

The following meeting was neither audiotaped nor video recorded.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Meeting to Discuss SRO Officer  
Monday, 29 June, 2015, 10:00 am  
Town Hall Selectmen's Meeting Room

TOWN CLERK  
BY  
DIGHTON, MA

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Meeting called to order by Chairman Cronin at 10:10

In attendance were, Kevin Braga (School principal), Dean Cronin, Matthew Tanis, Chief Mac Donald, Sergeant Cronin, Catherine Antonellis and Karin Brady (administrative assistant).

Chairman Cronin says that Katherine had sent him an email requesting a meeting to go over the specific parts of some MOAs or MOU's from other districts. He asks her if she would like to begin. Katherine begins by saying that she has sort of a template or a compilation of other agreements and we could probably just start with a general conversation and just incorporate what you think is necessary.

Chairman Cronin says I have asked Jen and Mary to be here for any questions that may arise.

Chairman Cronin asks Katherine to start.

Katherine says she thinks that this agreement, we could work out something and then August will be our first meeting. In the meantime we can have a general understanding of where we are going. She would like to know, about the position, the pay, benefits and the schedule of payments. She says she has been in agreements before where it is roughly September to June is the obligation of the School District to provide you with however you want to design the payments to the town and incorporate the gross plus the benefits that will be included. And then the other....you know make it a 10-12 split. The other time would be the obligation of the town to take on the responsibilities because now the officer would not be utilized by us at all during the summer months.

Kevin Braga says just to add that one of the things that is different in this agreement is fact that the Statement of Purpose on the first page indicates that the School Resource Officer may also provide instruction not to exceed 45% of the day. This is unique to our situation because we are trying to get a Criminal Justice, a Chapter 74 Program approved at the High School. The reason for the percentage is because anything under 50% is not teachers union, so that is the reason, for the 45% figure, to keep the two entities separate.

Chairman Cronin says it is a lot to go over and then asks the chief if he has any questions. Chief MacDonald asks if I take an officer from my department, and he goes there for the year is it \$65,000.00 Catherine Antonellis says I think its 35,000.00 Kevin Braga says he thinks it's fifty. Catherine Antonellis says that was just a guess not knowing the level of the officer.

Chief MacDonald says I have 9 full timers and if one goes to the school I am now short a man. Do I or the town hire another officer to fill that spot? Is this a one year deal, or will the school deny after one year?

Catherine says she will put in three years. She adds she doesn't get the feeling from the School Committee that this is a short term relationship.

Chief MacDonald says I am now short, so do I hire another full time and where does my money come from?

Catherine says we will be covering the salary of a fulltime person for 10 months. So that would be the decision of the town whether they would like to finance the other two months to fulfill the need.

Kevin Braga asks how the policeman are scheduled – is it 225 days.

Chief MacDonald says salary is about \$59,000.00. Jen Luiz says plus health insurance. Mary Hathaway adds that health is \$16,722.00 for a family plan, \$6,390.00 for an individual.

Kevin Braga asks chief how many weeks of vacation they get.

Chief MacDonald says 1 week after six months, 4 personal days a year and sick time.

Kevin Braga says school is forty weeks.

Chief MacDonald says so after the school year I will get him back and I will have to determine what to do with him, and how about school vacations, does he use vacation time?

Catherine says this is your employee. We are just hiring him. You would have to coordinate that.

Chairman Cronin says I think what he means is that we can't pay the officer twice for the same workweek.

Does our salary cover him during vacations?

Catherine says you will be paying him, all I will be doing is cutting the check. She says just like you providing outside services. Just like any other time.

Chief MacDonald says we are looking into if you can do it that way.

Catherine says all the others do it that way, Somerset, Berkley. She says 10 months will be about \$63,000.00 to pay an officer at the \$59,000.00 level. She says we are contracting with you to provide us an officer. You provide the benefits.

Jen Luiz says so what happens if the individual has four weeks of vacation? If he takes it, are you expecting another officer?

Catherine says if it were just strictly a resource officer that was just overseeing security, then that would not be a problem, but since we are asking this individual to provide teaching, then we need to have this conversation. Again, he is your employee. If an emergency happens you have every right to pull that individual to do what is necessary.

