

Brittany Voie

January 20, 2017

Hon. Rob Snaza
Lewis County Sheriff's Office
345 W Main Street
Chehalis, WA 98532

Re: Unmarked Vehicles

Dear Sheriff Snaza:

I am writing today to express my concern for what it appears to me to be an attempt by the Lewis County Sheriff's Office to reduce visibility of county law enforcement vehicles, despite vocal, public record opposition from the public on the topic previously.

Just shy of two (2) years ago, Lewis County updated their county code to potentially allow for broader use of unmarked vehicles (vehicles without graphics that specifically identify their agency) by the county, including law enforcement. The vote on this update was tabled twice by the Lewis County Board of County Commissioners over concerns and testimony from the public.

While it was stated by the Sheriff's Office and others, at the time, that the intent was **not** to increase the use of unmarked vehicles, the transition to dark, "lithium grey" law enforcement vehicles with black vinyl graphics, appears to be a step in the direction of unmarked vehicles.

On Monday, January 16, 2017, as I was driving on Maurin Road through the Port of Chehalis, just after dusk, with a bit of light left in the sky. I personally observed one of LCSO's new dark grey Ford F-150 vehicles conducting a traffic stop in front of Fred Meyer. As I slowed my vehicle for the safety of the deputy, I was barely able see the graphics on the side of the vehicle and observed no reflective vinyl lettering identifying the agency.

As a citizen, I believe your fleet is transitioning to a design and color scheme that greatly reduces the visibility and identifiability of your agency. This transition to "covert vehicles" is in direct contradiction to many of the concerns that were expressed during the public comment period on February 9, 2015 and April 6, 2015 at the Board of County Commissioners meetings. Attached, please find true and correct copies of the meeting minutes.

For comparison, law enforcement in the City of Centralia and City of Chehalis have chosen graphics and colors schemes on their vehicles that make them clearly recognizable and identifiable, utilizing high contrast schemes with messages to the public at large ("Call 911," etc.)

Not only does a highly visible police presence (including vehicles) act as a general deterrence of crime, according to most community policing standards, it also improve public confidence.

According to the Department of Justice:

"Police are finding that crime-control tactics need to be augmented with strategies that prevent crime, reduce the fear of crime, and improve the quality of life in neighborhoods. Fear of crime has become a significant problem in itself. A highly visible police presence helps reduce fear within the community, fear which has been found to be " ... more closely correlated with disorder than with crime." However, because fear of crime can limit activity, keep residents in their homes, and contribute to empty streets, this climate of decline can result in even greater numbers of crimes."

As the paragraph above illustrates, the concerns raised previously over the issue of less visible county vehicles is not a unique concern — it is one well documented by government law enforcement agencies and widely discussed in criminal justice education and training.

"Visible presence" (some textbooks refer to this as "officer presence") was also noted as the baseline level of the "force continuum" during my criminal justice education at Centralia College. According to the National Institute of Justice:

"The mere presence of a law enforcement officer works to deter crime or diffuse a situation."

It is no stretch to apply this principle to law enforcement vehicles.

It's worth noting that some of my professors who taught these topics, while I studied for my degree, were employed by the Lewis County Sheriff's Office.

The alleged officer impersonation incidents in Centralia and Vancouver in December 2016 underscore the concerns of reducing the identifiability, visibility of the graphics, and contrast of said graphics on your vehicles. As previously stated, clearly identifiable, visible law enforcement presence increases public confidence and sense of safety in their community.

It is not difficult to find, nor difficult to purchase surplus law enforcement vehicles. A quick internet search as of the writing of this letter revealed more than a dozen law enforcement style vehicles, including Ford Crown Victorias, Chevrolet Impalas and Caprices, among other police interceptor style vehicles, all available for sale. Decommissioned law enforcement vehicles have

also been sold at the local Centralia Auction on North Pearl Avenue. It's not uncommon to see what appear to be unmarked vehicles, driven by civilians.

It is also worth noting that your agency is transitioning to vehicles that are widely available to consumers and driven by many civilians. Ford F-150s and Explorers are among some of the most popular consumer and family vehicles on the road. This compounds the problem with lack of identifiability.

Also available online, just on Amazon.com alone, are more than 1,000 different types of law enforcement-grade, roof-mounted light bars — both magnetic (read: easily removable / temporary) styles and permanent styles, dash and under-mounted grill lights — nearly identical to those installed on county and city law enforcement vehicles, plus “problers” and other types of strobe / emergency lights similar to those utilized on other types of unmarked vehicles. All of these options I mention are available in amber and blue, or any other color configuration you can imagine. While the alleged suspect in the Centralia incident used a single, red light — inconsistent with most local agencies — it is not difficult to obtain more realistic features, if someone was so intent on impersonating an officer.

It's also important to note that my concerns are not limited to traffic stops. What's stopping someone from patrolling a local neighborhood, in a look-a-like county vehicle, in efforts to identify targets for burglary, etc.? Or, prevents a law enforcement impersonator from stopping at a residence and gaining entry to a home under false pretenses, with an unmarked car? As the county has broadened the language for unmarked vehicles overall, and continues to reduce visibility of their vehicles, citizens who otherwise might be vigilant of potential imposters, may be less likely to suspect danger, due to the increased use of unmarked and reduced visibility / identifiability vehicles.

Comments from Commissioner Bill Schulte, Commissioner Gary Stamper, and other county residents underscored some of these same concerns in the February 9, 2015 Board of County Commissioners Meeting, which are now relevant again, due to recent events and in relation to Centralia Police Department's recent instructions to residents who are uncertain of the legitimacy of an officer or vehicle to call dispatch and verify. For those without a cell phone, or in an area without cell service, or those who frequently travel or live in a very remote area, they remain vulnerable despite this protocol.

