

PUBLIC RELATION

JANUARY 5, 2023 SPENCER LAKE BAR AND GRILL AND JANUARY 12, 2023 BURGER CLAIM MEETINGS

Sheriff Spurlings first meeting at Spencer Lake was a grand success with folks elbow to elbow in attendance. He has announced that he wants these meetings to be addressed as "CITIZENS ADVISORY MEETING". He also wants a private citizen to take over the meeting notification communication position to free up an officer. He conducted a meeting with 101 employees and asked 3 main questions. 1. What should we start? 2. What should we eliminate/continue? 3. What is actually happening out on the streets? He wants to be out in all communities and give his Under Sheriff the same and more responsibilities. He has realized that his Under Sheriff Travis Adams is a huge asset with staffing issues. Corporal Tim Riff was asked to discuss his saving of another officer which left Corporal Riff with a titanium rod in his spine and a long journey with a physical therapist. A representative with DOT has been asked to attend a future meeting. Currently there are 39 State Patrol Officers of which 14 are new. It is obvious that there are communities voting in younger and less experienced officers and voting out experience. Chief Hanson is still in charge of the jail. The sheriff wants to keep his staff healthy and will support any and all counseling needed as situations arise. He is going to continue the support of the Special Olympics as it is actually a morale booster for the staff. 25 thousand dollars have already been raised. Currently 30% of Mason Counties Officers are female. Recently 2 State Representatives rode with the Sheriff to experience the current restrictive enforcement laws. Sheriff Travis has gone to Washington DC to lobby for law enforcement and also to Olympia. It was made obvious that the best support and effectiveness for law enforcement will be from the general public. The jail issue is being addressed by all commissioners. Staffing is very low and the entire operation is almost at an end because of staffing issues. Weekend arrests are being outsourced by officers. This situation is affecting the entire criminal system. Future round-a-bouts are coming to Agate and Pickering Roads. Apparently the Road Department is painting wider lane lines to trick people to slow down. Sheriff has also met with the Principals at area schools. Attendee requested that the county bring back animal control. Because of no funding no officer, available training, housing or medications available.

Burger Claim Meeting 1/12/2023

Deputies Castelle and Clark attended the meeting. The impressive vest being worn by the officers became of interest from one of the public attendees. So everything attached was shown and of course the purpose was shared. Sheriff Spurling talked about the entire territory and lakes that need to be covered by a few shift officers, the hundreds of daily calls and the fact that Washington State has the lowest number of officers in the entire USA. The State Patrol back up was discussed when county is in need of help. Again a volunteer for the Citizen Advisory position was discussed/hopefully announced. More talk about dangerous dogs, lack of animal control. There is hope that with a new jail that there could also be an area for animal housing available. The thought is that possibly therapy with caring for a dog would be comforting for those arrested. The uptick of aggressive dogs has been a serious issue lately. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves and where they live. The meeting attendance which has been anemic was enhanced by 5 new Lakeland Residents. Sheriff shortened the meeting as he had official business he needed to attend.

Submitted by Maureen Allen

Public Relations chair