Council Chamber | Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
4 So. Eagleville Road, Mansfield, CT

DRAFT MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
   Mayor Moran called the regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Council Chamber of the Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building.

2. **ROLL CALL**
   Present: Ausburger, Berthelot, Bruder, Fratoni, Freudmann, Kochenburger, Moran, Schurin, Shaiken

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
   Mr. Shaiken **moved** and Mr. Ausburger seconded to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2020 regular meeting as presented. Motion **passed** with all in favor except Mr. Bruder who abstained.

4. **OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS COUNCIL**
   Jim Mark, Olsen Drive, Chairman of the Region 19 Board of Education, spoke in favor of keeping the School Resource Officer (SRO) program. (Statement attached.)
   Janice Chamberlain, Perry Hill Road, Ashford, Region 19 Board of Education member, spoke in favor of keeping the SRO program. (Statement attached.)
   Elizabeth Peczuh, Timber Lane, Willington, Region 19 Board of Education member, stated support for keeping the SROs. (Statement attached.)
   Elizabeth McCosh-Lilie, Mansfield Road, Ashford, voiced support for keeping the SROs. (Statement attached.)
   Kimberly Christenson, Adeline Place, stated support for keeping the SROs. (Statement attached.)
   Anthony Paticchio, Waterfall Road, Ashford, Region 19 Board of Education member speaking on behalf of himself, urged the Council not to terminate the SRO agreement. (Statement attached.)
   Zachary Donald, Quail Run, Senior Class President at E.O. Smith High School, presented the Council with a petition to keep the SROs. (Statement attached. Supporting documentation will be included as a communication in the February 10, 2020 packet.)
   Martina Wharton, Bayberry Lane, asked the Council to approve a forty-hour senior transportation position.
   Tanya Maines, Spring Hill Road, parent and E.O. Smith High School employee, spoke in support of keeping the SROs. (Statement attached. Supporting

documentation will be included as a communication in the February 10, 2020 packet.)
Chuck Leavens, Highland Road, retired from E.O. Smith High School, spoke in favor of keeping the SROs and expressed concern over the discontinuation of the town's youth counseling referral services.
Judie Threatt, Birch Meadow Lane, Willington, voiced support for the SRO program.
Will Huey, Westwood Road, student at E.O. Smith High School, expressed surprise that SROs were hired, suggested more information is needed, and asked that the character of the SROs not determine whether they stay or go.
Zachary Scruggs, Thomas Drive, voiced concern over the SRO program. (Statement attached.)
Russ Wehner, Mount Hope Road, speaking as a citizen, spoke in support of keeping the SRO program.
Matthew Lisy, Mansfield Hollow Road, teacher at E.O. Smith High School, spoke in support of keeping the SRO program.
Mike Lynch, Coventry Road, questioned whether SROs make people safer and urged the Council to think more carefully about hiring them.
Erika Wiencenski, Adamec Road, Willington First Selectwoman, spoke in support of the SRO program. (Statement attached.)
Geoff Kern, Cemetery Road, representative of the E.O. Smith Teachers Union, voiced support for keeping the SRO program. (Statement attached.)
Mia Mitoma, Storrs Road, questioned the necessity of the SRO program. (Statement attached.)
Glenn Mitoma, Storrs Road, cautioned the Council on the effect SROs have on minority students.
Noah Vasington, Pudding Lane, student at E.O. Smith High School, voiced support for the SRO program.
Dave Tanner, Auburn Road, West Hartford, Assistant Principle at E.O. Smith High School, asked for a Juvenile Review Board and additional resources such as clinical mental health services.

5. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

Interim Town Manager John Carrington presented his written report.

6. REPORTS AND COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Moran reported that she recently attended a Capitol Region Council of Governments Legislative Committee meeting, a Region 19 budget meeting, and School Building Committee meetings.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. School Resource Officer Program (Item #7A, 1-13-20 Agenda)

Ms. Berthelot, by recommendation of the Personnel Committee, **moved**, effective January 27, 2020, to reject the current SRO Memorandum of Agreement,

immediately terminate the SRO program and terminate the employment of the current SROs.

Councilors discussed concerns regarding the SRO agreement and program with Superintendent of Schools Jill Krieger.

Mr. Schurin **moved** and Mr. Kochenburger seconded to amend the motion by striking all words after "January 27, 2020" and substituting the following:

To direct the Town Manager to renegotiate expeditiously the Memorandum of Agreement among the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Division of State Police, the Town of Mansfield and the Board of Education, Regional School District #19, to reflect the options outlined by the Superintendent of Region #19 to the Mansfield Town Council on January 27, 2020 including, among other elements:

1. specific language relating to funding for the School Resource Officer (SRO) positions;
2. provision of maximum feasible supervisory control of SROs by the Region 19 administration;
3. comprehensive cultural responsiveness and related training for SROs; and
4. other relevant matters clearly outlining the responsibility, accountability and oversight of SROs.