In my opinion, this is an officer safety concern, for several reasons. If a law enforcement vehicle is not easily identifiable or recognizable, there are a number of situations that where potential problems could arise:

- Lewis County deputies routinely conduct searches and pursuits of suspects at night in rural areas, including while driving and on foot, sometimes with K-9 tracking, etc. Often, this is with very limited use of strobe lighting or light bars, as officers are attempting to locate and, therefore, not tip off the subject the search. The unintended consequence of

this is that there has been more than one local instance in the past couple of years where (in the Lewis County area), because civilians unrelated to the activity did not know and / or could not tell / ascertain quickly enough that a legitimate pursuit or track was happening near their residence, and they were injured as a result.

- Lewis County deputies routinely (occasionally an unmarked car) conduct traffic stops in rural, outlying or remote areas, also at night (Sheriff Snaza himself acknowledged this in the February 5, 2015 BOCC meeting). As I have pointed out, law enforcement style lights and a police interceptor style vehicle are not enough to assure a citizen that they are being pulled over by a legitimate officer or agency. The unmarked vehicles present the greatest concern to me, but the reduced visibility of graphics on county law enforcement vehicles, I believe, will also contribute to the problem of reduced confidence in traffic stops. I believe the implementation of graphics that reduce the identifiability of your agency, in conjunction with the public's existing distrust of unmarked vehicles and the increased use of unmarked vehicles by other agencies, including State Patrol, will continue to undermine the trust of the citizens of Lewis County.
- If deputies are approaching rural residential properties in the dark, while in the lawful execution of their duties, etc., and citizen cannot easily identify their vehicle as law enforcement, it is not a stretch of the imagination to visualize a situation where a deputy could be met by an armed civilian resident, due to fear, having jumped to conclusions or perceived a threat because they felt unsafe. Lewis County's reputation as an armed county is well-known.

Among my law enforcement-related concerns, there is also concern for the Prosecutor's Office. In some cases, citizens have had felony eluding charges dropped or overturned on appeal, with citizens and counsel arguing that they were unclear if an officer attempting to stop them was legitimate. An affirmative defense against felony "Attempting to elude police vehicle" is noted in RCW 46.61.024, stating:

"(2) It is an affirmative defense to this section which must be established by a preponderance of the evidence that: (a) A reasonable person would not believe that the signal to stop was given by a police officer; and (b) driving after the signal to stop was reasonable under the circumstances."

In light of recent local events, the increase of surplus law enforcement vehicles on the road and available for sale, in conjunction with the reduced visibility / identifiability of county vehicles, on top of citizen concerns regarding the broadening of the language regarding the use of unmarked vehicles at the county level, and the news coverage of the events that transpired in the Board of County Commissioners meeting regarding this issue — I believe it's fair to be concerned that this progression of less visible identification on county vehicles could affect lawful prosecution in our county in potentially indirect ways.

I respectfully request, if the Sheriff's Office is going to continue to transition to dark colored vehicles, that the graphics be updated to include more highly visible markings, ideally including at least one additional color, with purposeful, increased contrast, to help better establish recognition of the vehicle by the community, and to increase public confidence in law enforcement, while also increasing your visibility in the community.

In closing, I would like to make my support for the Sheriff's Office, and all those in the county who work in law enforcement, very clear. My concerns stated in this letter in no way change my exceeding admiration, appreciation, nor the high level of respect I have for your agency and deputies. I, personally, have been assisted by the Lewis County Sheriff's Office and, in one personal case, I still to this day could not put into words the level of my gratitude. I have been personally impressed with the Sheriff's Office and Prosecutor's Office conducting town hall style meetings and taking an active interest in public opinion and concerns (which is also part of what encouraged me to write this letter). The success of JNET has been fantastic. I frequently hear the Sheriff, himself, out working in the community working while I listen to the scanner (even on holidays), and think that's an absolutely wonderful and a concrete show of solidarity with your deputies. I cannot overstate enough how much I value the functions you perform for this community.

All that being said, I remain concerned. Of course, my criminal justice degree from Centralia College is no match for your experience or expertise; However, I believe it gives me a solid foundation of information on which I base these concerns. As a citizen, I have been able to easily reference a wealth of local and regional sources that serve as realistic examples of the stated concerns in this letter.

I hope that my concerns are received as respectfully as I intend them, and I look forward to future correspondence on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brittany Voie", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brittany Voie

CC: LCSO Administration
345 W Main Street
Chehalis, WA 98532

Lewis County Prosecutor's Office
345 W Main Street, # 2
Chehalis, WA 98532

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
January 5, 2015**

The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) for Lewis County, Washington, met in regular session on Monday, January 5, 2015, at 10:00 a.m. **Commissioners Edna J. Fund, P.W. "Bill" Schulte, and Gary Stamper** were in attendance. **Chair Fund** determined a quorum, called the meeting to order and proceeded with the flag salute. **Commissioner Schulte** moved to approve the minutes from the 10:00 a.m. meeting held on Monday, December 22, 2014. **Commissioner Stamper** seconded the motion.

Motion Carried 3-0

PUBLIC COMMENT

Hal Washburn, Cinebar, stated he would like to see the BOCC videos and minutes be posted by the BOCC in a timely manner.

Bob Bozarth, Chehalis, spoke regarding I-594.

NOTICE

Commissioner Schulte made a motion to approve the Notice Agenda item one. **Commissioner Stamper** seconded the motion.

