

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 7, 2018 BOARD OF EDUCATION
CABOT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board President Dean Martin called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. Those in attendance were school board members Donna Nash, Brian Evans, Corey Williams, Sarah Owen and Marvin Jones. Board member Joe Trusty was absent. Also in attendance were Dr. Tony Thurman, Dr. Tammy Tucker, directors, community members, and media.

Cabot Police Chief Jackie Davis addressed the board regarding school resource officers (SRO). In 2017, it cost \$240,000 for 4 school resource officers, which the school district reimburses the city for 45% of their salaries. To add a new school resource officer, it would cost approximately \$101,000, which includes salary, vehicle, and equipment. The city is working on programs to possibly incentivize the SRO position.

SROs must still operate as a law enforcement officer while on school property, not as a school employee. They will certainly take recommendations from school administration, but ultimately they are still police officers.

Lonoke County Sheriff John Staley shared that a county-wide sales tax would fund a school security section through the sheriff's office. A concern was brought up as to how Cabot could be guaranteed to receive enough to fund the security needs of our district if using a sales tax. Sheriff Staley said a memorandum of understanding (MOU) would be created to dictate the funds that would be applied to the district's security needs. Sherriff Staley proposed 10 additional SROs would be added to the Cabot School District through the tax.


Based on 2016 information, a 1¢ sales tax would bring in \$7.4 million dollars a year. This would provide funds to increase personnel at the sheriff's department and provide some funding for the jail as well. If we wanted to just go for school security, a ½ ¢ sales tax could be requested.

Principal Henry Hawkins thanked Chief Davis for the increased patrol and coverage at the high school in the past weeks. Mr. Hawkins shared that he felt in increased number of SROs at the high school is imperative, and he recommends they patrol every building.


Dr. Thurman reviewed information provided to the board members. This information included a timeline for a millage election, current and proposed millage rates and collections, estimated security costs, proposed salary schedule, a list of long-term security projects, and an ad for a proposed millage campaign. A discussion then ensued as to whether a 1.5 millage increase would be enough to cover the necessary security upgrades. Board members discussed the options of a 1.5 millage increase, a 2.0 millage increase, or a county-wide sales tax.

The board asked Dr. Thurman to pull together a group of community members to discuss if they believe the community would support any of the proposed increases to fund security upgrades in the district. They also asked that recommendations be presented at the board meeting on March 13, 2018.

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.



President



Secretary