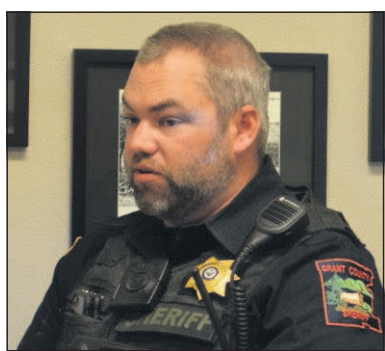


# Court agrees to beef up sheriff's office

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle



The Eagle/Richard Hanners  
**Grant County Undersheriff Zach Mobley addresses the Grant County Court on July 11.**

The Grant County Court unanimously approved creating two new sergeant positions with the sheriff's office at the July 11 meeting.

One position will oversee the office's road deputies, and the other will assist Sgt. Josh Wolf in overseeing the county jail. Grant County Treasurer Julie Ellison estimates that each position will cost about \$80,000 per year, including salary, health insurance, retirement and other costs.

## Increasing road deputies

In the case of the road sergeant, the goal is to eliminate the need to call out deputies, which puts a toll on staff and runs up overtime costs, Undersheriff Zach Mobley said.

Grant County Judge Scott Myers noted that he'd like to see officers have a chance to use their vacation time rather than just get the money.

The result would be the same seven-day-a-week patrol coverage for the road deputies, but the sheriff's office

overtime and \$50,000 for relief help at the sheriff's office last year. Costs ran \$30,000 over that amount last year, totaling about \$110,000, she said. The eclipse event and the Rainbow Gathering accounted for much of the unexpected costs.

Law enforcement agreements with John Day and Prairie City could help to cover additional costs of the road sergeant, Mobley said. Contracts between the county and the two cities have not yet been signed, but payments are being made, he said.

The county will not be able to keep those contracts without a fourth road deputy, Mobley said. He noted that Prairie City has a much higher call volume than Long Creek, Monument and Dayville combined. Without the fourth road deputy, Prairie City coverage would be for emergencies only, and John Day would have to figure out a solution on their own, Mobley said.

Ken Olson, a volunteer deputy who accrued long hours for the sheriff's office last year, noted that the office is in reactive mode, with deputies running from call to call without the time to consider preventive measures. He also noted that the county has a

serious drug problem that could be exacerbated with the legalization of recreational marijuana.

## Staffing issues at jail

Mobley said staffing at the Grant County Jail is down to a skeleton two-man crew, and the new sergeant position will enable the sheriff's office to run the jail with three people much of the time and maintain required standards. Grant County has contracts with several surrounding counties and the Burns Paiute Tribe to house inmates.

The county has nine to 10 corrections deputies, including part-time staff, for 24-hour, seven-day-a-week operations at the jail. But various needs put a strain on the staff, such as assigning two deputies for transportation, providing security during court sessions and booking.

Over-reliance on part-time deputies to fill those needs could lead to a union grievance, Mobley said. Skeleton staffing also poses a safety issue — if a fight breaks out, corrections staff must stay in the control room until a road deputy arrives to assist.

The new corrections sergeant position will provide a supervisor at the jail

seven days a week for 12 hours, Mobley said. Commissioner Rob Raschio, in his first county court session since being appointed, expressed concern about having two equally ranked officers in charge of the same facility but voted with Myers and Commissioner Jim Hamscher in favor of creating the new position at the jail.

In other county court news, volunteers were appointed to four county boards:

- Curt and Elizabeth Shelley resigned from the College Advisory Board. Chris Cronin was appointed to fill Elizabeth Shelley's seat, with the suggestion the new Grant School District 3 superintendent would fill Curt Shelley's seat.

- Mary Michael and Dolores Ostberg were reappointed to the Library Advisory Board.

- Judy Kerr and Hank Lissman were reappointed to the Road Advisory Board.

- Charles Dowse was reappointed to the Senior Citizens Advisory Council. Bruce Kaufman has resigned, leaving a vacancy.

The court's next regularly scheduled meeting is July 25.

## COPS AND COURTS

Arrests and citations in the Blue Mountain Eagle are taken from the logs of law enforcement agencies. Every effort is made to report the court disposition of arrest cases.

### Grant County Circuit Court

A charge against Michael D. Waddell, 61, Canyon City, of driving under the influence of intoxicants committed on May 27, 2017, was dismissed with prejudice on July 13. Waddell had showed substantial compliance with the requirements of the DUI diversion agreement.