The existing agreement shall remain in force provided that this process of renegotiation among the parties leading to its amendment be initiated and resolved with appropriate urgency;

Further, that the SROs seek SRO certification from an appropriate national certifying body, and that the Mansfield Town Manager initiate promptly any additional relevant anti-bias and cultural responsiveness training for SROs through an entity approved by the Town of Mansfield and Region 19 administration;

Further, that the amendment of the Memorandum of Agreement be completed, at least in draft form, by the Town of Mansfield and Region 19 administration no later than March 6, 2020; and

Further, that the parties consider a new Memorandum of Agreement for the 2020-2021 school year immediately following the end of the current school year. In considering a new Memorandum of Agreement the Town of Mansfield will review information and data provided by Region 19 and the State Police, with the understanding that information protected by confidentiality statutes may be excluded from public review.

Motion to amend **passed** with all in favor except Mr. Ausburger, Mr. Fratoni, and Mr. Freudmann who voted against.

Motion as amended **passed** with all in favor except Mr. Ausburger, Mr. Fratoni, and Mr. Freudmann who voted against.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Appointment of Executive Search Firm for Town Manager Recruitment

(Mr. Ausburger left the room.)

Ms. Berthelot, by recommendation of the Personnel Committee, **moved** to appoint Rutherford Advisors, Inc., DBA The Executive Suite as the executive search firm to assist the Town Council with the Town Manager recruitment, and to authorize Interim Town Manager John C. Carrington to execute the attached professional services agreement with the firm. Motion **passed** unanimously.

B. Presidents' Day Ceremonial Presentation Planning Subcommittee

Mayor Moran appointed Mr. Bruder and Mr. Freudmann to the Presidents' Day Ceremonial Presentation Planning Subcommittee.

9. REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Ms. Berthelot reported that the Personnel Committee will start having their meetings recorded.

10. DEPARTMENTAL AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

11. PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

A. The Commission on Aging letter re: Senior Center full time driver (11.24.19)
B. Sgt. K. Timme, Town of Mansfield Monthly Report (December 2019)
C. Storrs Center Parking Operation Financial Report (December 2019)
D. E. Henrichon (1.13.20)
E. N. Silander (1.13.20)
F. J. Carrington re: Appointment letter to Mansfield EDC (1.16.20)
G. Access Community Action Agency Service Profile for the Town of Mansfield
H. Alzheimer's Association Dementia Conversation Program
I. The League of Women Voters of Northeastern CT Legislative Breakfast

12. FUTURE AGENDAS

(Mr. Ausburger returned to the room)

- WRTD/Dial-A-Ride and Senior Transportation
- Town's Process for Funding Community Based Services
- Juvenile Review Board
- Transitional Counseling Program
- Draft Letter to UCONN re: Housing

13. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Shaiken **moved** and Mr. Ausburger seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:53 p.m. The motion **passed** unanimously.

Antonia Moran, Mayor

Sara-Ann Chaine, Town Clerk

I've thought quite a bit about what I might like to say to the council, but I'll try to keep it relatively short and fairly simple. You've already heard the circumstances and facts which lead to the placement of SROs in E.O. Smith high school, and you will likely hear more tonight, and so I won't go over that ground again. However, I would like to say that I have a lot of admiration and respect for the members of the Mansfield Town Council. I know seven of you, and I also know that all of the people on this council are there because they care and are concerned about the Town of Mansfield. It might not always seem so, but all of you nonetheless share a common bond which actually unites you. You may not always agree on what each of you might believe would be best for the town, but that doesn't change the fact that you are all good people trying to do a good job in best protecting the Town of Mansfield. Just like the members of the Board of Education for Region 19 always try to do when making decisions for the Region.

Which brings us to our current situation. Serious and legitimate concerns have been raised by some of the members of this town council regarding whether or not placement of SRO officers within E.O. Smith High School should be allowed. This question has come up before the council only because of a legislative determination which prohibits the Region from hiring SROs on its own. The result is that any SROs which Region 19 might wish to place within the high school would become employees of the Town of Mansfield. It is therefore very easy to understand the concerns which this might generate for the Mansfield Town Council, and I agree that those concerns are serious and legitimate, as did the Region 19 Board.

