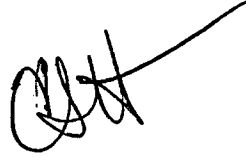


**TOWN OF OCEAN VIEW
DELAWARE**

June 3, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council

FROM: Carol S. Houck, Town Manager



SUBJECT: Town Manager Report for the Council Meeting of June 10, 2025

School Resource Officer (SRO) Lord Baltimore Elementary School

We have spent some time engaging with the Indian River School District and attending both their Finance discussion and Board meeting. To begin, Ocean View made its request for funding support of our SRO at Lord Baltimore as requested by the district in April. Our request for the district to support the Ocean View Police Department SRO at the level of \$80,000. This is up from \$40,000 the prior year and in association with the level of funding the district has provided to three other towns. At the May 19th meeting of the Board of Directors they voted not to fund any Town sponsored SRO, but to fund three Delaware State Police SRO at significantly higher levels than any of the towns. They will primarily serve at the two high schools. The district will hold a second attempt at a successful referendum this year on June 5th, which some believe, if successful may cause the district to reconsider its May 19th decision. Chief McLaughlin and I will engage with Mayor and Council prior to the start of the 2025/26 school year for direction regarding our SRO program. Attached please find the most recent information provided to the Indian River School District and Board regarding our request.

Newsletter and FY2026 Tax Statements

The Town newsletter and individual property owner tax statements were mailed the end of May. The due date for tax payments is August 31st with early payments prior to July 31st receiving a 1% discount.

Concert Series at John West Park - Friday's from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Began last Friday – June 6th with Hot Sauce Band

Next up – June 20th – Love Seed and June 27th – The Funsters

Fit and Fun Fair

The 3rd Annual Fit and Fun Fair held at Lord Baltimore Elementary School took place on its rain date of June 1st raising \$8,000 for Special Olympics Delaware. Congratulations on a successful event to Lori Smyth and her team and thank you to the Cert Team for assisting with parking. Ocean View Police and one public works employee also assisted day of.

Engagement with Delaware Valley Health Trust (DVHT)

Finance Director Dawn Parks and I began our engagement with the Delaware Valley Health Trust (DVHT) to complete an evaluation of its health insurance offerings for the Town well in advance to our next fiscal year. This is something the City of Newark moved to when I was there and still is a member. As we move forward through the vetting process we will provide more detailed information. However briefly, the Trust originated in Pennsylvania and expanded into Delaware with Newark as its first member from the state now including 165 public entity members from Pennsylvania and Delaware and covering over 25,000 employees and their families with a retention rate of 95% since conception. So, it seems they are doing something right. The trust has represented cost savings and premium stability to its members with the average increase of only 5.5% over the past 10 years. You will recall we had a 29% increase impacting our FY25 alone from the State of Delaware. Lastly, our evaluation will include engagement with employees for full awareness prior to making any recommendations.

Diva Nails 10th Anniversary Celebration

Mayor Reddington, Councilpersons Cobb and Twardzik, Chief McLaughlin and I attended Diva Nails celebration for its 10th successful year in business here in Ocean View. A well planned and welcoming event that we were happy to support!



Old Town Holiday Market and Tree Lighting Event – Vendors Welcome

We have launched our outreach and review of vendors for the 2025 event with an eye towards unique and interesting vendors. Anyone interested in participating may submit photos of the items they would like to sell and some descriptive information including photos of booth set ups if available.

Outreach and Engagement:

I participated in various meetings/engagements/events including those with the Historic Village in Ocean View as Board member, Jane Seagrass – of Community Solar, League of Local Government – Legislative issues, Sussex County Association of Towns (SCAT), Town of Old New Castle – Budget Temp questions, Scout Troop 281 and Bonkey's Ice Cream – event support, Indian River School District – SRO Agreement, finance discussion and board meeting, Senator Hocker and Representative Gray regarding various Bills before the legislature that are of concern, DEMA – grant for door access, Lord Baltimore Landing HOA representative, PFM regarding launch of Compensation study, IACP regarding launch of Risk analysis, and various other vendors and contractors, the Town Solicitor, and residents, organizations or contractors in response to requests etc.

