

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Law and Justice Council**  
**Wednesday, July 19th, 2023 – 12:00 p.m.**  
**Benton County Justice Center**

This Council meets about, and takes action on, issues pertaining to local criminal justice matters. This includes but is not limited to: Issues regarding jail management and DOC coordination, local crime trends and availability of criminal justice resources, sharing of information, personnel and infrastructure to reduce duplication of efforts and facilitate policing and supervision efforts to reduce recidivism and enhance responses to offender violations.

Eric Eisinger – Benton County Prosecutor  
Ryan Brown – Benton County Deputy Prosecuting Attorney  
Tom Croskrey – Benton County Sheriff  
Rob Guerrero – Benton County Corrections Chief  
Chris Guerrero – Kennewick Police Chief  
John Trumbo – City of Kennewick Council Member  
Matt Rasmussen – Deputy County Administrator  
Tom Glover – City of Prosser Administrator  
Dave Neher – City of Richland Deputy Police Chief  
Chuck Torelli – City of Kennewick Council Member  
Joe Burrowes – Superior Court Judge  
Tom Greggo – West Richland Police Chief  
Michael Alvarez – Benton County Commissioner  
Jon Law – Benton County Sheriff's Office Undersheriff  
Kevin Kennedy – Citizen Member  
Diana Ruff – Superior Court Judge  
Tiffany Runge – Superior Court Administrator  
Jennifer Azure – Benton County District Court Judge

Called to order by Chief Guerrero at 12:01

**Approval of Minutes (Action)**

- June 14th, 2023, no approval needed, they were approved the week prior

**Introductions**

- Around the Room Introductions

**New Business**

- **PSST Jurisdictional Spending Plan**

Chief Chris Guerrero gave an introduction and stated he hoped everyone had chance to see and review the spending plan document

Judge Burrowes stated that the corrections made look good

City Council member John Trumbo stated the form is good and easy to read and asked what the changes were made

Deputy County Administrator Matt Rasmussen stated that a couple of comments received regarding typos and some internal discussions and changes to gang and crime prevention were updated

City Council member John Trumbo asked how does estimated revenue line up with expenses, can someone comment

Deputy County Administrator Matt Rasmussen stated that county expenses are higher than the estimated revenues

Commissioner Alvarez commented that the gang and crime prevention took a hit, and they changed it to \$900,000, but that we needed to include other programs, stretching it a bit thin and we believe we will make it work

Judge Burrowes stated that under Superior Court, current actions should only state guardianship manager

- **Pro/Con Committees**

Chief Chris Guerrero listed the 2 names on pro committee – Alvarez as a citizen, May Hayes from West Richland

Commissioner Alvarez commented that Richland City Council was going to solicit some folks from foundation. Mr. Torelli stated he may be interested

Chief Chris Guerrero stated that we need to know those names sooner than later

Judge Burrowes asked if there are any other individuals on the KPD foundation that might be interested

Prosecuting Attorney Eric Eisinger stated that it is best to be very thoughtful when an elected official is advocating as a private citizen

City Council member John Trumbo stated it would be unwise to have 3 people directly related to the agencies from an optics standpoint

Commissioner Alvarez stated that name recognition is why he volunteered

City Council member John Trumbo stated it's a numbers game associated with this issue

Deputy County Administrator Matt Rasmussen commented that the resolution is ready, and he is waiting on the names

City Council Member Chuck Torelli stated that there is an argument to be made that we see the needs in much more detail than the general population, but also that there is validity in what Trumbo said and the optics, but also, we are all expected to know something

Chief Chris Guerrero asked if there were any other questions. No other questions were posed.

## **Old Business**

- **Continued Conversation – Update on the status of Public Safety Sales Tax**

Commissioner Alvarez stated that the communications department has been working hard at the county and going to be doing a lot of public speaking and getting the facts out. He will start doing that in September and October.

Deputy County Administrator Matt Rasmussen stated that the communications group and PIO's from the cities are opening a website regarding this where the public can access this online, once website is up, they will begin distributing it

## **Other Business**

Chief Chris Guerrero asked if there was any other business

City Council member John Trumbo stated he wanted to share a personal experience to help those making public presentations. He stated that you need to know that in his past he had to make a phone call about someone who purchased the house of a public official, and they don't know him, and he didn't know them. They recognized his name because it was recognizable and unique. He said something to the effect that you may recognize his name because he wrote for Herald and was on the Council, but I am calling as a private citizen. Because the way he did it, he was subjected to a complaint. It was determined by the PDC hearing officer that it doesn't matter how he tried to describe himself differently, it left an impression with the person that he was intimidating and that he then was then removed from his duties for 10 months. Saying you are a private citizen doesn't always override the power of your position.

Commissioner Alvarez stated that he agrees with that, and we are going to have a presentation reviewed by the PA to ensure we are only providing facts to the citizens of Benton County

City Council member John Trumbo added that in the complaint about the Kennewick School District, they were slapped on the hand for the social media content being too emotional

Judge Azure mentioned that they had met regarding the new diversion process and based on the new drug laws, they had opportunity to meet with LE and PA and were hoping to loop in OPD. They are working on a way to process and come up with a plan as we see influx of cases

Chief Chris Guerrero stated that meetings have been more productive with GCBH and seeing what they can bring forth. There is a purpose outside of PSST for this group. We need to continue to discuss these other topics.

Deputy County Administrator Matt Rasmussen stated that he was reading an article that Washington was the 51<sup>st</sup> in the nation for number of officers, where does this region stand?

Sheriff Croskrey stated that we are at the bottom of the barrel

Chief Greggo stated that West Richland is at 1.236

City Council member John Trumbo stated that when he was a news guy, the newsroom was populated with 1 reporter per 1,000 population, today the herald is rebuilding and 4 per 1,000

Chief Chris Guerrero stated that for Kennewick, national average is 2.4, not sure what we would do with 200 officers. We currently have 180. I would have a hard time going to council to justify we need 200. It's about finding balance

City Council member John Trumbo mentioned that at the city council meeting last night they had a discussion regarding the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks. Proposition was made by Torelli, more unified approach from the Tri-Cities. May be a good discussion point for this council to discuss in the future

**Public Comment**

Chief Chris Guerrero asked for public comment

There was no public comment

Meeting adjourned at approximately 12:33