County commissioners hire 3 school resource officers

by Renée Shreve
STAFF WRITER

OAKLAND — The Garrett County commissioners have approved the hiring of three new school resource officers for the sheriff’s office.

“This is to keep in compliance with Senate Bill 1265, known as the Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018,” Commissioner Paul Edwards said during the commissioners’ public meeting Tuesday afternoon at the courthouse.

The legislation was approved by the Maryland General Assembly this year in response to a school shooting in March at Great Mills High School in St. Mary’s County and other

school shootings across the country.

“We currently have three SROs in our buildings,” Edwards said. “This will authorize the sheriff’s office to hire three more, which was requested by Sheriff Corley and agreed to by the superintendent of schools.”

Edwards said SRO training takes time — almost one year. He noted, though, one of the new hires already has law enforcement and SRO training.

“I think the plan is to have him in place relatively quickly,” Edwards said about the trained officer.

The Garrett County Sheriff’s Office School Resource Officer program started in the 2013-14 school year.

“This is another move on behalf of us, in conjunction with the sheriff’s department and public schools, to do our part to try to keep our kids safe,” Edwards said.

In addition to the SRO announcement, the commissioners’ meeting included a public hearing on a Community Development Block Grant application.

Garrett County Community Action is seeking $420,000 through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development’s 2019 Homeless Initiative.

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Gregan Crawford, vice president of strategic initiatives, provides an overview of Community Action’s plan to provide transitional housing for homeless men. The agency is seeking $420,000 from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. A hearing on the grant application was held Tuesday afternoon during the county commissioners’ public meeting.

Counseling, transportation to appointments, job training and other services would be available to the residents, he indicated.

Crawford noted the grant does not require matching funding.

The CDBG application will be available for public review Aug. 27-31 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. in Room 208 at the courthouse in Oakland.

Sharon said.