- 1. Notice: Establishment of 2015 county road construction projects by County Forces. Resolution No. 15-001**

Tim Elsea, Director of Public Works, stated pursuant to RCW 36.77.070, "If the Board determines that any construction should be performed by county forces, and the estimated cost of the work exceeds ten thousand dollars, it shall cause to be published in one issue of a newspaper of general circulation in the county, a brief description of the work to be done and the county road engineer's estimate of the cost thereof." In this case, the work to be done is the county forces construction projects in 2015. The 2015 Annual Construction Program (ACP) was adopted by resolution 14-306 on November 17, 2014 and lists portions of the 2015 Countywide 3R Program (\$1,100,000), 2015 Countywide Misc. Safety & Guardrail (\$25,000), and Roundtree Road Slide Repair (\$150,000) as County Forces construction projects with estimated costs in excess of ten thousand dollars.

Motion Carried 3-0

CONSENT

Commissioner Schulte made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items two through ten. **Commissioner Stamper** seconded the motion.

2. Resolution No. 15-002 Approval of Warrants for payment.

Chair Fund stated this approves 411 regular warrants for a total payment against the County in the amount of \$2,345,336.55.

3. Resolution No. 15-003 Cancellation of Warrants.

Suzette Smith, Auditor's Office, stated we have two warrants that were lost. The two warrants totaling \$95.00 will be voided and reissues.

4. Resolution No. 15-004 Designating Time and Location of Tax Foreclosure Sale.

Laura Rider, Treasurer's Office, stated this is a Resolution which recommends Friday January 30, 2015 at 9:00 am for the Tax Foreclosure Sale.

5. Resolution No. 15-005 Approving an Inter-agency Agreement with Washington State University for the Delivery of Outreach Education Programming.

Sheila Gray, WSU Extension Director, stated WSU Extension and Lewis County have held a long standing relationship through an annual Inter-agency Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). This year's MOA follows terms as per past agreements along with financial support from Lewis County in the amount of \$68,374 for the fiscal year of 2015. WSU Extension is the front door to the University. It extends non-credit education and degree opportunities to people within Lewis County. Extension builds the capacity of individuals, organizations, businesses and communities, empowering them to find solutions for local issues and to improve their quality of life. Extension is an accessible, learner-centered, providing relevant, high quality, unbiased educational programs. Extension collaborates with communities to create a culture of life-long learning.

6. Resolution No. 15-006 Contract between Lewis County Coroner's Office and Northwest Forensic Pathologists, P.S.

Chair Fund stated this Resolution is a contract between the Lewis County Coroner's Office and Northwest Forensic Pathologist, P.S. for autopsy services.

7. Resolution No. 15-007 Contract between Lewis County Coroner's Office and Brown and Sticklin Funeral Homes.

Chair Fund stated this Resolution is a contract between the Lewis County Coroner's Office and Brown and Sticklin Funeral Homes for removal services.

8. Resolution No. 15-008 Approve Contracts with Community Allied Behavioral Health, True North ESD 113, Eugenia Center, and Fresh Start for Drug and Alcohol Treatment and Prevention Services.

April Kelley, Social Services Manager, stated this approves contracts between Lewis County and Community Allied Behavioral Health (CABH), True North ESD 113, Eugenia Center, and Fresh Start for Drug and Alcohol Treatment and Prevention Services. These funds are then subcontracted with local treatment agencies to provide services and activities as defined in RCW 70.96A and WAC 388-877 and 388-877B. Contracts are effective July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. Contracts were delayed in getting out to providers due to contract revisions requested by DBHR in August 2014.

9. Resolution No. 15-009 Appointing Larry Mason as an Alternate Member to the Veterans' Advisory Board (VAB).

April Kelley, Social Services Manager, stated there is a vacant alternate position on the VAB which needs to be filled. It is recommended to appoint Larry Mason to the position.

10. Resolution No. 15-010 Appointing Michael Mahoney to the Lewis County Planning Commission.

Lee Napier, Director of Community Development, stated this is a reappointment of Michael Mahoney to the Lewis County Planning Commission. Mr. Mahoney has served two terms on the planning commission and would like a third term. This will be his last term and is a four-year commitment.

Motion Carried 3-0

HEARINGS

Chair Fund announced the hearing and asked for a staff report.

Glenn Carter, Prosecutors Office, stated State law, RCW 46.08.065, generally requires all vehicles owned or controlled by the county to be marked while used in public business or operated on the public highways. RCW 46.08.065 authorizes county boards of county commissioners to provide by rule or ordinance for exceptions to the marking requirements with respect to vehicles "used for law enforcement, confidential public health work, and public assistance fraud or support investigative purposes, and for vehicles leased or rented on a casual basis for a period of less than ninety days." Additionally RCW 46.08.66 authorizes the director of the Department of Motor Vehicles on the recommendation of the Chief of the Washington State Patrol to issue confidential plates where necessary for the personal security of a county officer or employee. The proposal before you adds a new section to the Lewis County Code authorizing the use of unmarked vehicles for the purposes permitted by RCW 46.08.65 through 66. We are

proposing this change because of a recent incident in Chelan County. From time to time the Lewis County Sheriff's Office is engaged in investigative activities where the use of an unmarked vehicle enhances the effectiveness of the investigation as well as provides an extra measure of personal protection to the officers involved.

Commissioner Schulte asked how many unmarked vehicles does Lewis County own at this time.

Tim Elsea, Director of Public Works, stated no vehicles except the Sheriff's Office, are unmarked.

Ron Averill asked if we are essentially passing the RCW.

Glenn Carter stated in the sense that the exception permitted by the RCW are the only exemption that we are adopting then yes.

Hal Washburn, Cinebar, asked would this proposed Ordinance allow the Sheriff to use the unmarked vehicle to issue speeding tickets or traffic control.