However, I'd also like to mention a few points which I hope might take into consideration when making your decision. As you already know, the Region 19 Board is an independent governmental body charged with the responsibility for oversight and administration of EO Smith High School. Its currently comprised of three member towns, though there are several towns which also send students to the school on a tuition basis. Each of the member towns elects four representatives to the regional board, and, by statute, those elected officials are also charged with responsibility for the safety and security of EO Smith. The individual towns comprising the Region do not have this responsibility. The Region 19 Board is an experienced, well educated, and very concerned board, and, after grappling with the issues with which you are now struggling, the members of that board unanimously agreed that it was in the best interests of the school and its students to retain the services of the school resource officers. This decision was not made lightly, and, just like what you are now experiencing, it followed investigation and debate by the representatives of all three towns comprising the Region.

At this point, the Mansfield Town Council is essentially covering ground that the Region 19 Board has already covered, and covered thoroughly. There isn't a single issue which has been raised by the town council which was not already raised and discussed by the Region 19 Board. Ultimately, our decision to retain SROs was unanimous, but, initially, a number of members of the Board were opposed to the hiring of SROs, and for many of the same reasons you have raised. However, like the town council is now doing, we also did our homework, and we ultimately decided unanimously that this was an appropriate course of action to improve the security of our school. Did we have some reservations initially? Of course! However, our superintendent has experienced the presence and effect of SRO's in three different high schools, and was therefore well qualified to discuss the benefits derived from the presence of the SROs in those systems. After reviewing the information we obtained, and listening to the experiences of our own superintendent, we all decided that the presence of SROs would increase the safety of the students and staff. This was complicated decision for us, but one we unanimously agreed was in the best interest of our school community. It is our hope that the Mansfield Town Council will respect that decision.

J. Mark

Monday, January 27, 2020

My name is Janice Chamberlain. I am a resident of Ashford and have served on the Region 19 board for over 16 years. I have played an integral part in the decisions made by this board during this time that involve the school's budgets, buildings, personnel, policy, curriculum, school environment, and the health and safety of our students. These decisions are always made after careful, thoughtful, and informed discussion. It is an honor to serve my community on this board and I take my responsibilities very seriously.

I was a part of the Region 19 board decision to hire two part time School Resource Officers (SRO's). Our board proceeded cautiously and deliberately when considering the hiring for these two positions. It was important to us to ensure that they would be incorporated into our unique school environment and culture at EOSmith. Our current Superintendent had positive experiences with SRO's in the schools where she previously worked. Her input and guidance informed our decision as well.

The SRO positions are a part of a bigger security plan at EOSmith.

SRO's are not to take the place of our administration, teachers, and staff such as guidance counselors, social worker, and psychologist. These employees are key in managing the social and mental health issues of the students, establishing relationships with our students, being mentors, and maintaining a positive and safe school environment for all our students.

As a board member I expect SRO's to develop positive relationships with our students as well however they are trained professionals in emergency procedures and will play an important role in managing a school crisis.

Our school administration will have greater supervision and oversight of these SRO positions and influence over their staff development and training. It is important to us that whatever they do supports the school culture at EOSmith. SRO's having a direct line of communication to the resident trooper and to Troop C is critical if we are going to have any type of armed personnel on the school premises. In a school emergency that involves an active shooter every minute is critical. A faster response will help to minimize a school crisis and unwanted school tragedy.

Region 19

My name is Elizabeth Peczuh, 47 Timber Lane, Wilington, CT.

I am here as a representative from Willington who has served 12 years on the Region 19 Board of Education. I have been elected repeatedly to represent the students from Willington and ensure that their best interests are being met at EO Smith. That is what I was doing when I voted to have SROs at the school. I voted to have qualified and trained police officers in our building. All the other members of the Region 19 Board of Education unanimously voted in the exact same manner.

As Mansfield Town Council members, respectfully, you have not been elected to ~~represent~~ make decisions for students at EO Smith. That is the responsibility of the Region 19 Board of Education ~~'s responsibility~~. The only reason we are here is due to a technicality in regional school district hiring procedures. Your opinions on SROs at EO Smith should have occurred during Region 19 public meetings where you could have shared your thoughts during public to speak.

Just as the Boards of Selectmen of Ashford & Willington have cut.

Your charge is to decide whether or not you want SROs on your payroll. When you make this decision, please understand that you are making a decision that affects not only students from Mansfield but also from Willington, Ashford, and many other towns. The citizens of Willington and Ashford voted for their representatives who made the decision to have SROs. They also voted for the cost when the budget passed in all 3 towns.

