

HAND COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Public Safety Dispatch & Emergency Management
415 West First Avenue, Suite 102
Miller, South Dakota 57362-1371

Newsletter & Commission Report
August 2014

PERSONNEL:

- I have completed an additional interview but do not have the back grounds done on the two current applicants. I got a call from a current deputy sheriff elsewhere but he was making \$19/hour so he was no longer interested.
- Tammy Hofman will reach her one-year anniversary in August.
- Jeremy Johnson completed week three of his new position as deputy sheriff. Things are going well from my perspective.

TRAINING:

- Deputies Jim Keeter and Jeremy Johnson completed the DCI handgun / shotgun qualification program in Spink County this past month.
- Deputy Johnson will take traffic RADAR training this month in Gettysburg and a day long program on Meth in the coming weeks.
- Deputy Johnson continues in his orientation at the office. This typically takes three months to complete with another three months of field training.

Policy Manual:

- No activity

EQUIPMENT:

Prisoner Cage for vehicles: I have been in contact with a number of companies about the cage for the vehicle. Because of the age of our vehicles (2008) none of them carry cages in stock and said they could only be found in the used market which they all said is hard to locate. I spoke with Boney's Parts Plus as they had done some work for us in the past and they may be able to modify our used items to fit the vehicles.

Hand Guns: I submitted the paperwork and order forms for the GLOCK handguns to Jack's Uniforms. I have not heard anything back yet. Part of the paperwork was for the ATF as these are law enforcement only weapons.

Portable Radio: After Deputy McGawley left I got work back from the Communications Center in Pierre that the radio McGawley was using was "un-repairable". The channel selector knob was broken and needed replaced. The replacement part was ordered and installed but it was found that the connections to the main printed circuit board were damaged also. The cost to repair that was as much as a new radio. I told them to stop repairs and I am now asking to replace the radio while keeping costs below \$325.

Fuel business: Cowboy Country Store has expressed interest in providing pump fuels to the county through their store here in Miller. Mr. Fiblecorn in Watertown has offered to provide us fuel under the same terms and conditions as North Central Farmers Elevator has, that is \$0.06/gallon off pump price plus refunding of Federal Fuel Taxes. **I would ask the commission to approve the Cowboy Country Store as an alternate vendor for fuel.**

Surplus Property: I have several items which need to be surplused if there is going to be a fall sale. Among them would be the 99 Crown Victoria (currently used by the Assessor), which is contingent on purchasing the pickup for Emergency Management. I also have several computers which were taken out of service but not discarded / surpluses yet. **Has a date been set?**

GRANTS

The 2013-2014 Highway Safety Grant : Reimbursements are forthcoming on overtime and equipment purchased.

BVP / Vest Grant: I am in the process now of signing up for this program. Under this program the grant would pay about 50% of the costs associated with the purchase of vests for the officers.

2009-2014 COPS GRANT program: Because the program position is unfilled, there is no report.

Courtroom Security Grant: No report

IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES:

My **YEAR TO DATE** activity report is attached to this newsletter. This information is also uploaded to the sheriff's page on the Hand County Website. It can be reviewed at any time.

NECOG

I attended the NECOG - Revolving Loan Fund / Economic Development Corporation meeting this past Wednesday, July 30th. The next "council" meeting will be announced soon.

More information can be found at www.necog.org. I encourage you to visit the NECOG website.

To the commissioners,

First I would like to thank you for approving my hire for the Deputy position. I was very excited to take it and advance in my law enforcement career. Although I transitioned in this position a bit quickly, I learned a lot in the past month and want to provide some insight to you all, so that you can be more prepared in the hiring for this county.

Law enforcement operations are 5% public, 95% office and private. Not a single citizen in Hand County has any clue of what it takes to run the office in the day-to-day operations. I took this position because I have vast understanding of the day-to-day operations of more-staffed counties such as Brown and Pennington. The operations do not change much from county to county. But in larger counties they have different people to handle the different areas.

*** There is a need for 24/7 dispatch, there is a need for office staff to complete daily mail, logs, radio traffic, serving paper preparation, and smooth communication with other agencies and areas of the county.

From what I have seen in my travels throughout the county, the roadways are fine, fine enough to not invest a vast amount of money into the highway department for a single year. Rather put more into the Sheriff budget so you can offer a certified cop a decent signing bonus to come to Hand County.

I have told Doug and other employees in the past, for someone to take a deputy job here; all of the stars need to align. All things in their immediate life need to be smooth in order to take a large pay cut, and give up their former lives to start a new chapter.

\$13.22 an hour is insufficient for most. 99% of the cops you receive for hire that come to Hand County will treat it as a stepping stone; they'll leave after getting certified. I advised Doug this morning that based on my current experience here, the workload I had, and the low staffing; I would not want to stay here. I advised him that I wanted to have enough respect and courtesy to resign before any further money is wasted teaching someone who doesn't intend to stay.

To ensure proper operation of this office, there needs to be at least two full time deputies. The fuel budget needs to be more than \$2,700 a year. That is nothing. I will admit that this county does have good vehicles and equipment; however they are about ready to retire.

There really is no incentive to make any changes to the budget, or to actually try to make a difference in the Sheriff's Office. But realize this Commissioners, the sheriff's office deals with most legal matters and everything legal-wise needs to be done correctly. Its only a matter of time before the low pay and bad communication leads an inexperienced employee to do the wrong thing, and cause the county a major lawsuit.

Do you really want to take responsibility for a half-wit deputy who discharged his weapon in the wrong? Or wasn't alert enough for work because he didn't care, didn't take this \$13/hr job serious enough to see someone in a crosswalk and hit them? \$13.22 an hour is insufficient in this day and age. We aren't farmers with nice things, paid for homes, great credit, and land ownership. We are starting from the bottom in life and need to be sure we have financial security as well as good job security before we want to take this job seriously.