Glenn Carter stated the authorization under the statute is "Used for law enforcement, confidential public health work, public assistance fraud or support investigative purpose etc..." Enforcing the laws might include traffic laws.

Glenn Carter stated there were questions submitted for record purposes by Cindy Ticknor who is a former employee of the County. She has asked that those questions be answered as well.

1. How and who will authorize the use of an unmarked vehicle when an employee feels threatened?

Glenn Carter answered the Ordinance incorporates state law which provides in RCW 46.08.066 (1)(c) for the Director of the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue confidential plates standing public employee for the person security of that employee when recommended by the Washington State Patrol Chief.

2. How will you handle the public's concern of feeling threatened by a public employee in an unmarked vehicle?

Glenn Carter answered in any case where a member of the public feels threatened by public employees. He or she should contact the employee's supervisor or law enforcement or both.

3. Will your decision to allow an employee to drive an unmarked vehicle, with exception of those allowed by RCW 546.08.06, be made public?

Glenn Carter answered if the security of an employee requires the use of unmarked vehicle there might be reasons why that employee's identity is not disclosable. It will depend on the circumstances of the case.

4. Will the employees who drive an unmarked vehicle pay tax for the vehicle in accordance to the IRS tax requirement? How will you insure the tax laws are followed?

Glenn Carter answered unfortunately he was not an expert on the tax laws and that question is best addressed to a tax accountant or within our own county to the accounting services employees in the Auditor's Office.

5. How are you currently reporting unmarked vehicle use, to the IRS, for the employee's violating RCW 546.08.06 and other laws?

Glenn Carter answered I am not aware of any violation. It would be best addressed to the county employees that handle the County tax issues.

6. Why are you making these changes?

Glenn Carter answered the change was proposed in response to a recent incident in Chelan County.

Commissioner Schulte noted that we are authorizing a practice that we are currently conducting.

7. What benefit is it to the public?

Glenn Carter answered unmarked vehicles are useful in undercover investigations.

8. Will unmarked vehicles be taken home or used for out of county travel?

Glenn Carter answered some vehicles may be used for community purposes but are not authorized for personal use.

9. What audit tracking/documentation will be in place to insure these vehicles are being used for county business and not personal use or to threaten or follow people (with exception of those allowed per RCW)?

Glenn Carter answered it is dependent on the person record keeping of the individual, checking by the employees supervisor, and reports from members of the public.

10. How long will an employee be allowed to drive an unmarked vehicle because they feel threatened?

Glenn Carter answered based on RCW 46.08.066 the determination whether and for how long a public employee may drive an unmarked vehicle for person security reason will be for the DMV Director to make on the advisory of the Chief of the State Patrol.

11. Are family members allowed to ride in unmarked vehicle?

Glenn Carter answered it would depend on the facts and circumstances on whether and employee would be allowed to carry a family into his or her place of work in the vehicle.

12. How will the public know if a county vehicle is being used for personal use or when to notify the BOCC of unsafe operation or improper use if it is not marked?

Glenn Carter answered a citizen should report unsafe driving to law enforcement whether a vehicle is marked or not.

13. Have you reviewed the State Auditor's guidelines for taxing the use of public owned vehicles?

Glenn Carter answered the County Auditor's tax personnel are responsible for reviewing and applying the State Auditors guidelines.

14. How will no marking a vehicle protect an employee who feels "threatened"?

Glenn Carter answered the legislature made that determination to adopt the employee security exception into State Law.

15. Is this Ordinance being changed to protect threatened county employees or to allow certain employee to continue to drive an unmarked vehicle and go unnoticed by the public.

Glenn Carter stated the proposal is being made in response to the Chelan County incident.

Bo Rupert, Chehalis, asked what precautions are being taken to make sure this law is followed.

Commissioner Schulte stated the State Law allows the State Patrol to use unmarked cars for traffic stops so he does not see where this is against the State Law.

Bob Bozarth, asked out of the 14 questions identified how many of those questions could be answered with a yes or no.

Glenn Carter stated most of the questions are not yes or no questions.

Commissioner Schulte stated we do not know how many of the Sheriff's people are taking home an unmarked car. If you ask specifically if there is anyone in the Commissioners' Office being charged a tax for using that car for commuting the answer

is no. We cannot answer that for the Sheriff's Office. What we are doing is basically approving current practices by adopting this Ordinance. We are changing how we do business by adopting this Ordinance.

Chair Fund asked if there were any questions. There were none. She closed the question and answer portion of the hearing and opened the formal hearing.

Glenn Carter asked that his previous comments be adopted into the record.

Robin Roy, Cinebar, stated she wishes the Sheriff's Department was here so we could ask them the questions directly. She stated she is opposed to having the unmarked cars.

Hal Washburn, Cinebar, stated he feels it is dangerous having unmarked cars out there doing normal police functions.

Chair Fund stated she texted the Sheriff and he is really busy today with the flood but he estimated there are 12 unmarked cars.

Bob Bozarth, Chehalis, stated it seems to him that it is clear that the State Patrol are within their right to have unmarked cars if they are doing undercover work. There are a lot more questions than what we have answers for. He then told a story about an incident that happened when dealing with the secret service. Had a uniformed office approached him and explained the situation, it would have been a different result.

Dennis Shain, Centralia, stated there are times when the unmarked cars make a situation unsafe. He then told a story of a personal experience with an unmarked police car.

Ron Averill, Centralia stated he thinks some of the public is missing some of the point. Cars that do not belong to the county are not the subject. All the rules regarding the cars that are marked also apply to the unmarked county cars.

Chair Fund asked if anyone else would like to testify. There was none. She closed the hearing and asked for a motion.