In this day and age, I find it hard to believe that anyone would vote to remove a safety measure from our schools and our students' lives. I urge you to vote in favor of keeping the SROs on your payroll so that we can continue to provide a safe environment for our students.

Elizabeth J. McCosh-Lilie
Representative to Region 19 Board of Education for Ashford, CT.
Joined Reg. 19 Bd. August of 2001 – Served 18 ½ years.

When I first joined the Region 19 Board, the main shooting in a school was at Columbine High School in Colorado. As the years have gone by the number of events have increased and the need to increase security has grown. The Region 19 Board has steadily increased the building security to make it more difficult for intruders to enter.

For a number of years the assumption at E.O. Smith High School was that the CT State Police at the Mansfield Town Hall afforded us the added protection that was needed. However, in recent years the officers have advised us that the CT State Police would not always be close by and that there would be valuable time lost if the school had to wait for them to respond.

There have been suggestions that teachers be armed or that armed security be hired. These two approaches to protecting the school have a number of problems. It was the CT State Police who recommended that we hire School Resource Officers (SRO). This was a suggestion that was debated for an extended period. For some of us, we were not comfortable with guns in the school.

It was decided a year ago with the planning for the 2019-2020 budget that we would move forward and hire two SRO's. This budget was approved in all by all three towns in the regional district.

The students, faculty and staff have found the SRO's to be a valuable part of the staff. Discipline issues have declined and parents are pleased with the addition. Further, students have positive role models of state police.

At the Mansfield Town Council meeting two weeks ago I was concerned about the attitude of the Mansfield Town Council toward the state police. The expression of fear of the officers and the 'blame' if an officer goes bad was a sad statement. The SRO's have extra training for their jobs, something that security guards don't have.

I believe the Mansfield Town Council should also be concerned that if a problem were to occur at E.O. Smith High School without the SRO's, they will be held accountable along with the Administration of E.O. Smith High School. It will not take long for the community to become aware if the SRO's are removed.

I realize that negative incidents involving police do occur. For myself I have lived in four different states and have had interactions with the state police in each one of them. All have been positive.

At the meeting two weeks ago questions were raised that clauses concerning removal of an SRO were lacking in the contract. This was of concern to Council members. It would seem better to work with the SRO's, the E.O. Smith Administration and their lawyer and the Mansfield Town Council and their legal council to improve the contract rather than throw the whole program out.

Mansfield Town Council
Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
4 South Eagleville Road
Mansfield, CT 06268

Kimberly Christenson
19 Adeline Place
Mansfield Center, CT 06250

January 27, 2020

Town Council Members:

I would like to take this opportunity to assure the members of Mansfield Town Council that the decision to welcome School Resource Officers into the EOS High School community was done with prudent research and thoughtful conversations among the members of R19 Board of Education.

It is extremely important to us to have exceptionally trained and highly qualified SROs at EOS High School. One of the goals of the SRO program is for the officers to integrate into the school community as they build trusting relationships with students and staff. There are countless accounts from students and staff how this is already happening and having a positive impact on the school community.

Region 19 BOE represents the students of Mansfield, Ashford, and Willington in addition to other sending towns. We consider all our students when making these decisions. SROs are one of many school security measures in place at EOS. These officers are an instrumental part of our security plan to do our absolute best to provide safety for all staff and students so that they can ultimately learn and thrive in a safe educational environment.

I invite each of you to spend time at EOS. Walk our halls, observe our students, learn from our teachers, engage in conversation with our SROs. You will experience a warm and welcoming high school. You will see how the daily interactions between staff, students and SROs are positive.

Please take this opportunity to work with Region 19 BOE in implementing our thoroughly researched and thoughtfully implemented SRO program. I believe that we value the same things for the EOS community: safety and education.

Sincerely,

K. Christenson

Kimberly Christenson

Region 19 BOE Mansfield Representative
Parent of EO Smith students
Mansfield Resident

SRO Statement: January 27, 2020
Anthony Paticchio
178 Waterfall Road
Ashford, CT 06278
Region 19 Board of Education Member from Ashford, CT since 2015

I want to point out that this is my personal statement reflecting my own individual views as a member of the Region 19 Board of Education. While I am confident that the other members of the Board who participated in the unanimous decision to develop and enter into an agreement assigning School Resource Officers to E.O. Smith High School share views similar to mine, I am not now addressing you as the designated representative of the entire Region 19 Board of Education.

