGENDA ITEM:

- CONSENT AGENDA
- PRESENTATION
- ACTION ITEM
- TOWN MANAGER & STAFF COMMENTS
- PUBLIC HEARING
 - Duly Advertised

PURPOSE OF ITEM:

- INFORMATION ONLY
- DISCUSSION ONLY
- DISCUSSION AND/OR DECISION
 - Introduction Resolution
 - Ordinance Grant/MOU
 - By Motion Bylaws
 - Certificate

PRESENTER: Robert E. Forker, Jr.

PRESENTER TITLE: Chief of Police

AGENDA ITEM: School Resource Officer Guidelines

BACKGROUND / SUMMARY:

On February 5, 2013, the Town Council directed the police department to place a school resource officer at Dumfries Elementary School. The attached document outlines the initial role of that officer in the school.

ATTACHMENTS:

Memo

REQUESTED ACTION:

NO ACTION REQUESTED

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Name: Robert Forker

Phone#: 703.221.1111

E-mail: rforke@dumfriesva.gov

FOR USE DURING MEETING

VOTE: PASSED

NOT PASSED

Y	N		Y	N		Y	N	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brewer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Foreman	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Forrester
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reynolds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toney	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Washington
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wood						



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March 25, 2013

TO: Town Council

THRU: Daniel E. Taber
Town Manager

FROM: Robert E. Forker, Jr
Chief of Police

RE: Update/Frame Work - School Resource Officer

The purpose of this memorandum is to update you on the progress of the new School Resource Officer (SRO) position and provide you with an outline of how I see this position progressing. With no other area jurisdictions having taken steps to implement a full time officer position in an elementary school, we will be moving forward in uncharted areas.

Prior to discussing the role of the SRO, I want to encourage everyone to remember the objective of the SRO is to provide extra security and provide a more rapid response to incidents that might occur at the Dumfries Elementary School. It is the Town's intent to protect our most precious resources, our children, and provide a safer environment where children can focus on what is occurring in the classroom, not outside of the classroom.

I bring to your attention a recent study conducted by Professor J. Peter Blair of the Texas State University. In reviewing Active Shooter Events (ASE) that occurred between 2000 and 2010, he found they had increased from one (1) in 2000 to twenty-one (21) in 2010. Most disturbing is 34% of all ASE's occurred in a school environment.

Officer Renee Moody has been selected to be the Dumfries Police Department SRO. Officer Moody has been with the police department since October 2010 and is second in officer seniority. She has been highly visible in the community and as such, she is known and well respected in the residential and business communities.

Officer Moody just successfully completed her initial School Resource Officer Training. This training was conducted March 25-28, 2013, at the Chesterfield County Police Department Training Academy.

The Dumfries SRO program should focus on four (4) different areas. The G.R.E.A.T. program, D.A.R.E. program, personal interaction and community outreach. I will discuss each area.

Page Two

Update/Frame Work - School Resource Officer

G.R.E.A.T program – This program, Gang Resistance Education and Training, is described as a evidence based and effective gang and violence program built around school based, law enforcement officer – instructed classroom curricula.

For the past two years, the police department has conducted its “Dumfries Police Department Kids Academy.” Officers, including instructors from the Northern Virginia Gang Task Force who conducted instruction, have been surprised at the vast knowledge 5th graders attending the Academy have in the area of gangs. They know the gang signs, gang colors and some have even been approached by gang members.

I feel this would be an excellent opportunity to reach out to these children at a young age and provide them with options and alternatives to help them avoid the violence associated with gangs. Providing children with problem solving techniques and avoidance measures allow for the possibility of another avenue for them to travel.

D.A.R.E. program – This program, Drug Abuse Resistance Education has been around for decades. Wikipedia defines D.A.R.E. as

“The D.A.R.E. program enables students to interact with police officers or sheriffs in a controlled, safe, classroom environment. This helps students and officers meet and understand each other in a friendly manner, instead of having to meet when a student commits a crime, or when officers must intervene in domestic disputes and severe family problems. The Surgeon General reports that positive effects have been demonstrated regarding attitudes towards the police.

It is also an important tertiary crime and violence prevention education program. The D.A.R.E. program cites cases where assertiveness and self-defense education helped prevent students from being harmed. D.A.R.E. officers also help schools when children are threatened, and their presence helps alleviate concerns about situations like school shootings and other threats of violence to children while at school.”

As with G.R.E.A.T. I feel this would be an excellent opportunity to reach out to these children at a young age and provide them with options and alternatives to help them avoid substance abuse. Children are confronted with opportunities, almost on a daily basis, from peer pressure to try different substances. Even within a child’s home, their parents alcohol and prescription drugs can offer a tempting dilemma. Again, providing children with problem solving techniques and avoidance measures allow for the possibility of another avenue for them to travel.

Personal Interaction – The G.R.E.A.T. and D.A.R.E. programs are designed to target youths in the 4th and 5th grades. This leaves a void in the SRO’s ability to interact with children in the kindergarten through 3rd grade levels.

Page Three
Update/Frame Work - School Resource Officer

This interaction will be conducted by having the SRO on site when the children arrive and depart for the day. There is also an expectation the SRO be on hand during selected times when the children are eating lunch in the cafeteria. In addition, the SRO will be encouraged to spend time, whether in the library or classroom reading to the children and interacting. I would expect the SRO to be able to go to the classrooms to discuss other safety concerns such as Halloween safety, latch key safety and playing safely in the community.

Community Outreach – There are times when school will be out of session (holidays, winter break, spring break, summer break, etc.). Use of this down time will be utilized to reach out to the community in ways that are viewed as positive. Programs to include bicycle safety, children car seat safety, mentoring through Dumfries Cares and visibility in our local parks will allow our youth to view a police officer in a positive and informal manner.

The police department's intent is to encourage the SRO to limit the use of annual leave to periods of time when school is not in session. This holds true to scheduling in-service training. However, there will be times when mandatory training dates and times are dictated and not within the department's control. In addition, there will be days when the SRO has Court commitments, takes sick leave or when other personal emergencies occur that will take the SRO out of the school.

It is the police department's intent not to staff a police officer at the school when the SRO is not available. To staff an officer on days when the SRO is not present would take needed coverage off of the streets.

I offer the above plan as a blue print for the SRO position. Suggestions and comments are welcome and serious discussions must take place as a result of your input. You must be cognizant that any individual ideas and suggestions that alter the general guidelines of any program must be general in nature. Parents will have the ability to "opt" their children out of any program we develop. It is imperative we ensure as many children as possible are able to interact with the SRO and see the officer as a positive that could be emulated and respected.

The attached chart contains possible dates for the necessary classes the SRO will need. Although, the SRO has been enrolled in these classes, the SRO will not be admitted without a signed letter from the school showing support and permission to teach. This paperwork is currently in possession of the school and I am waiting for their response.

Submitted for your information and consideration.

Attachment

PROJECTED TIME LINE

SCHOOL	DATE	COST ESTIMATE
School Resource Officer School	March 25 - 28, 2013	\$135
G.R.E.A.T	April 22 – May 1, 2013	\$520
D.A.R.E.	July 22 – August 3, 2013	\$1,800
Bicycle Safety	TBA	\$0
Car Safety Seat Inspections	July 1 - 5, 2013	\$0