

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Law and Justice Council**  
**Wednesday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 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.

Josie Delvin – Benton County Clerk  
Rob Guerrero – Benton County Corrections Chief  
Jon Law – Benton County Sheriff's Office Undersheriff  
Matt Rasmussen – Deputy County Administrator  
Cameron Fordmeir – Citizen Member  
Jay King – City of Prosser Police Chief  
Dave Wheeler – Benton County Probation Manager  
Tom Glover – City of Prosser Administrator  
Joe Burrowes – Superior Court Judge  
Tiffany Runge – Superior Court Administrator  
Jon Schwarder – City of Richland Police Commander  
Jared Kelly - West Richland Police Commander  
Michael Alvarez – Benton County Commissioner  
Kevin Kennedy – Citizen Member  
Melissa Hedrick – West Richland Police Assistant to the Chief

Called to order by Undersheriff Jon Law at 12:00pm

**Introductions**

- Around the Room Introductions

**Approval of Minutes (Action)**

- September 6, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Undersheriff Jon Law asked for a motion to approve minutes from September 6<sup>th</sup>

Kevin Kennedy made a motion to approve the minutes, and Chief Jay King seconded, motion carries unanimously

**New Business**

- Status of the Public Safety Sales Tax

Undersheriff Law asked for update on PSST

Commissioner Alvarez believes the ballot is set for pro/cons, he has spoken on public events as a private citizen and stated that both Republican party and Democratic party has endorsed it.

Commissioner Alvarez stated Yakima had the same thing came up with no sunset and 3/10, passed with 70%

Undersheriff Law asked for any other comments and any other business

Commissioner Alvarez stated that on Thursday they will have a PSST informative meeting at 6pm and the public is welcome to come and speak

Judge Joe Burrowes asked do you need us to come

Commissioner Alvarez stated that if people want to come, they are welcome

Undersheriff Law asked if there was any old business, no comment

### **Public Comment**

ABE Massage School, Rebecca Norman and Brenda Wiesner were present and stated that massage parlors posing as sex workers has become a problem and it seems it has been being ignored. They stated people are living in the building next to them. Richland made a new ordinance that is regulating massage parlors/bath houses. They posed the question "Why is this happening and why has no one reached out to association of massage?" They stated they are feeling like no one cares about this topic and don't feel it's not fair to allow people to get licensed as massage parlors, poses dangers. They asked, "How do we become an advocate?"

Undersheriff Law thanked them for coming in and speaking to the group

Commander Schwarder stated that he is aware they have worked with our street crimes division, but the Police department cannot change code. He did encourage them to continue to work with Richland PD and keep them informed. Seems they are large scale organizations that and not something that they can quickly get rid of. Thank you for coming and bringing this up

ABE Massage School, stated they want to know what they can do, seemed like it missed the mark when Richland rewrote the code. Lots of policies that we aren't sure information is being shared, such as business licensing requirements.

Commander Schwarder stated that keeping lines of communication open and working with them will be key

Commissioner Alvarez also stated that keeping in contact with LE is good, but they can only enforce current regulations. Go to city councils, write 3 legislatures, Stephanie Barnard, April Connors, Matt Boehnke. They can go back to Olympia and that is a good a starting point.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 12:12pm