The Region 19 Board of Education is comprised of board members elected by each of the Region's three member towns of Ashford, Mansfield, and Willington. The Board is charged pursuant to Sec. 10-220(a)(4) of the Connecticut General Statutes, with providing "a safe school setting" at E.O. Smith High School. Assuring the safety and security of the E.O. Smith community is therefore the responsibility not of any single member town but of Region 19 and its Board of Education. It is a responsibility that the Board of Education and the school Administration take with a seriousness second to none in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities to the Region 19 community.

At its December 4, 2018 Board Meeting, the Region 19 Board of Education voted unanimously to develop an SRO agreement with the Connecticut State Police and the Town of Mansfield.

Following the Board vote in December 2018, discussions and negotiations commenced among Region 19, the Connecticut State Police, and the Mansfield Town Manager. In August 2019, a Memorandum of Agreement was entered into pursuant to Sec. 10-233m of the Connecticut General Statutes between The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Division of State Police, the Town of Mansfield, and the Board of Education of Regional School District #19 concerning assignment of one or more School Resource Officers ("SRO") at E.O. Smith High School.

Under the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement the SROs are employees of the Town of Mansfield appointed as special constables, are under the operational control, subject to the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement, of the Connecticut State Police Resident State Trooper Program in accordance with the Resident State Trooper Contract between the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection and the Town of Mansfield, and are qualified "retired police officers" as defined under and subject to the rigorous law enforcement training requirements specified in Section 10-244a of the Connecticut General Statutes. As required by Sec. 10-233m of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Memorandum of Agreement includes, among other things, provisions addressing the daily interactions between students and school personnel with the school resource officers and includes a graduated response model for student discipline. The costs and expenses of this program, including the

compensation of the SROs, are borne by Region 19 and are included in its annual budget approved by the Region 19 member towns.

Several months after the execution of the Memorandum of Agreement and implementation of the SRO program at E.O. Smith High School, Region 19 first learned that the Mansfield Town Council had not been advised of the SRO Memorandum of Agreement or its terms prior to its execution by the Town Manager, and that the Council would revisit and reconsider the Town's participation in the Memorandum of Agreement, including consideration of whether to terminate the Agreement.

I want to assure the members of the Council that the Region 19 Board members did not come to the decision to place armed officers within the school without serious consideration of the concerns voiced by members of the Council. And while it is true, as some members of the Council pointed out at the last Council Meeting, that Region 19 could hire armed guards directly without involving the Town of Mansfield as employer of the SROs, it was considered essential by the Region 19 Board of Education and the school Administration that any armed officers present in the school be qualified "retired police officers" subject to the rigorous police training requirements mandated by Section 10-244a of the Connecticut General Statutes.

The Council has now heard widespread support for the Board's decision from students, parents, teachers and community members who want to continue the SRO program currently in place.

While I understand and support efforts of the Mansfield Town Council at this time to seek to clarify and more clearly delineate certain responsibilities of the parties and requirements under the existing Memorandum of Agreement, I urge the Council not to act to terminate the Memorandum of Agreement, and thereby overturn the Region 19 Board of Education's determination of the need for and efficacy of having School Resource Officers assigned to E.O. Smith High School, a determination made by the Region 19 Board of Education acting for and on behalf of all of its member towns and in the due exercise of its statutory duty and responsibility to assure the safety and security of the entire E.O. Smith community.

I am asking the members of the Council to honor the unanimous decision made by the Region 19 Board of Education to implement the SRO Program, and, as a fifth option in addition to the four presented to you by your counsel, to work with the Region 19 Board, the Region 19 Administration, and the Connecticut State Police, in reaching mutual agreement on an amendment of the existing Memorandum of Agreement to clarify certain responsibilities, duties and requirements of the parties under the provisions of that Agreement, and under any successor agreement. Region 19 acted in good faith in all respects in connection with entering into the Memorandum of Agreement, and with no reason to believe that the Town Manager had not obtained all required approvals from the Town prior to executing and delivering the Memorandum of Agreement on behalf of the Town of Mansfield.

Thank you.

Now that all of you have hopefully learned more about our SRO program, I am back again to emphasize the importance of its continuation in our high school. I am out here speaking on a midterm exam night. Because many of my classmates are at home studying for their exams, I decided to bring their voices here to this meeting. I have a petition that reads "As a student at E.O. Smith, the Student Resource Officers are a positive role model in our school community and they create a safer environment." I got 356 signatures in a matter of only 2 hours. Now one thing that you may ask me for a "clarification" on is that this is only 30% of our schools student population. Yes, I can't possibly talk to everyone and yes I talked to a few people who disagreed with my point of view. However in the 2 hours of collecting signatures, the vast majority of students that I talked to were in support of the SROs. To further put this percentage in perspective, for the November municipal election across Connecticut, the voter turnout was 33.5% for the entire day. (Denise W. Merrill, Secretary of State).