Commissioner Schulte stated he knows the Sheriff's Office is very busy with flooding this morning. It is unfortunate that we don't have someone in the Sheriff's Office here to answer some of the questions that the public ask. He asked if this has to be voted on today?

Glenn Carter stated he is not aware of a reason this has to be done today.


Commissioner Schulte asked to table the decision for this Ordinance and asked the Clerk to republish a Notice of Hearing.

There being no further business, the Commissioners' public meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m. on January 5, 2015. The next public meeting will be held Monday, January 12, 2015.

Please note that minutes from the BOCC's meetings are not verbatim. A recording of the meeting may be purchased at the Commissioners' office.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

ATTEST:


Karri Muir
Karri Muir, CMC, Clerk of the Board
Lewis County Commissioners

Edna J. Fund
Edna J. Fund, Chair

P.W. Bill Schulte
P.W. Bill Schulte, Vice-Chair

Gary Stamper
Gary Stamper, Commissioner

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
February 9, 2015**

The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) for Lewis County, Washington, met in regular session on Monday, February 9, 2015, at 10:00 a.m. **Commissioners Edna J. Fund, P.W. "Bill" Schulte, and Gary Stamper** were in attendance. **Chair Fund** determined a quorum, called the meeting to order and proceeded with the flag salute. **Chair Fund** introduced children from the Pe Ell School District and asked them to lead the flag salute.

Commissioner Schulte moved to approve the minutes from the 10:00 a.m. meeting held on Monday, February 2, 2015. **Commissioner Stamper** seconded the motion.

Motion Carried 3-0

PUBLIC COMMENT

Hal Washburn, Cinebar, commented on the County Website and the posting of the minutes and meeting.

Larry Larmon, Chehalis, stated he had to leave early so he wanted to comment on the hearing for unmarked cars. He spoke against this Ordinance.

Jo Coleman, Centralia, spoke with concern to the unmarked police cars having the ability to pull people over. She feels this is dangerous.

Dianne Dorey, Assessor, introduced R. C. Cavazos as her new Chief Appraiser.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

The BOCC recognized Bonnie Wangen for 40 years of service to Lewis County as she retires.

NOTICE

Commissioner Schulte made a motion to approve the Notice Agenda item one. **Commissioner Stamper** seconded the motion.

1. **Call for Bids: For the 2015 Lewis County Legal Publications. Bids are due to the Clerk of the Board on or before 9:30 a.m. on Monday, March 23, 2015. Resolution No. 15-046**

Chair Fund stated bids are due to the Clerk of the Board on or before 9:30 am on Monday, March 23, 2015.

CONSENT

Commissioner Stamper made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items one through seven. **Commissioner Schulte** seconded the motion.

2. Resolution No. 15-047 Approval of warrants and payroll for payment.

Chair Fund stated this Resolution approves 154 regular warrants for a total payment against the County in the amount of \$370,018.84. This also approves 221 payroll warrants and 447 automatic deposits dated February 5, 2015 for a total payment against the County in the amount of \$3,244,918.33

3. Resolution No. 15-048 Approving a service contract between the Lewis County Sheriff's Office and Cascade Mental Health.

Kevin Hanson, Chief of Corrections, stated this approves a revised service contract between Cascade Mental Health Care and the Lewis County Sheriff's Office. This contract provides new mental health programs to care for inmates in the Lewis County Jail. This program will be funded from the .1% sales tax dollars (Fund 110) designated for individuals with chemical dependency, alcohol, and mental illness.

4. Resolution No. 15-049 Approving the purchase of five (5) Sheriff patrol vehicles.

Tim Elsea, Public Works Director, stated the Lewis County Public Works Department has determined that five patrol vehicles in the fleet are in need of replacement. This Resolution would authorize the County Engineer to sign contracts between Columbia Ford & Dwayne Lane's Chrysler for the purchase of five 2015 patrol vehicles in the total amount of \$156,264.84.

5. Resolution No. 15-050 Approving a match agreement between Lewis County and Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP).

Tim Elsea, Public Works Director, stated this resolution will approve a Match Agreement between Lewis County and WFLHD, FHWA for FLAP grant funding. Lewis County applied for and was awarded FLAP grant funding by WFLHD for road improvements to 9.53 miles of Cispus Road near Randle. The first step in moving the project forward is to execute a Match Agreement. The purpose of this agreement is to document the intent of Lewis County to meet the (13.5%) match requirement for the federal funding. The purpose of this project is to stabilize stream banks, culvert replacement, pavement repair, an asphalt prelevel course to repair spot locations as necessary, and a single application of chipseal surfacing. It is Public Works' intent to complete the projects using the following funding sources:

FLAP Funds - \$660,129.00

Lewis County Matching Funds - \$103,026.00

Total - \$763,155.00

Approval of this resolution will authorize the Public Works Director/County Engineer to sign the FLAP Match Agreement for this federally funded project.

6. Resolution No. 15-051 Approving and entering into an inter-local agreement for support services with the City of Centralia.

Lee Napier, Director of Community Development, stated this inter-local agreement between the City of Centralia and Lewis County to update the Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (Hazard Plan).

7. Resolution No. 15-052 Appointment of a member to the Lewis-Mason-Thurston Area on Aging Advisory Council (LMTAAA).

Danette York, Director of Health and Social Service, stated the LMTAAA is a governmental agency sponsored by the three counties to manage, monitor, plan, fund, coordinate, and advocate for services and programs that serve the elderly and younger disabled persons. The Agency has an 18 member Advisory Council that provides input and advice to the Agency staff and makes funding and legislative recommendations to the Agency and the Agency's Board. Six people from each county are appointed to a two-year term and can be re-appointed up to three terms. There is currently an open position. The BOCC will appoint Mildred Wood, who resides in Ethel, to this position. This appointment would be effective as soon as the resolution is signed and continue through December 31, 2016

Motion Carried 3-0

HEARING

Hearing Ordinance 1261

Chair Fund announced the hearing and asked for a staff report.

