

**Benton County Law and Justice Council
Meeting Minutes 09/13/2017**

Present:

Craig Littrel, City of Kennewick Police Department
Paul Parish, City of Kennewick Council Member
Ben Majetich, City of West Richland Police Department
Dave Giles, City of Prosser Police Department
Rusty Morris, Citizen Representative
Ray Kofoed, Citizen Representative
Pat Austin, Superior Court
Shyanne Faulconer, Benton County Commissioners
Dan Kathren, District Court
Jacki Lahtinen, Benton County District Court Administrator
Tara Symons, Mental Health Court
Frederick Brink, Citizen Representative
Andy Miller, Benton County Prosecutors Office
Judge Alex Ekstrom, Benton and Franklin Superior Court
Eric Hsu, Benton County Office of Public Defense
Delfina Meza, Benton County Office of Public Defense

Benton County Mental Health District Court – Tara Symons

- The program has been a success, they are currently full with 37 clients and no wait list. They have a total of 5 clients graduating with 2 ceremonies scheduled. Tara mentioned the team will be going to Seattle for training at the end of October; training will be through the National Association of Drug Court. Early next year they will be providing additional training for the Attorney's as well. A referral packet is being put together for the clients so they can have a better understanding of the process of the program. The Benton County Mental Health Court Team has invited all staff to witness one of their graduation ceremonies scheduled for September 27, 2017 at 9:00am in Benton County District Courtroom # 4.
- Superior Court Judge said that it is refreshing to see the program be such a great success and has seen a reduction from clients returning to court.
- Eric also mentioned that he has seen a reduction in cases due to the program.

Benton County Commissioners – Shyanne Faulconer

- Public Safety Tax review: Revenues are from January 2017 through the end of August 2017 targets at 33%. Shyanne passed around a sheet explaining all the budgets and expenditures for each department. Gang and Crime Prevention program has a remaining biennial budget allocated at just over

\$600,000. Public safety tax are being tracked and there is discussion on a Radio tower, but no confirmation on it just yet.

- Citizen Representative - Questioning the double taxation, it was recommended the citizen go to the board regarding these concerns.
- West Richland Police Department – Chief Majetich stated West Richland is the best city to raise your family. In August 2017 the city opened their new Middle School Leon Libby, and they have confirmed a new High School is to come.
- Kennewick Police Department – 5 Officers have been hired, one will be sworn in on Monday September 18, 2017.
- District Court – No update all is going well.
- Eric Hsu OPD – No updates for OPD, other than funds were used to staff the Executive Assistant position.

Eric asked if there is any other business to discuss, none at this point. Next meeting will be in November 2017.

Adjourn at 12:28