Last meeting, I was hearing the use of national averages. National data is important. However, if you took a Statistics midterm today, just as I did, you would know the important idea that correlation doesn't imply causation. Just because there is an SRO program in a school and the national average, emphasis on "average," shows that with SRO programs, minorities and students with disabilities are targeted more often, doesn't mean that a school with an SRO program is going to 100% have this issue. This is why I encourage the council to at least wait until the end of the year to look at the data from this year and compare it to previous years at E.O Smith. Do not compare our school with other high schools because every school has their own unique school community. Speaking about the school community, I am in Peer Natural Helpers, a program that helps students, and I give tours to incoming freshman and their parents to familiarize them with the school. One of the things I always say and take absolute pride in is our open and welcoming school community. When I was a freshman I was completely lost in

Z. Donald

this new big school. Someone saw my confusion and came over and helped and to me they were a total stranger. I am proud of the administration and students that they do not racially profile. I trust my administration to hire appropriate SROs that reflect our school's core values.

Because school shootings are random and can happen anywhere, we need to keep our school safe for everyone. This is why I feel the SRO program should continue. If you vote to get rid of the SRO program at our school, you will be denying at least 356 students of their right to feel safer in our school environment.

Before I begin I would like to take a moment and express my frustration with this council. Last meeting I came to you not only as an employee of EO Smith, but as a resident and most importantly as a parent. I shared with you my concerns regarding not having the SROs in our school and it was quickly dismissed with a response of, "Well the district can hire armed security guards." I walked away from that meeting feeling a total lack of respect from this council. It was as if my message was only listened to because it was part of a required process. Before I proceed I ask each of you to actually hear me, hear my voice, hear my message. Hear me!

At the last meeting it was mentioned that a council member wanted to have Mark and Hans removed immediately because of articles saying that SROs profile students. I also read an article, actually a research brief completed by the Dolan Consulting Group and it reads:

"The first important research finding is that SROs are individuals and, like all people, individual school resource officers act differently from one another. Therefore, examples can likely be found of individual SROs who have taken an unnecessarily heavy enforcement stance toward student conduct problems, and others who have not. Undoubtedly, officers with temperaments unsuited for working with children and youths should not be assigned to SRO positions. However, solely focusing on isolated incidents receiving national media attention is not a reasonable way to determine the effects of the thousands of SROs assigned to schools throughout the country."

Based on that alone, I'm left to wonder are you profiling Mark and Hans based on national media attention brought on by those SROs who have acted inappropriately? Has this council done its due diligence and actually had a conversation with our administration? With our Board of Education? Or with Mark and Hans themselves? Well I have. I have learned that aside from the years of training and experience as officers of the law, both gentlemen are fathers and have previously worked with the youth in other communities. Hans was instrumental in establishing the DARE program in Coventry by personally writing the grants for it. He then went on to teach this program for 10 years! He was also the coach for his son's soccer team. Mark taught a class to high school students about the dangers of drinking and driving. This is something he'd like to teach our Juniors and Seniors ahead of prom season. He also discussed with our football team the dangers of drugs, vaping and alcohol and how they effect athletic performance. My son is on the football team and he told me that Mark's message was well received by everyone. Mark then took his time to listen to each student who asked questions and gave advice. Before leaving he also let them know that he's always available to listen to them, or help any of them if they're going through any difficult times. Mark made sure our students knew they could go to him with anything! Aside from all of that for 3 years he taught a class called Interaction Between Police and Youth to other police officers. According to the ct.gov, website this course is described as teaching, "..officers in helping to eliminate the problem of disproportionate minority contact," and "Strategies for communicating more effectively with young people and improving police/youth relations." He literally taught the class that you are basing why the SROs should be dismissed on.

Now, let's compare that to the armed security guards you mentioned we can hire. I found a list of their responsibilities online and some of those are to, "prevent theft, protect property, prevent or deter criminal activities, protect people, patrol businesses, diffuse violence, crowd control." No where does it say anything about youth interactions. Or teaching our youth the dangers of drugs and alcohol, or encouraging them in a positive manner. Here are some examples of where armed security guards are used, hospital security, casino security, armored trucks and banks. I don't know about you but I certainly do not want the same people that protect my money to protect and interact with my son! Again, I ask you, did this council do its due diligence to learn about Mark and Hans and what they have to offer the students and staff of EO Smith?