Glenn Carter, Prosecutor's Office, stated on January 5, 2015, we had a hearing on this same subject and at that time I said I would come back with the Sheriff so he could answer questions from the public as well as the BOCC. Under the existing law the Sheriff is already authorized to use unmarked vehicles for purposes of special undercover and confidential investigative purposes. From time to time the Lewis County Sheriff's Office is engaged in investigative activities where the use of an unmarked vehicle enhances the effectiveness of the investigation as well as provides an extra measure of personal protection to the officers involved. All we are doing here is

adding to the existing authority that the Sheriff Office has to using unmarked vehicles and to ratify the use of the unmarked vehicles for the other general undercover or confidential investigative purposes including traffic control as a possibility.

Commissioner Schulte stated the first question brought up at the last hearing is whether Lewis County use unmarked cars to do traffic stops.

Sheriff Snaza stated there is specific traffic unit where unmarked cars are used for traffic. We have approximately 20 unmarked vehicles. There will be a traffic stop if violations occur in front of a detective. Detectives are often asked to assist deputies in difficult situations. We have six detectives that were plain cloths. They are required to where descriptive clothing that identifies them as a Sheriff with the Lewis County Sheriff's Office.

Commissioner Schulte asked if Mr. Carter is aware of any unmarked cars in any other departments of the County.

Glenn Carter stated the Sheriff's Office is the only department that he is aware of having unmarked cars.

Ron Averill, Centralia, asked what is the definition of unmarked cars.

Sheriff Snaza stated we have a variety of unmarked vehicles. Our Corrections Chief drives an unmarked vehicle that is an Impala with exempt plates and no emergency lights on it. We have confidential undercover vehicles that have cold plates. Our detective vehicles still have spot lights, exempt plates.

Jo Coleman stated she is concerned on the dark windows on an unmarked car. She stated with an area with no cell phone service, what are citizens supposed to do if an unmarked car puts a light on and the citizens can't see whom it is?

Sheriff Snaza stated the citizen should continue to travel the normal speed and drive to a well-lite area.

Walter Wilson asked if the Sheriff's Office uses personal vehicle in enforcement.

Sheriff Snaza stated no

Hal Washburn asked if there was any unmarked car other than the Sheriff's Department.

Commissioner Schulte stated our vehicles are run by Public Works and he checked with the County Engineer and asked him if there are any unmarked cars other than with the Sheriff's Department and there are not.

Chair Fund asked if there were any questions. There were none. She closed the question and answer portion of the hearing and opened the formal hearing.

Glenn Carter and Sheriff Snaza asked that their previous comments be adopted into the record.

Bernie Rodgers spoke against this Ordinance

Karen Callies spoke against this Ordinance due to it allowing unmarked cars to be used for traffic stops.

Walt Wilson spoke against this Ordinance due to it allowing unmarked cars for traffic stops.

Hal Washburn spoke against this Ordinance and provided information showing items that you can purchase on the internet to make your vehicle look like a police car.

Robin Roy stated she is opposed in using unmarked police cars for traffic stops.

Jude Cooper spoke against this Ordinance and stated if we are already covered under the State why add more paperwork.

Dan Townsend spoke against this Ordinance.

Bob Bozarth spoke against this Ordinance

Ron Averill stated we have a number of agencies in the State and have local city forces that use unmarked cars that are not governed by the Ordinance of the County. If you are stopped by an unmarked police car it is unlikely going to be County or City. It is likely going to be the State Patrol.

Jo Coleman spoke against this Ordinance

Chair Fund asked if anyone else would like to testify. There was none. She closed the hearing and asked for a motion.

Commissioner Schulte stated he is not in support of unmarked cars doing traffic control stops. Whether we pass this or not, you can be stopped in Lewis County by an unmarked vehicle from Chehalis, Centralia, or the State Patrol. Reading through this and listening to the questions he feels we need to go back and work on this Ordinance some more.

Commissioner Stamper stated he also has questions on this Ordinance and would like to look at this again.

Commissioner Schulte moved to hold this agenda item until the March 9, 2015 BOCC Meeting. **Commissioner Stamper** seconded.

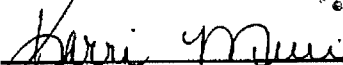
Motion Carried 3-0

There being no further business, the Commissioners' public meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m. on February 9, 2015. The next public meeting will be held Monday, February 23, 2015.

Please note that minutes from the BOCC's meetings are not verbatim. A recording of the meeting may be purchased at the Commissioners' Office.



ATTEST:



**Karri Muir, CMC, Clerk of the Board
Lewis County Commissioners**

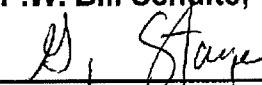
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**



Edna J. Fund, Chair



P.W. Bill Schulte, Vice-Chair



Gary Stamper, Commissioner

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
April 6, 2015**

The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) for Lewis County, Washington, met in regular session on Monday, April 6, 2015, at 10:00 a.m. **Commissioners Edna J. Fund, P.W. "Bill" Schulte, and Gary Stamper** were in attendance. **Chair Fund** determined a quorum, called the meeting to order and proceeded with the flag salute. **Commissioner Stamper** moved to approve the minutes from the 10:00 a.m. meeting held on Monday, March 30, 2015. **Commissioner Schulte** seconded the motion.

Motion Carried 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ron Averill, Centralia, spoke about the State House of Representatives budget that was put out last Friday.