Carol Houck

From: Carol Houck
Sent: Tuesday, May 13, 2025 9:35 AM
To: Owens Jay
Cc: Troublefield Jennifer; Lewis Preston; Mclaughlin Kenneth (Ocean View PD)
Subject: FW: Town of Ocean View 2025/2026 School Year Request for Funding
Attachments: SRO FY25 FY26 School Year Funding Request Letter.pdf; Indian River School District SRO Program Presentation May 2025.pptx

Good morning Dr. Owens – it was good to see you last night and thank you for the opportunity to share some information before the finance committee.

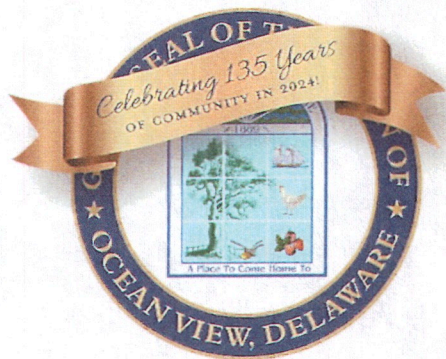
On my way out one of the members asked if we had statistical information to share. Thankfully, I had a copy to give her of what we submitted on the 8th with the understanding that it would be shared. It included the funding request letter, programs offered by our SRO and SRO reportable incidents.

Since it wasn't, I feel we are at a disadvantage in that we assumed the members had already reviewed the information provided. Can you please share the attached with all in attendance and participating in decision making regarding the SRO program funding.

I also attach a copy of the power point packet we prepared for last night and handed out.

Much appreciated, as I'm still trying to get a handle on your process with this committee.

Carol



Carol Houck
Town Manager

TOWN OF OCEAN VIEW

201 Central Avenue - 2nd Floor, Ocean View, DE 19970

Office 302.539.9797 ext. 104 Cell 302.354.4564

Web oceanviewde.gov Email chouck@oceanviewde.gov

From: Carol Houck
Sent: Tuesday, April 8, 2025 1:04 PM
To: Owens Jay <Jack.Owens@IRSD.k12.de.us>; Troublefield Jennifer <jennifer.troublefield@IRSD.k12.de.us>
Cc: Mclaughlin, Kenneth (CJ) <kenneth.mclaughlin@CJ.State.de.us>; Lewis Preston <preston.lewis@IRSD.k12.de.us>
Subject: Town of Ocean View 2025/2026 School Year Request for Funding

TOWN OF OCEAN VIEW

201 CENTRAL AVE, 2ND FLOOR
OCEAN VIEW, DE 19970

April 8, 2025

Dr. Jay Owens
Superintendent
Indian River School District (IRSD)
Selbyville, DE 19975

RE: Lord Baltimore Elementary School – School Resource Officer (SRO) – 2025/2026 School year Agreement

Dear Dr. Owens:

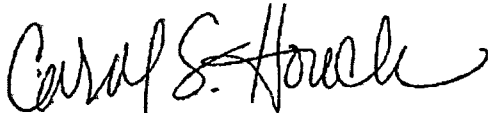
Please accept this correspondence as our request for funding for the continuation of our full-time SRO program at Lord Baltimore Elementary School during the 2025/2026 school year. This request is being submitted in advance to your May 12th Board meeting.

As you and returning members of the IRSD Board are aware, the Town has discussed funding support equity concerns in the past. Simply stated, the fact that our SRO is only assigned to one school (the only school in Ocean View) vs. other SRO's that are assigned to more than one school should have no impact on the value the district places on our program. In addition, there has been no accounting of the time other SROs actually spend at each school. We contend it doesn't matter what school the SRO is present at, just that they're fulfilling SRO duties while there.

Likewise, you have already established a precedent in funding the Delaware State Police at a higher level for two SRO assignments while funding all other Towns at approximately \$80,000 for one SRO. Your precedent has been set by number of SRO's being funded, not by the number of schools assigned.

