

Sheriff's Update

March 9, 2021

10:00 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, Dusty Breen, Wes Rethwill, Kevin Engelbertson, Chris Sweet, Rob Snaza, Becky Butler, Katie Conradi, Erik Martin

Guest: Claudia Yaw

Recorder: Tammy Martin

Services Chief Kevin Engelbertson said they have one opening in the jail and one opening on roadside. Firearms transfers and Concealed Permit Licenses (CPL) are up. The *State vs. Blake* decision is impacting both firearm transfers and CPLs due to retroactive determinations being null and void. There were three detectives that attended training for de-escalation. This training was required because of I-940. Lewis County partnered with four other counties to ensure compliance of requirements. Lewis County was the first county to enact procedures of I-940. He also said there were human remains found and the detectives are partnering with King County Medical Office to determine identity.

Chief Sweet said there are three correction deputy vacancies. They made one hire last week. Two people are in the background process. COVID cells in the intake area are about 80% complete. They are also adding additional cameras. There have been some issues with the landscape blocking cameras and Facilities has agreed to take on the landscape project.

Chief Sweet said NaphCare has medical contracts to provide medicine to a variety of facilities. NaphCare's goal is to be accredited. They have a few items left to achieve the accreditation. Harborview University has teamed with NaphCare to see how NaphCare achieves the necessary requirements to become accredited. NaphCare currently has 6 contracts with jails in Washington.

Commissioner Pollock asked how NaphCare was handling the COVID crisis. Sheriff Snaza said that the Lewis County Jail is one of very few jails that offer 24 hour medical care. Having 24 hour medical care makes identifying medical issues efficient and easier to care for in a timely manner.

Chief Breen advised two deputies are finished with their Field Training Officer (FTO) training, and two employees graduated from the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA). There is a person on medical leave that will be resigning and a deputy that moved to a different department. They are currently in background review with one person. There will be one vacancy soon. Sheriff Snaza said Chief Breen is reviewing cost analysis to hire an entry level sheriff deputy, lateral sheriff deputy and a corrections deputy. This includes equipment, training, wages and benefits. They are also researching the cost associated for 2 years, 5 years, and 10 year ranges to employ deputies long-term.

Chief Breen said the most recent change in laws creates frustration for the sheriff's deputies and impacts cases and service on the road.

Undersheriff Wes Rethwill said they are expecting updates from Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs (WASPC) concerning Legislature updates that outline the bills are at and what changes have been made. They will update the Commissioners of any impact to Lewis County.

Sheriff Snaza said that they have to change adapt and overcome changes. There are grave concerns and frustrations due to the *State vs. Blake* decision. He feels there is a great need to address. This impacts drug court, mental health, and homelessness. He feels the recent decision from Legislature gives the wrong impression. He feels this decision condones drug use or abuse and show the Legislature supports drug addiction and legalization. Sheriff Snaza feels that Lewis County needs to continue to fight for helping those individuals that would have gained assistance for substance abuse.

Commissioner Stamper asked if there was any chance of a legislative fix for the impacts of the *State vs. Blake* decision. Sheriff Snaza did not have an answer for that. Commissioner Pollock feels this brings a grave disservice for supporting Drug Court and how they are handling drug crimes. Sheriff Snaza fears the legislature will undermine the actions to address dealing with drug possession and that condoning this type of behavior is not the right tactic to deal with drug possession.

Meeting ended at 10:39 a.m.