Tiffany Huffaker, 36, Boise, Idaho, was found not guilty by a jury July 12 of one count of felony driving under the influence of intoxicants committed on March 24. The defendant was discharged.

Ryan D. Mingus, 51, Burns, pleaded guilty July 5 to misdemeanor fourth-degree assault committed on May 19. He was sentenced to 15 days in jail, 24 months probation, 20 hours community service, \$300 in fines and fees and \$100 restitution. Charges of criminal mischief and harassment were dismissed. Mingus also pleaded guilty July 5 to violating a court's stalking protective order, a misdemeanor committed on June 7. He was sentenced to 10 days in jail, 24 months probation, 15 hours community service and a \$100 fine, all consecutive to the previous case. Five additional charges of violating a court's stalking protective order were dismissed.

### Grant County Sheriff

The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the following for the week of July 11: concealed handgun licenses, 8; average inmates, 16; bookings, 12; releases, 14; arrests, 1; citations, 7; fingerprints, 1; civil papers, 12; warrants processed, 4; asst./welfare check, 1; search and rescue, 1.

July 6: Austin Nelson, 21, La Grande, was cited for vio-

lation of the basic rule, 83/55 zone.

July 9: Megan Lee, 53, Edmonds, Washington, was cited for exceeding the posted speed limit, 47/30 zone.

July 9: Phillip Stuwe, 59, Milwaukie, was cited for exceeding the posted speed limit, 67/45 zone.

July 9: Richard Boren, 61, Dayville, was cited for exceeding the posted speed limit, 67/45 zone.

July 9: A juvenile from Prineville was cited for being a minor in possession of marijuana and warned about being a minor in possession of tobacco.

July 9: A juvenile from Terrebonne was cited for being a minor in possession of marijuana and warned about being a minor in possession of tobacco.

July 11: Melani Finch, 28, Burns, was cited for violation of the basic rule, 83/55 zone.

### Justice Court

Speed limit violation: Brandon A. Merisch, 29, San Clemente, California, June 12, 80/65 zone, fined \$165; Tyler J. Rooney, 28, Mt. Vernon, June 8, 50/35 zone, fined \$140.

Exceeding speed limit: Kirk S. Scilacci, 62, Baker City, June 24, 43/25 zone, fined \$165; Randall R. Griffith, 61, Canyon City, June 16, 37/25 zone, fined \$140.

Violation of basic rule: Jackie A. Haff, 53, Mt. Vernon, June 18, 75/55 zone, fined \$165.

Driving uninsured: Tyler J. Rooney, 28, Mt. Vernon, June 8, fined \$265; Victoria J. McLean, 35, Prairie City, June 19, fined \$200.

Driving while suspended: Victoria J. McLean, 35, Prairie City, June 19, fined \$340.

Heather A. Reilly, 29, John Day, pleaded guilty to second-degree forgery and third-degree theft. Reilly was sentenced to 192 hours in jail, 18 months probation, 50 hours community service and \$697 in fines, fees and restitution. Three counts of second-degree forgery were dismissed. Probation was revoked for an earlier

case, and Reilly was sentenced to 120 hours in jail, and the fines became a \$684 civil judgment.

### Dispatch

John Day dispatch worked 178 calls during the week of July 9-15, including:

- **John Day Police Department**

July 11: Received a report of a hit and run crash on East Main Street in John Day.

July 11: Dispatched with sheriff's office and state police to West Main Street in John Day for a domestic dispute. Jessica L. Officer was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and probation violation.

July 12: Following a traffic stop on Highway 26 west of John Day, Adrian S. Obiero, Omaha, Nebraska, was cited for driving without a license and no insurance.

July 14: Following a traffic stop on Main Street in John Day, Tami L. Sasser, 36, Canyon City, was cited for driving with a suspended license and no insurance.

July 15: Dispatched to an

apartment complex on Highway 26 east of John Day for a possible assault and harassment.

July 15: Received a report of a stolen vehicle title on Southwest Brent Drive in John Day.

July 15: Following a traffic stop on West Main Street in John Day, Debra Parlin, 56, North Powder, and Benjamin Buchee, 54, Haines, were cited for open containers.

- **Oregon State Police**

July 9: Received a report of a vehicle hanging off the road on Highway 26 east of Mitchell.

July 10: Received a report of bicyclists taking up a lane and refusing to yield on Highway 26 near Fields Creek Road.