For that reason, we submit to you that the equitable level of support for the OVPD SRO at Lord Baltimore Elementary School for the 2025/2026 school year is \$80,000. This figure is in line with what we understand the district is funding all other SRO.

I sincerely thank you for your consideration. Please refer to the attached information about our program's offerings during the 2024/2025 school year (to date).



Carol S. Houck
Town Manager

cc: IRHS Board
Town of Ocean View Mayor and Council
Chief Kenneth McLaughlin
Preston Lewis, Administrator of Student Services

Below please find detail of the programs that the Ocean View Police Department SRO has offered at Lord Baltimore Elementary School each year.

Eddie Eagle

- Teaches the students about firearms safety. Kindergarten through 4th grade. To date every student at LB has taken my Eddie Eagle Gun safety programs.

DEA Drug Awareness

- Helps teach students about the dangers of drugs/alcohol/over the counter medications. 4th and 5th graders

Bike Rodeo

- Teaches the students about Bike Safety. I team with DelDOT and I do a classroom presentation about Bike Safety and then we also put the students through a Bike Safety Obstacle Course. 3rd Grade students.

ReThink Lessons

- Provision of assistance to school counselors by teaching ReThink lessons to all grades. These lessons focus on behavior/mental health/dangerous substances.

Mentoring

- SRO participation in the school I mentoring program, meeting with certain students at least once a week to talk through issues and play games.

Well/House Checks

- Our SRO will accompany the school counselor off campus to do well checks/ home visits on students. Some of these house visits have resulted in the need for the SRO to file DFS reports. He has also responded to students' residences and provided them transportation to school when needed.

IRSD Constable Training

- The TOV SRO has provided training to all the IRSD Constables at no cost to the district. They have been trained in Active Shooter Response and also use the OVPD Simulator to run them through Use of Force Scenarios.

Complaint Investigations (see next page)

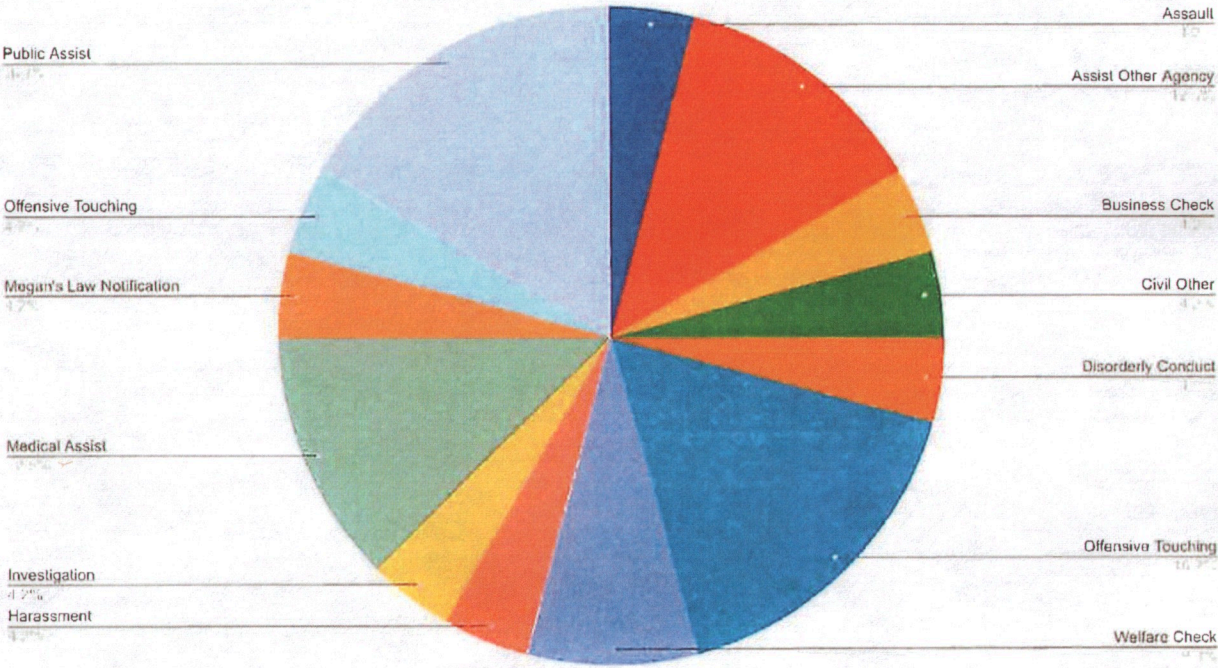
- The TOV SRO assists school administration in the investigation of complaints that occur in the school. These complaints include, harassment, assault, terroristic threatening, Bullying, Threats to the school, sexual harassment, and unlawful sexual contact. I've also assisted in investigating child abuse situations occurring at students' homes and make the appropriate contacts with police agencies (if occurring outside of OV town limits) and DFS to further have the situations investigated. I also assist school administration with escorting disorderly and combative students out of the classroom.