Sergeant Cronin asks so if the officer needed to take some time off, would you replace the officer with a sub for the teaching portion?

Kevin Braga says it is the first year, we are going to see how things go. If it were an emergency, we would have to get a substitute.

Sergeant Cronin says we are pretty flexible with taking our time, but it could happen. So I don't want to be blindsided, but it could definitely happen. But you can't say no, you cannot.

Kevin Braga says well I think it should be mentioned. We are aware that this person is not going to be there for one hundred and eighty days.

Sergeant Cronin says curriculum-wise does he have to be replaced with an officer or can it be a sub.

Catherine Antonellis says on the teaching end of it, we can fill that with a substitute. But the individual would have to understand we are trying to prevent that. We do not expect you to pull another officer off of a shift to sit at the school – That's not what we want.

Sergeant Cronin asks Jenn if invoicing at the end is going to be okay.

Jen Luiz says in talking with the auditor, there are a few ways it can be done. Chief can pay the wages out of his budget. The only thing is that he can't pay for the officer to replace this person. We can also tap the assessment account numbers. When Mary gets the assessments we can send it minus the amount that we have paid out. That way his budget doesn't get hurt. Her budget we don't have to fund more money.

Catherine Antonellis says I don't think that we can do it that way. I want a clean line. I'm not sure, but we can work that out.

Jen Luiz says otherwise that town will have to raise and appropriate more money to fund these budgets.

Chief MacDonald says if I am going to take the money out of my budget. I want to know that I am going to get the money back.

Sergeant Cronin says the biggest thing is figuring out the money transfer.

Chief MacDonald says my issue is taking a guy off the force. I want to see this happen, but I need to make sure that the town is properly covered. I'm short. How do I put a body in that position? If this were a thirty man department, this would have been done already.

Chairman Cronin says you will just need to sell it to the people. Which won't be a problem. This has nothing to do with what we are agreeing upon here. It's legit. You can't decrease the size of your department. You will have to put more people on. This agreement has nothing to do with the people.

Kevin Braga asks for clarification.

Chairman Cronin says we will not have an answer until next town meeting or special.

Catherine Antonellis asks if there is any way that we could utilize an officer for courses until that time.

Kevin Braga says we have a time crunch to get Chapter 74 approved because of the teaching aspect.

Jen Luiz says so you need someone before school even opens.

Kevin Braga says yes, to plan out the first couple of weeks. To plan course lessons.

Catherine says maybe we could be charged per day for this type of thing.

Chief MacDonald says that could work. Two classes?

Kevin Braga says yes two - one each day. Monday thru Friday.

Chief MacDonald says this would have to go out to bid, and he must have a bachelor's or above correct?

Kevin Braga says yes it helps with Chapter 74 process.

Catherina Antonellis says that is not a problem for us financially. We have is budgeted. We could be charged per day on the individual that is teaching. We could cover that almost like a detail. Or if necessary I could run by school committee and Dr. Azar for the school year for the educational aspect then you have the year to figure out your budgets and such.

Chairman Cronin says bottom line is security. We do it right or not at all. We need to figure how to get it done until then. What would be the deadline for getting it done?

Catherine says it would just be having a MOU in operation.

Kevin Braga says we are at the town's discretion but two weeks before would be a good time for me to sit down with that person to establish a curriculum.

Chairman Cronin says let me work on that part.

Sergeant Cronin says with regard to the union, you are talking about two different things. A temporary assignment and a new position. He says we will work on that. Also, he thinks the number on that is arbitrary, because we have people on the force with masters and also with bachelors. It depend on who gets the job. I don't know who this will be open to.

Sergeant Cronin says he likes the three year stint. It gives them ownership and some consistency regarding planning and budgeting. One thing Kevin and I talked about is responsibilities to the other schools in town if we have an SRO - it will be an SRO - they will be dedicated to the high school of course, but if something arises we are proponents of that. Second, I know administratively you have a lot more discretion than we do, but there are instances where a search and seizure may have to happen because of safety. Being in your house, I get it, you guys can ask for a search anytime you want with reasonable suspicion. Basically, if the officer deems it necessary due to probable cause, it will be done. I would rather not have the probable cause language in there. It severely limits a lot of things.

