

Sheriff's Update

May 3, 2023

10:35 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Swope, Commissioner Pollock, Interim County Manager Steve Wohld, Undersheriff Wes Rethwill, Corrections Bureau Chief Chris Sweet, Operations Chief Dusty Breen, Patrol Captain Rick VanWyck, Sheriff Rob Snaza, Budget Administrator Becky Butler

Guest(s): None

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Public comment: None.

Undersheriff Wes Rethwill said the Sheriff's Office is recognizing or participating in the following:

- Public Service Recognition Week
- National Corrections Officers
- National Police Week
- Peace Officers Memorial Service
- Vader May Day parade
- Onalaska school carnival

Undersheriff Rethwill said the Sheriff's Office participated in the week-long mock crash / distracted driving program in Mossyrock. He also discussed training the Sheriff's Office is providing.

Operations Chief Dusty Breen provided the following Sheriff's Office statistics:

- Has responded to 4,906 calls for service year to date
- Has responded to 1,347 calls in April 2025 alone
- Has initiated more than 1,000 traffic stops year to date
- Has responded to 395 animal calls year to date

Chief Breen said his department has one recent graduation and that one deputy will start the Academy in June, He said the sheriff's office ice has three total vacancies, one upcoming retirement in June.

Chief Breen said the Special Olympics Torch Run is June 2.

Corrections Bureau Chief Chris Sweet

Chief Sweet said Corrections has four vacancies, with one potential lateral move to fill a vacancy and two upcoming retirements.

Chief Sweet gave the following updates:

- HVAC and kiosk projects have been completed.
- The server and control tower projects ongoing.
- The jail population is hovering around 160-180.

Undersheriff Rethwill provided updates regarding the Services Bureau. He discussed staffing changes and noted that the Sheriff's Office is launching an electronic payment option. Undersheriff Rethwill said the East County substation should be ready to open in late summer / early fall.

Undersheriff Rethwill said the office is in compliance with training requirements under WAC 13905-300. He said Lexipol has recognized the Corrections and Operations bureaus for meeting its gold standards.

Patrol Captain Rick VanWyck said deputies continue to monitor Airport Road for illegal homeless encampments.

Sheriff Rob Snaza discussed the need to continue working together on code enforcement, homelessness and code enforcement. He noted that the Sheriff's Office has changed its testing firm.

Sheriff Snaza highlighted the attention the Sheriff's Office pays to policies, procedures and officer wellness.

Sheriff Snaza said the Legislature will hold a Special Session May 16 to address the Blake decision.

Sheriff Snaza said the Sheriff's Office sells seized firearms, but that the weapons are not sold to private citizens. He said they are sold to Federal Firearms License ("FFL")-licensed dealers, which then sell the weapons under state and federal guidelines. He noted that funds gathered from the sales fund the purchase of guns, ammunition and targets for the Sheriff's Office, saving taxpayer dollars.

Undersheriff Rethwill said there have been 135 officer deaths nationwide year to date, drastic increases over the previous year.

Meeting ended at 11:29 a.m.