Bob Bozarth, Chehalis, said three or four months ago he had approached the BOCC supporting the Sheriff's Office and Prosecutor's Office in not supporting I-594 in Lewis County. He would like to know the status of this.

Commissioner Schulte stated we support this but how a Resolution is worded still needs to be discussed. **Commissioner Fund** said the commissioners are also watching what is happening on a statewide basis.

NOTICE

Commissioner Schulte made a motion to approve the Notice Agenda items one and two. **Commissioner Stamper** seconded the motion.

1. Notice: Regarding the acceptance of a bid on tax title property located off Eureka Avenue, Centralia, WA. Resolution No. 15-109

Tim Elsea, Public Works Director, stated tax parcel 002768 182 001 is a 0.16 acre vacant parcel located off Eureka Avenue, Centralia. The property was offered for sale at auction by the Treasurer due to tax delinquencies. The property did not sell at the tax sale and was subsequently deeded by the Treasurer to Lewis County. RCW 36.35.150 allows for the property to be disposed of by private negotiations providing that the final sale price is no less than the principal amount of unpaid taxes which are \$152.40. An adjacent property owner has now offered to purchase the property for \$537.40, the amount of the tax delinquency and miscellaneous Treasurer's fees. This resolution would accept the bid subject to conditions of L.C.C. 3.30.390 which requires that the proposed sale be noticed in a legal newspaper of general circulation at least once a week for two consecutive weeks.

2. Notice of Hearing: Amending the 2015 Annual Construction Program and the 2015-2020 Six Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Hearing will be held on or after 10:00 a.m. on Monday, April 20, 2015. Resolution No. 15-110

Tim Elsea, Public Works Director, stated this Resolution amends the 2015 Annual Construction Program and the 2015-2020 Six Year TIP. The changes to these programs are as followed;

- Countywide Bridge/Road Bank Protection (title category) 2159E Oyler Rd MP 3.24 Bridge Scour Increase federal STP(BR) funding from \$74,000 to \$217,000 for preliminary engineering (PE) and construction (CN) in 2015.
- Pe Ell McDonald Rd MP 8.68 Bridge Scour Increase federal STP(BR) funding from \$111,000 to \$235,000 for PE and CN in 2015.
- 2015 County Safety Program Increase federal HSIP funding from \$800,000 to \$1,322,387, and add \$11,038 matching funds for PE and CN in 2015. (matching funds for PE only)
- Coughlin Road - Bridge #36 Deck Replacement Add \$10,000 of county funds in CN to TIP & ACP due to continuing work on resolution of deck surfacing issue in 2015.

Motion Carried 3-0.

CONSENT

Commissioner Schulte made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items seven through nine. **Commissioner Stamper** seconded the motion.

3. Resolution No. 15-111 Approval of warrants and payroll for payment.

Chair Fund stated this Resolution approves 326 regular warrants for a total payment against the County in the amount of \$725,330.40. This also approves 181 payroll warrants and 457 automatic deposits dated April 3, 2015 for a total payment against the County in the amount of \$3,251,698.79.

4. Resolution No. 15-112 Bid award for the 2015-2016 Legal Printing.

Karri Muir, Clerk of the Board, stated we have received two bids. This year's bid award will go to The East County Journal.

5. Resolution No. 15-113 Declaration of surplus property.

Michael Strozyk, Director of Central Services, stated as required by Lewis County Code (L.C.C.) Chapter 3.30, Article III, the Facilities Manager shall, upon finding that personal property with an estimated value of less than \$2,500.00 is surplus to the needs of the County, shall forward a list of such property to the BOCC for review and approval.

(L.C.C. 3.30.130(2)). In an effort to streamline the process, the Facilities division presents a quarterly list of items to the BOCC for consideration and declaration as surplus property.

6. Resolution No. 15-114 Authorizing additional funds to the Southwest WA Fair Office Revolving Account.

Michael Strozyk, Director of Central Services, stated a resolution authorizing temporary bank transfers in an amount up to \$7,500.00 to be used by the Southwest Washington Fair (SWWF) Office for the Revolving Account during specific hosted interim events during the next five years. The SWWF Office currently has in existence a Fair Office Revolving Account in the amount of \$300.00 used to make change for events. During the year, the fair sponsors/hosts various interim events where the need for additional available cash for the event is necessary to provide change for parking and/or admission. This resolution will allow for temporary cash transfers in an amount not to exceed \$7,500.00 for a period of up to 30 days to be used for hosting events.

Motion Carried 3-0.

HEARING

Hearing: Non-Exclusive franchise to AT&T

Larry Unzelman, Public Works, stated L.C.C. 12.20 and RCW 36.55 require that all utility installations on county road rights of way be authorized by a franchise/license from the County. An application for a license has been received from AT&T Corporation to construct, operate, and maintain telecommunication facilities within Highway 603 Right of Way. This license would replace a previous license that recently expired. A hearing was set by Resolution 15-077 on March 9, 2015 to give all required notices to the public.

Chair Fund asked if there were any questions. There were none. She closed the question and answer portion of the hearing and opened the formal hearing.

Larry Unzelman asked that his previous comments be adopted into the record.

Chair Fund asked if anyone else would like to testify. There was no one. She closed the hearing and asked for a motion.

Commissioner Schulte moved to approve Resolution No. 15-115. **Commissioner Stamper** seconded.

Resolution No. 15- 115 In the matter of a nonexclusive License to AT&T Corp. to construct, operate and maintain Telecommunications Facilities in Lewis County Rights-of-Way: and setting forth conditions accompanying a grant of a

nonexclusive License; and providing for County administration and regulation of the nonexclusive License.

Motion Carried 3-0.