Catherine says what if we have an excerpt of the General Law, very general so that neither one of us gets into a situation.

Sergeant Cronin says as long as it is within the scope of the Mass General Law. I just don't want to have limiting language. That is really all that I saw.

Kevin Braga says on the term, we will change the term to three years, and once we know who the individual is, we can put in salary.

Catherine says how about not putting in the amounts at all. How about "salary and benefits"

Sergeant Cronin says I agree with Katherine. There will be a lot of communication that needs to happen between the officer and Kevin.

Catherine says we fully expect to tap this individual for ALICE training in schools, but we are also looking into other avenues as well in the way of security and such for the school and how to secure our buildings.

Sergeant Cronin says a camera is a good place to start. Basically on our end we need to figure out – I think we work 1941 hours a year.

Kevin Braga says the teachers are paid 184 days a year. It's not hourly.

Sergeant Cronin says so 1288.

So the net is 653 hours, so about 17.5 weeks based on 37.333 hours/week.

On days that there is a holiday or school cancellation.  
Jen Luiz says most of the holidays will fall on Monday

Chief MacDonald says, so he is there Monday thru Friday, is that a forty hour week.

Sergeant Cronin says so whoever takes this will lose 2.5 hours of pay per week.

Selectman Tanis says they could use the extra hours for added security, for sports or whatever. Getting kids in an out of school.

Catherine says we will make the hours match, whatever is necessary.  
Katherine says so you need 37.333 hours? Does that include the half hour lunch or is that on top.

Jen says that is included.

Sergeant Cronin says the person who is interested is on vacation the last two weeks in August.

Kevin Braga says before that is better.

Sergeant Cronin says the problem that we will have is who will it be open to?

Jen Luiz asks if it has to be a Bachelor's degree. You mentioned it would be best to have a Bachelor's Degree.

Kevin Braga says the more education they have, the easier it is to get it approved.

Chief says wasn't Somerset fifteen years of experience?

Kevin answers no it was four years.

Kevin Braga says minimum of four years of experience to even talk about getting the program certified. Baseline is four years working. Absolutely. To get the program certified.

Sergeant Cronin says, then after that it doesn't matter. This first year is critical.

Kevin Braga says yes it is and then after that the program will pay for itself. Everybody wins. He asks if there is anything else in the language that needs to be modified doesn't sit well. All I have so far is under Section 7 Search and Seizure to revise to a more general scope to reference Mass General law and remove probable cause. In Section 10 to amend the 1st part, Part A from 1 to 3 years and Part B to include salary and benefits.

Catherine says yes salary and benefits and take out the money, because it could fluctuate.

Sergeant Cronin says 6B- Trespassing – He says this is like walking a tightrope with the court. Unless there is an order in writing, it is very difficult for us to take anyone into custody.

Catherine says we will make changes. We will be going back and forth on this. We can make changes.

Chairman Cronin says how about Section 2A. The police department shall hire, assign and will train the SRO at their sole discretion. Are they going to get training from your aspect regarding the classroom stuff.

Kevin Braga asks if you would like the language to be changed to say that they will receive special development from the administration.

Sergeant Cronin says I wouldn't. I think it is fine.

Catherine says I take it as that is on the police end (training). We will take a look at that and see if we can change that to more specifically mention the police department.

Sergeant Cronin says 3C that's good, because each year we have three weeks of training. During that time you would not have that officer.

Kevin says we understand that the police department doesn't run on the school schedule.

Catherine says we will have to look at the hours on 3A. Whether that 7-2:30 meets the 37.333 requirement.

Sergeant Cronin asks Kevin if he wants to go over the roles.

(Everyone looks over the roles).