T. Maines

Zachary Scruggs
Storrs, CT, 06268
1/27/2020

Mansfield Town Council
4 So. Eagleville Road, Mansfield, CT

Dear Council Members,

I write to you both as a resident of Mansfield, and a student of E.O. Smith High School. Some of my peers and I have become very distressed after the hiring of two school resource officers by our high school. Without mentioning the questionable legality of their hiring by Region 19, these officers will only worsen the learning and teaching environment.

First, on the issue of school safety, I'd like to say that keeping students safe is a priority for everyone. The goal for our town should be to keep guns as far away from the school as possible. There are conflicting studies on how safe these officers make schools, but the feeling among many I have talked to is that they feel more threatened than safe. Famously, Marjory Stone Douglas High School had a stationed officer at the school during a shooting and he stood outside in "defensive position" while students were killed. Me and my peers place no trust in these officers to keep us safe.

Second, on the issue of policing in schools. A recent study done by Connecticut Voices For Children found that in schools with resource officers, illegal activity remained constant, while arrests shot up. Specifically Latinx students are 6 times more likely to be arrested than whites for said illegal activities despite ~~committing~~ no proof that they do them at a higher rate. The last thing we need at E.O. is two over policing guards that won't deter any illegal activities, but will up the number of arrested students. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Zachary Scruggs

To: Mansfield Town Council

From: Erika Wiecenski, 19 Adamec Rd Willington CT

Dear Town Council Members,

My name is Erika Wiecenski, I am a resident from Willington, parent of an E.O. Smith student and current Willington First Selectwoman.

I am here to express my concerns regarding the potential termination of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program at Region 19 E.O. Smith High School. I understand that the officers are employed by the Town of Mansfield and this is why the matter is before you now.

Region 19 Board of Education is made up of elected officials from Ashford, Mansfield and Willington. These individuals were elected to work and make decisions on behalf of their respective residents. The decision of what programs are implemented as well as how funds are spent at E.O. Smith is the role of the Region 19 Board of Education not the Mansfield Town Council. Citizens of Ashford, Willington and Mansfield have an opportunity to speak to that board expressing our opinions, concerns and questions. The governing bodies of Willington, Ashford & Mansfield do not have the authority or oversight as to the implementation of such programs.

Over the course of the many months in the winter of 2019 the Region 19 BOE held public meetings regarding their budget planning and the SRO program was discussed in open public meetings. Ultimately the budget was taken to a referendum in Willington, Ashford and Mansfield and passed with funds allocated for an SRO program.

While I understand the process may not have been handled appropriately through your town council, these unfortunate circumstances do not change the need for the program as appropriately determined by the Region 19 BOE.

I am asking the members of this Council to honor the unanimous recommendation of the Region 19 BOE, school administrators, and the voters of Ashford, Willington and Mansfield by allowing the program to continue with the officers employed by the Town of Mansfield. I encourage you to evaluate the program with all stakeholders to make any necessary improvements to a vital security feature in our High School to continue.

Respectfully,

Erika G. Wiecenski

My name is Geoff Kern. I live at 58 Cemetery Road. I am a parent of two successful EO Smith graduates. The last time I spoke, I spoke in my role as the president of the Teacher's union, the EOSHSTA. Since I spoke two weeks ago, nothing has changed in a significant way to make me believe that a majority, a large majority of teachers are in favor of keeping the SRO's in their current position.

What has changed is my desire to address this board ~~on related~~ matters related to the meeting of two weeks ago. First, ms mayor, I wish you would keep to the ground rule you so correctly put forth, to wit, that there should be no cross talk, no back and forth. I understand the council needs clarification, but simply because interrogation rhymes with clarification, we should be careful not to conflate the two words.

Second, I find it disquieting that not a single argument, neither for nor against the SROs, has made the point that an inference of causation cannot be made from observational data. I can only speak to the statistical education of one of you. Pay attention carefully. All the data that I have found that has been referred to in previous arguments has been observational, not experimental. From observational data-only inferences of association can be made-NOT CAUSATION. And the observational data has been found where? Not in schools like EO Smith. Either, they have been from inner city schools or from middle schools. I can assure you, there is a huge difference between high school and middle school.

And that brings me to my next point. Simply because some of you attended EO Smith, your lack of knowledge about the EO Smith community is terribly unfortunate. I'd like to take this opportunity to invite you to my classroom, ~~assuming I can get my supervisors permission~~. I can provide you with coffee and a seat and I think you will be amazed at the changes that have been rendered in the way we deliver our product.

