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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Budget Initiatives 2018-2019

PUTNAM COUNTY, TN – The Putnam County Sheriff’s Office (PCSO) 2018 - 2019 Budget emphasizes the value this administration places on both protecting the most vulnerable within the community i.e. protecting its citizens and one of the county’s most important resources, the professional staff of the Sheriff’s Office.

A large portion of the budget is devoted to the proper implementation of a School Resource Officer (SRO) in all of the county’s elementary schools. Sheriff Eddie Farris has requested 11 School Resource Officers as part of this year’s initiatives. None of the elementary schools within Putnam County currently have a School Resource Officer assigned to them. The cost for each SRO is approximately \$100, 818. This price includes Deputy salary, mandatory state certification, training, resources, and equipment.

Sheriff Farris has been a proponent of SROs since taking office in 2014.

“We have plans in place for all budget outcomes,” the Sheriff stated. “I will not go into detail about those plans at this time, but rest assured that your Sheriff and Sheriff’s Office are taking precautionary measures to ensure the safety of your children.”

The Sheriff’s Office already has at least one SRO in every high school and middle school in the county.

“Our number one goal as the Sheriff’s Office is to prioritize the safety and security of Putnam County’s citizens, especially those who cannot protect themselves.”

Another way in which the budget reflects this sentiment addresses the growth of the county and the increasing demand for Sheriff’s Office services. These services, including unfunded mandates which include statutory requirements, necessitate more resources. A prime example would be court ordered mental health transports. The Sheriff’s Office takes approximately 400 trips annually for mental health transports. These transports are to facilities all over the state. This puts a strain on the office in multiple ways. These trips can be long and frequent which not only adds mileage but also causes additional wear and tear to the patrol vehicle. During these transports, the Sheriff’s Office is operating with one to two fewer Deputies and one less patrol vehicle for the duration of the trip to and from the mental health treatment center. This means that the other Deputies who are on shift when the transport occurs have to

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work twice as hard to accommodate the loss of manpower.

The budget committee has already approved a pay adjustment for commissioned and non-commissioned personnel. This next step will assist the Sheriff's Office in the retention and recruitment of trained and skilled personnel at all organizational levels. PCSO strives to maintain a highly trained workforce, but law enforcement, like any other industry, needs to remain financially competitive to employ the best and brightest. This pay adjustment improves job satisfaction for current employees and validates their importance, while simultaneously showing potential employees that this county is willing and capable of the investment in training and advancement for them to succeed in their careers.

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