Kevin Braga says when this was created –I sat down with the Sergeant and the Chief. We understand that there will be some growing pains. At the end of the day, we are just looking for someone for support. Security at the school and ALICE training. We have started to look into cameras, we would like some input on that as well. In September he or she would be responsible to teach the classes-

Investigation and Collection Analysis. My support mechanism will be how to teach the children, and I will provide that resource. Mostly, just to be that resource or the kids. It's about opening the communication, and having that relationship with the police. We want the kids to feel safe going to the police. For the officer to have that open door policy. For them to have that conversation.

Chief MacDonald says that he agrees with Kevin on that. They used to hire a detail officer, but it was always a different face. It was good that there was an officer there. Some kids got along with this officer, and the next time it was a different face. Important to have the same face there every day, and someone that can deal with the kids and not push them around. You have to be able to work with the kids. If not, it's not going to work, especially at the High School level.

Jen Luiz has a question. At the parent events. Will those be overtime?

Kevin says no - it would be expected that they would attend.

Sergeant Cronin says it could be an offset. We talked about that before.

Kevin says it is not required, but it is to build that relationship with the parents as well.

Sergeant Cronin asks if the officer would be eligible to apply for any coaching positions.

Kevin Braga says yes, I would encourage that. That's when the relationships really develop.

Chief MacDonald says when events are there - it is not an SRO who works the event- It would be a union thing. They could bring that up.

Kevin Braga says no, just things during the day.

Sergeant Cronin asks Jen about the money thing. Can it be worked out?

Jen says there are a few different ways we can do it.

Jen says it would probably be monthly.

Catherine says so if you can give me the numbers once you figure out who it will be. I will need to present this to school committee. It will be coming in higher than my initial estimate.

Chief MacDonald says am I going to post this.

Sergeant Cronin says if it is a temporary assignment - you don't have to. He says the issue we have, is that the people who have a better shot at getting the position, may not have the education you need.

Chairman Cronin says if that is your job description, they have to fill the requirements.

Sergeant Cronin says that is not true. You can't do it.

Catherine asks if you need a certain level of requirements to be an SRO.

Selectman Tanis says not until you get to the teaching requirements.

Kevin says not necessarily the case. To meet the CTE requirements an associate's degree is needed. According to the policy from the State, Catherine says, there is a minimum requirement of an associate's degree and 4 years of experience.

Selectman Tanis says the education has to be in a related field.

Kevin says if we have to go for a waiver, the program would not be funded this year.

Two programs that I know have been certified, are with retired police officers.

Sergeant Cronin says you have criteria that needs to be met. That is not our criteria.

It will be seen as discriminatory. If they don't have that, they will not be able to apply for it. It's based on leadership, experience, training and the Chief's discretion. The way it is written now, education has nothing to do with how we assign jobs.

Sergeant Cronin says we need to figure if we need to post it, and the chief adds, And how to post it.

Catherine says you must know the Somerset Police Chief.

Chief MacDonald says I'll sit down with Shawn and figure out how we can do it.

Sergeant Cronin says it is all contractual; basis. If you don't follow the right protocol, you are subject to grievances.

Kevin says we will clean up the language. Do you want to set another meeting in July?

Chairman Cronin says let us get back in touch with you. See if they can clear up some contractual matters. Let me find out about from town counsel the pros and cons and if we are even allowed to have a special meeting.

(There is a discussion about budgets and funding).

Catherine says, then we are kind of on hold. We can clean up language for now.

Kevin says both sides are pretty excited about this opportunity.

Catherine says it would be nice to get this started, if even on a part time basis. It would be a feeling out process.

Chief MacDonald asks if Rehoboth covers Beckwith.

Catherine says no, not anymore.

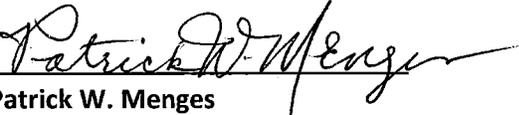
Kevin says at the ALICE training, we did a survey among the students and asked them what we can do to improve security within the school. Number one response from the students was to have a police officer in the school. The number two answer was security cameras.

Kevin Braga thanks everyone.

Meeting adjourned at 11:25 am.

Respectfully submitted

Karin L. Brady  
Administrative Assistant

  
Patrick W. Menges

  
Dean Cronin, Chairman

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Matthew W. Tanis, Member