Next, I'd like to quickly point out the hypocrisy of suggesting that EO should hire armed guards over trained policeman. A certain comedian, Jim Jeffries, whom you might know, (I'd recommend him), said in effect, that armed guards may be good at bang-bang video games, but $15 per hour does not give them a lot of reason to put anything on the line, in the event of an actual shooting.

So as a citizen of Mansfield, it is my opinion that this decision to choose to hire or not hire SROs was never rightfully yours, but rather it is yours by some sort of technicality, which apparently I don't understand. ~~Get over yourselves.~~ Trust the real decision makers in this process, our superintendent and principal, who are telling you to keep the SROs.

PLEASE

OVR
REELY BAD

Statement entered into the record - Mia Mitoma, Storrs Rd. Mansfield - Town Council 1/27/2020

I'm a mother of 2 kids - one @ EOSmith & the other, a recent graduate of EOS (16 & 18) - both went through Mansfield schools since early elementary (2008-current).

I'm also a former school teacher with experience in both CA & CT - with most of my experience at Manchester HS (in part with Jill Kreiger as my principal; current region 19 superintendent)..

My opinions about School Resource Officers/SRO are based off of my experiences have evolved with incidents such as 9/11 & Sandy Hook and the outcomes of our school's responses to them. I have also become very active with a newly formed Mansfield community group having difficult conversations about race and racism - THIS being an active discussion topic.

- Imagine it is the last period of the day, you are tired, and not looking forward to the day ending because you are going to work and then home to an empty house until your father comes home very late. You head to chemistry, and although you are re-taking the class, you don't mind because you usually get to work on activities with your hands and your friends - and you like your teacher. In fact, you feel like this class is an "extended family" since many of you share frustrations, hugs, and other displays of affection. Today though, your teacher tells you that you need to report to your administrator's office, you refuse as you know that seeing your administrator means it's disciplinary rather than helpful, as you would have gone to your counselor otherwise. You go, and find out that your teacher has reported you for sexual harassment, your father is called to set up a face-to-face meeting with your teacher and possible SRO/law enforcement to discuss and determine what actions will be taken. You've been told that your teacher may be able to press charges against you in addition to the report going in your school records.

- Imagine it is the first period of the day and ~~your just starting the schoolday with~~ this particular day is all academic classes, no electives, art, or gym. You arrive on-time. As the bell rings an unfamiliar adult walks through the door, your substitute English teacher. The sub introduces themselves and gets organized while you stand and stretch as everyone else begins to sit. After taking roll, announcements and explaining the task for class, you are told to take your seat. You continue to sway and dance in place looking straight at the substitute (are you Frustrated? Sad? Tired? Hungry? Defiant? Enter emotion here… c'mon you're a teenager). You see the sub in front of you, their lips moving, but you continue and even get up on top of your desk to dance. You hear the substitute's voice say they will call for security's assistance to help remove you from the academic setting as you are disrupting the learning environment. You jump off the desk and leave the classroom before anyone arrives. A "FALSE PEACE" has taken over the classroom - students are quiet in their seats, some working, when a security officer arrives begins a kind, albeit disruptive interrogation from the doorway of the classroom before going to find you.

Imagine you are on-campus on a particularly stressful day. You've dabbled with illicit drugs to self-medicate and relieve the anxiety, stress and depression you sometimes feel. You decide to

take something you've had in the past and take a walk outside to catch your breath and relieve some anxiety. Suddenly it's dark and you find yourself locked outside the building with no-one around and moments later several officers are grabbing you, strapping you to a gurney and loading you into a vehicle. Where are they taking you and what will happen to you? Days after being released from the hospital you receive notification that your phone has been found and you can pick it up at the police department. You could be arrested and charged for drug use, or other possible offenses, but you go anyway. Before the officer gives you your phone they begin to question you about what happened and where you got the drugs - just for the record.

I've shared these experiences to illustrate the likely scenarios that EOS's SRO's will ~~likely~~ face - for 2 of these have happened right here in Mansfield. I ask that the council and the school-board consider 3 things:

1-The LIKELY security breach situations that SROs/Peacekeepers will encounter
(Active Shooter? Mental Health? Disciplinary? Compliance? False Peace?)
2-The representation/presence necessary for those LIKELY situations
(Aggressive? Defensive? Caring/Compassionate? Is a weapon of any sort necessary?)
3-the appropriate,necessary responses for LIKELY situations & therefore abilities that the SROs/Peacekeepers have (What responsibilities & when can SROs/Peacekeepers be utilized? Is the ability to arrest someone onsite really necessary?

MLK speaks and avocates for all marginalized POC peoples. People that the majority often LGBTQ etc. don't realize are "invisible".

Who is feeling safer?