- **Grant County Sheriff's Office**

July 9: Received a theft report on West Bench Road.

July 10: Responded with John Day ambulance to Cottonwood Creek Trail near Wheeler County for a search and rescue call.

July 11: Received a report of sexual abuse in Mt. Vernon.

July 12: Received a report

of a suspicious person on Highway 402 near Monument.

July 12: Received a report of sexual abuse on Highway 19 near Kimberly.

July 13: Received a report of unwanted mules on Luce Creek Road in John Day.

July 13: Dispatched to South Bridge Street in Prairie City for suspicious circumstances.

July 14: Responded with state police to B Avenue in Seneca for a report of a domestic dispute.

- **John Day ambulance**

July 9: Responded with Seneca ambulance to Park Avenue in Seneca for a woman who had passed out and hit her head.

July 10: Dispatched with Prairie City ambulance to East Fifth Street in Prairie City for a woman who possibly had a stroke.

July 10: Prairie City ambulance responded for John Day ambulance to Laycock Creek Road in John Day for an 83-year-old woman with a possible stroke.

July 11: Responded to Northwest First Street in John

Day for a 36-year-old woman with difficulty breathing.

July 12: Responded to a gas station in John Day for a 34-year-old man.

July 13: Dispatched with Prairie City ambulance to Main Street in John Day for a woman with flu-like symptoms.

July 14: Dispatched to Southeast Dayton Street in John Day for a woman who had fallen.

July 14: Responded with Prairie City ambulance to North Johnson Avenue in Prairie City for a woman who fell while stepping out of a pool.

July 15: Dispatched with sheriff's office to Aldrich Mountain south of Dayville for an ATV accident.

- **Prairie City fire**

July 11: Responded to Keeney Fork Road in Prairie City for a report of an illegal campfire.

July 12: Dispatched with sheriff's office to South Johnson Avenue in Prairie City for illegal burning.

- **Forest Service**

July 11: Received a report of smoke near Starr Campground.

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Hello Grant County,

Did you notice the Horseless Carriages last week? There were about 30 of them tooling around Grant County. I was told they had a wonderful time!

On July 19, watch the skies for the antique and classic aircrafts that will be flying in to our airport. There will be eight planes. Take a drive up to the airport and check them out!

On Friday, July 20, there will be a presentation and discussion on Chinatowns and Placer Mines - The Lives of Chinese Gold Miners on the Oregon Frontier. It will be held at the Canyon City Community Hall from 6:00 to 7:30 PM. It is FREE, and is sponsored by Southern Oregon University Laboratory of Anthropology, the Grant County Historical Museum, 1188 Brewing Company, Oregon State Parks, USDA, and the Forest Service.

July 20 - 22 is the BIG John Day swim meet, so the town will be buzzing for sure! Stop by and wish our swimmers good luck!

Don't miss the Farmers Market on the 21st and 28th and every Saturday 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

We will also have 300 bicyclists for the "Ride the Range" bike tour July 21-28, sponsored by Bicycle Rides Northwest. They will begin and end in beautiful Seneca, Oregon, with overnight stops in John Day and Clyde Holliday State Park. So, let's be ready to share the road and show them some Grant County hospitality.

What else is happening this month:

25th & 26th - Velocette Owners Club Convention at the Fairgrounds

28th - Blue Mountain Hospital Foundation Golf Scramble

28th - National Day of the Cowboy in Prairie City - A full day of fun with a parade, games, dog exhibitions and talent contest and a concert at the Prairie City Community Hall with Brenn Hill and Andy Nelson at 7:00 PM and special guest, our own A.K. Moss!

The Chamber board will meet Thursday, July 19, at 10:30 at the Chamber office. The no-host membership luncheon will follow at 12:00 at the Outpost restaurant.

Our guest speakers this month will be Kathy Cancilla, the accreditation coordinator for the Grant County Health Department, and members of the Grant County Economic Council. Cathy will be discussing the Community Health Assessment, and the economic council will be sharing information about the new John Day bike park.

Everyone is welcome to come to our meetings.

It is time for our annual election of Chamber Directors. If you are interested in serving as a director, please let me know as soon as possible.

Current Directors are: Bruce Ward, President, Jerry Franklin, Scotta Callister, Bob Quinton, Greg Armstrong, David Driscoll, Amber Wright, Elaine Eisenbraun, Sally Knowles and Elaine Livran.

Tammy Bremner  
Chamber Manager

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