

City of Camanche-Special Meeting

June 27, 2018

The City Council of the City of Camanche, Iowa and the Camanche School Board met in special session June 27, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at the Camanche Community Center. Present on roll call: Mayor Willis, presiding, and the following named council members: Metzger, Varner, Campie, Weller and Brightman. Also present were City Administrator Andrew Kida, department heads Reid and Schneider.

The Camanche School Board roll call was performed by Business Director Roxanne Aude.

Mayor Willis led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Willis gave some background on the purpose of this special meeting. Mayor Willis and Superintendent Tom Parker started discussions about the potential of a School Resource Officer about two years ago. They have slowly brought the City Administrator and Police Chief into the discussions. Where we are with today's society, this is becoming a necessity everywhere. This meeting is a preliminary discussion.

City Administrator Andrew Kida introduced guest speaker, The Honorable Liandro Arellano, Jr., Mayor of Dixon, Illinois. Mayor Arellano talked about the incident itself and also Dixon before and after the incident that took place at Dixon High School in May. He stated that Dixon is a safe community and he owns several businesses there. They invest quite a bit in public safety. They are not the community where you expect to have a school shooting. Their high school is a building that is 80 or 90 years old that was not designed with modern life, technology or safety in mind with 20 doors. Their SRO is a fully sworn officer; just another member of the force. The school district pays a portion of the officer's salary during the school year. It was started with a grant then the city and the school district came up with the splits. That position has been in Dixon for a number of years. On the day of the incident there was a graduation practice. Officer Dallas was there but in polo, not dressed in tactical gear. He was in School Resource gear. In his regular day job, he did many trainings; he was not just there as an officer with a gun. He would do trainings and interactions with the students and teachers. They had a student that was pulled out of school due to a number of issues but was set to graduate with that class. He was coming to school; he had a right to be there and was buzzed in. He was carrying a long handgun under a hoodie. He went to the bathroom to get ready. At the same time, a teacher left the gymnasium where all the students were to get ice, went into the hallway at the time that student was coming out of the bathroom. They saw each other and the student started firing shots. A coach closed the gymnasium door and told the students to start running. The SRO was not in the gym and immediately came running to that hallway. He confronted the student who went running out the door and the SRO chased him and shot him in the shoulder, not fatally. Mayor Arellano feels blessed that due to timing, training and the presence of the SRO it ended the way it did. The mission is training, prevention; they run drills with teachers and students. After the incident, the teachers expressed appreciation for the training they had. Everyone did what they were trained to do. Since the incident, not much in terms of behavior has changed there, just a lot of appreciation shown for the SRO. Mayor Arellano talked about the costs associated with the SRO but when you look at events of a day like that it doesn't matter what the cost is.

Discussion among the School Board and Council members, Superintendent and Mayor followed. Superintendent Parker expressed appreciation for the council's willingness to discuss this. The SRO program is powerful and sets up communication between kids and police so they can interact. He has experience with previous districts with SRO programs. Principal Gonzales said she has worked with SROs at previous districts and having them helps to deescalate situations. She is grateful with the relationship the Police Department has with the schools.

Kida stated that safety has always been a focus of communities throughout history. As a 26-year police veteran who was on patrol quite a bit, Varner said that people trust a police officer they see every day. An SRO program Chief Reid said this is an opportunity to be a community policing entity and to be proactive. He worked with the SROs in Clinton and the program is positive. It is very positive and builds relationships with students and parents; we would see benefits all the way through. It is time to have this. If we can do anything to make it a safer environment, we should be doing it.

Mayor Willis said the preliminary ideas about funding include an even split for 9 months of the year with the total cost of a full time officer of approximately \$90,000 would mean the school share would be approximately \$33,750 with the city paying the rest. The SRO would be a city employee; a full time certified officer. We are coming together to see if this is feasible. Kida said this requires a 28E agreement. Chief Reid said special events at the schools would also be part of the SRO function. An SRO has specific training; they go to a specific national certified school to be certified as an SRO.

Superintendent Parker is pleased Camanche is willing to consider this. He sees it as a very good opportunity and positive all around. It is good for kids to see that police are there to help and is reassuring to have them there for kids, parents and school employees. We are investing in our community, in our kids and the future of Camanche. Metzger asked Superintendent Parker if this has ever been brought to the city's attention before and we as a city have missed it. He said no, funding is something we really need to look at. We are very fortunate to have a police force in our community with response times much greater than the average.

Mayor Willis stated that in the late 1990's or early 2000's, the City of Camanche was awarded a federal COPS grant but the City Council decided not to accept it. The COPS grant would have paid for a full time police officer for three years and the city had to guarantee for one or two years after that. The COPS grant is no longer available.

Metzger asked if we do ALICE training now. Chief Reid will be meeting at the high school tomorrow to discuss the training coming up for the next school year. The training continually evolves and we try to keep that going. There will be another complete ALICE training on August 22, 2018. Metzger also asked if we would be sending one or two officers to the specific SRO training and how the cost of training will be divided. Chief Reid said it would be one and the training is a national program and the officer would be certified. It also takes a special kind of officer to fill that role. The cost is about \$500 plus travel and hotel with a session in July and then October in Indiana.

Kida said the individual boards will meet next to authorize leaders to negotiate the terms of a 28E agreement. Mayor Willis stated each entity needs to also talk about funding. Chief Reid is looking into grants to help fund the program.

Director Morgan feels that principal people involved had some warning that something could happen in most cases. The counselors and the staff members that are involved with the students, is there a problem with HIPAA? Mayor Willis said there is an Iowa state statute that allows for information sharing between the school and the School Resource Officer. Kimberly Willis stated that while she worked with Lutheran Social Services she worked with a lot of the Clinton SROs. She could share information about the children with the SRO and the SRO could share information with her so they could each have a heads up if the children were going through difficult times. Judy Dell shared that her experience with SROs as a teacher saying that the SRO was often a confidant for students who did not have a stable family life. The SROs also talked to teachers about drugs, gangs and taught classes as well as providing support and protection. Donna Current said the children of today are dealing with many things we have never dealt with; there is help but people can't seem to get the help; what is one child's life worth?

Director Wolf asked about grant funding. Chief Reid said he is working on grants; the COPS grant is not funded this year but he is monitoring websites for options and applying for local grants. Tia Nauman asked about staffing levels at the Police Department. Chief Reid stated that we are authorized to go from 7 to 8 officers. The process for that is very lengthy, usually a year-long process. We currently have two new officers finishing up their 15 week field training and will be on solo patrol by mid-July. We also have an injury that has dropped our staffing level. He stated that the national average staffing level of 2.3 officers per 1,000 residents would be 10 without considering crime rate and demographics. Director Kinkaid asked if Reid envisions a current staff member applying. Chief Reid said a recent hire would not be his choice. The SRO needs to be a fit for both entities. The SRO wears so many hats and is the busiest person in the department. Mayor Willis said he thinks we should definitely have an SRO in place by next fiscal year but should be sooner if we could possibly do it. Weller asked if the SRO would be a 9<sup>th</sup> officer. Mayor Willis said that would be discussions the Council would need to have; he said from his perspective, absolutely. Additional discussion regarding staffing level took place.

At 8:02 p.m. the Mayor adjourned the meeting.

Trevor Willis, Mayor

Toni Schneider, City Clerk/Treasurer