I wrote this from my own personal experience. Doug is a huge asset to the office because he ensures the smooth operation, but I resigned because the workload is far too much and beyond me as a law enforcement officer to handle for \$13.22 an hour.

To the commissioners,

As the weight of work increases on Doug's shoulders, it affects his attitude and outlook, which then in turn affects our perception and the impact of that weight on us.

This job has been extremely stressful and I am more at ease after resigning. Please see the big picture and correct these issues before someone makes a mistake and it costs the county more than preparation would have.

I have been a police officer in the past, I have worked for the South Dakota Highway Patrol, I have experienced the big picture with departments such as Rapid City Police and Sioux Falls Police. I have seen what it takes to run an agency correctly and the backbone is the staff. And for \$9.00 an hour Hand County won't have a computer-literate person that can handle her workload.

The only reason Nehemia and Tammy have not left is because they are tied to this town. They have to keep that job to keep food on the table.

Any new deputy that will come in will most likely come in a single man such as myself. He will have no kids, no ties to other towns. He is free to create a new chapter in his life at his own will. But as I said above, all factors and stars need to align for him to make this place his home.

The old saying is "You get what you pay for".

It is my understanding that a few of you commissioners are farmers? Or "Ranchers"?

What kind of "right-hand man" do you think you could get for \$8.00 an hour?

Do you think someone could put together discreet legal documents and handle your money correctly without error for \$8.00 an hour?

This county is 1,400 sq miles; We have 1-2 people that are sworn and armed to protect the lives of the citizens at all edges of the county. The sheriff is your protection outside the city. The sheriff is a reflection of your image in the public. I could write pages upon pages of things that need to be fixed in this county. Everyone in the office is so over concerned with job security and staying busy that it causes extreme stress on everyone.

Like I said above, its only going to be a matter of time, not if; but when someone ill-experienced, poorly paid, ill-committed to their job makes a big mistake in the line of duty and the county gets sued to the nines. If anyone knows the legal repercussions of poor sheriff work its Doug.

Please take this information as insight and I pray that it assists in a workplace change that can be great for everyone. The minimum hourly pay for a good deputy should be at least \$16.89/hr, It would also be a very smart idea to offer a \$3,000 signing bonus (w/contract) to a certified guy with at least 3 years deputy experience. So the county isn't constantly writing new books on blank paper every year. Hand needs a good right hand man for Doug to help oversee operations.

Sincerely,
Jeremy Johnson
Formerly HCSO 331B

X{  } 08/03/2014

Hand County Sheriff's Office, Report of Monthly Activity (2004 to Present)

Activity by period:	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014 (Year to Date)		
Case Reports / Responses	456	480	483	306	488	553	461	558	580	416	273		
Sheriff's Returns (Process Served)	234	207	254	260	262	391	246	260	199	204	174		
Pistol Permit Applications	76	78	80	98	99	109	105	100	145	180	68		
Accidents (No injury)	115	97	101	87	90	98	101	99	112	76	37		
Accidents (w/Injury)	7	11	13	1	2	10	12	10	13	11	10		
Accidents (w/Fatality)	4	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	2	0		
Traffic Tickets Issued	77	84	67	61	16	51	107	157	87	132	46		
Traffic Warning Tickets Issued	60	23	40	28	10	25	138	268	117	341	137		
Writs of Execution / Judgment	40	30	24	25	28	43	51	71	69	46	39		
Distress Warrants for Taxes	2	2	2	5	2	3	4	6	5	4	0		
Unattended Deaths	4	2	2	0	3	3	3	2	4	2	1		
Hand County Warrants Open			44	2	50	55	62	54	51	57	56		
Totals	1075	1015	1110	873	1053	1341	1290	1585	1383	1471	841		

Persons in Held in Jail or Detention

Adult Prisoners	50	41	4	6	20	18	0	21	17	13	4		
Juveniles in Detention	2	0	2	0	1	2	1	0	1	0	0		
Prisoner Days	675	855	774	186	-	-	-	180	UNK	288	151		

Financial Report

Accounts Receivable to Jail	\$14,515.00	\$21,202.12	\$28,377.12	\$27,409.62	\$27,437.12	\$28,907.12	\$30,753.80	\$1,125.74	\$1,375.74	\$1,065.74	\$815.74		
Jail Restitution Received	\$2,820.00	\$4,325.00	\$3,545.00		\$4,805.00	\$1,980.00	\$1,413.62	\$1,820.00	\$350.00	\$1,885.00	\$2,785.00		
Revenue from Sheriff's / Other fees			\$4,153.18	\$4,730.76	\$4,166.51	\$6,662.54	\$5,055.89	\$4,553.75	\$3,305.01	\$3,901.23	\$2,578.70		

Accident Damage Information (Does not include medical expenses)(Sheriff's Office Only)

2004 Vehicle Accident Property Damage	\$351,357.60												
2005 Vehicle Accident Property Damage	\$344,269.90												
2006 Vehicle Accident Property Damage	\$439,364.90												
2007 Vehicle Accident Property Damage	\$396,975.67												
2008 Vehicle Accident Property Damage	\$280,457.52												
2009 Vehicle Accident Property Damage	\$433,199.00												
2010 Vehicle Accident Property Damage	\$394,084.34												
2011 Vehicle Accident Property Damage	\$384,380.41												
2012 Vehicle Accident Property Damage	\$490,103.99												
2013 Vehicle Accident Property Damage	\$282,716.57												
2014 Vehicle Accident Property Damage	\$379,068.11												

When "UNK" appears this is because the records can not be validated yet. Some records were maintained correctly or information was loaded in the wrong area.