Besides the programs that are offered by our SRO he is constantly contacted by students at school to talk whether it be on the playground or in the cafeteria or in my office. I also get contacted by teachers looking for advice on issues they may be experiencing outside of the school.

The following provides a breakdown of the types of complaints our SRO handles and how much of his time is spent on the various complaint types.

| Incident Type (24-25) | Bradshaw |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Assault | 1 |
| Assist Other Agency | 3 |
| Business Check | 1 |
| Civil Other | 1 |
| Disorderly Conduct | 1 |
| Offensive Touching | 4 |
| Welfare Check | 2 |
| Harassment | 1 |
| Investigation | 1 |
| Medical Assist | 3 |
| Megan's Law Notification | 1 |
| Offensive Touching | 1 |
| Public Assist | 4 |

SGT Bradshaw SRO Incidents 9/24-4/25



Lord Baltimore Elementary School

SRO PROGRAM

**Town of Ocean View Police
Department**

2025/2026

Funding Request

**Presented to the
Indian River School District
Finance Committee
May 12, 2025**



Just the facts! Ocean View simply wants to be treated equitably in association with the IRSD funding support for our full time SRO program!

- Our program is entering its 4th year, with years 1 through 3 recognized to be beneficial to students, the school and the District.**
- The programming being offered by our officer and the level of staff, family and student support and engagement is above average for the SRO programs being offered in the District (refer to detail presented with our letter of April 8, 2025).**
- Ocean View has expressed concern for not being treated equitably in past years for which the District has yet to provide adequate justification.**
- The IRSD has set a precedent in that its clear the District funds other Towns/DSP by the number of officers serving as SRO not the number of schools they cover.**
- The number of schools an SRO is covering should have no bearing related to funding support if the Town/DSP have committed to provide a full-time officer at one or more schools.**

Just the facts! Ocean View simply wants to be treated equitably in association with the IRSD funding support for our full time SRO program!

The following SRO contracts were approved for the 2024/2025 school year (per information provided by the District):

- Delaware State Police (2 officers) **\$250,282**
- Town of Selbyville (1 officer) **\$82,000**
- Town of Georgetown (1 officer) **\$ 82,480**
- Town of Millsboro (1 officer) **\$83,412**
- Town of Ocean View (1 officer) **\$40,000**

There is no justification for limiting the Town of Ocean View to this level of funding. Our officer is a full time SRO at a District elementary school.

Our request for the 2025/2026 school year is \$80,000

Just the facts! Ocean View simply wants to be treated equitably in association with the IRSD funding support for our full time SRO program!

- We have requested funding at the Level of \$80,000 for the 2025/2026 school year.
- This level of funding will likely still fall below that of the other District supported SRO.
- It would be prudent for the District to adopt a per SRO level of funding that is standard rather than continue its current approach.
- The Town of Ocean View has made a commitment to our local school and the IRSD and therefore expects to be treated fairly for funding level support.
- Our SRO continues to provide additional value-added training to other SRO and constables that has not been provided by other SRO serving in District schools.
- The actual cost for our current seasoned SRO (salary and benefits is \$148,938) and for an entry level officer the actual cost (salary and benefits) would be \$113,291 at current rates.