Hearing: Ordinance 1257 pertaining to unmarked vehicles

Glenn Carter, Prosecutor's Office, stated he has a list of letters received over the course of the last several weeks. We have new letters from Kevin Schmadeka, Mark Obtinario, Bernadene Ramey, Dan Townsend, and Thomas Dorink. Previously we had letters and comments from Cindy Ticknor, Tim Elsea, Brian Green, and from Karri Muir. Mr. Carter provided a summary of the changes to the statute. The State statute without any action by anybody on this board that the Sheriff's and local Police Departments may already use unmarked vehicles for purposes of special undercover or confidential investigations. The state law provides that the BOCC can adopt exceptions to the marking requirements with respect to other activities. In order for the Sheriff's Office to have the right to do general confidential work this ordinance must be adopted by this board. We have stricken the provision dealing with confidential plates. We have inserted the language that makes it clear what the intent of this Board is with respect to traffic control.

Brian Green, Onalaska, asked what is with all the secrecy and why is there a need for the sneaking around? Is an infraction a crime?

Glenn Carter stated it is a civil infraction which is processed in the District Court. It can be a misdemeanor and is not treated as a felony.

Walt Wilson, Chehalis, asked if the Prosecutor's Office and Sheriff's Office on an ongoing basis are committed to notifying the BOCC of what cars are used for what purposes.

Wes Rethwill, Sheriff's Office, stated the Sheriff's Office meets with the BOCC and provides a list of all the vehicles and who utilizes those vehicles.

Glenn Carter stated the Prosecutors do not have any unmarked vehicle.

Bob Bozarth asked if the County has a policy and does it have a standard for marking of those vehicles?

Commissioner Schulte stated he was not aware of a policy but all County cars, other than the Sheriff's Office are marked.

Dan Townsend asked how many Sheriff's vehicles do we have and how many are unmarked?

Wes Rethwill stated four vehicles are considered unmarked. Two of the four do have interior lights. The other two vehicles are for surveillance or undercover work. Aside from the four vehicles we have two additional vehicles, one that is used by jail staff for transport and for training. The second vehicle is for volunteers who have no police power to act on a situation. There are 16 vehicles that have spot light, big antenna, lights, with no sticker on the side of the vehicle, with 70 vehicles in our fleet.

Tami Bozarth, Chehalis, asked about the expense of the vehicles. Does the Sheriff's department have in place a policy with how many cars require markings?

Wes Rethwill stated we do not have a written policy.

Chair Fund asked if there were any questions. There were none. She closed the question and answer portion of the hearing and opened the formal hearing.

Wes Rethwill and Glenn Carter asked that their previous comments be adopted into the record.

Jo Coleman, Centralia, spoke against the Ordinance.

Robin Roy, Cinebar, spoke against the Ordinance

Emil Berg, Winlock, spoke against the Ordinance

Bernie Rogers, Toledo, stated he understands the purpose. He is not against unmarked vehicles but has lost trust in our government.

Jude Cooper, Onalaska, stated she agrees with the last few people who spoke. She spoke against the unmarked cars.

Walt Wilson, Chehalis, stated he feels the Ordinance should say Sheriff's vehicles are prohibited from routine traffic control.

Dan Townsend, Centralia, spoke against the Ordinance.

Bob Bozarth, Chehalis, spoke against the Ordinance.

Anne Aho, Chehalis, spoke against the Ordinance.

Ron Averill, Centralia, spoke in favor of this Ordinance.

Brian Green, spoke against this Ordinance.

Tim Elsea, Chehalis, stated it has gone on record today that his vehicle is not marked legally and he wants to go on record saying his vehicle is and has been marked legally. He read from the RCW regarding the marking of vehicles.

Commissioner Fund asked if there were any further testimony and there were none. She closed the hearing and asked for a motion.

Commissioner Schulte stated this ordinance does not intend to allow the use of unmarked vehicles to do traffic stops. We cannot change State Law, we adopt State Law, and we enforce State Law.

Commissioner Stamper stated we have had ongoing dialog on this. Through training, public awareness, as a County Commissioner, also as a citizen for sixty one years, I trust our law enforcement to make the right decisions.

Commissioner Fund stated we do have updates with the Sheriff's Office and we do get updates on how many are pulled over with unmarked vehicles, with February having none and March, one.

Commissioner Schulte moved to approve Ordinance No. 1257. **Commissioner Stamper** seconded.

Ordinance 1257- An Ordinance of Lewis County, Washington adding a new chapter to Title 10 of the County Code Enumerating Exceptions to Marking County Vehicles.

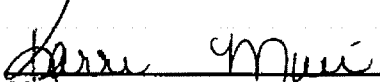
Motion Carried 3-0.

There being no further business, the BOCC's business meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m. on April 6, 2015. The next public meeting will be held Monday, April 13, 2015.

Please note that minutes from the BOCC's meetings are not verbatim. A recording of the meeting may be purchased at the BOCC's Office.




ATTEST:



**Karri Muir, CMC, Clerk of the Board
Lewis County Commissioners**

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**



Edna J. Fund, Chair



P.W. Bill Schulte, Vice-Chair



Gary Stamper, Commissioner

Accused police impersonator in court in rape case

Vancouver man allegedly used ruse to kidnap woman



(http://16749-presscdn-0-94.pagely.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/474310_POLICE_IMPERSONATOR_6871511-1024x684.jpg)

Shannon Stover, who is accused of impersonating a police officer as a ruse to kidnap and rape a woman, appeared in Clark County Superior Court on Monday. (Ariane Kunze/The Columbian)

Buy this photo

By [Jessica Prokop \(/author/jprokop\)](#), Columbian Courts Reporter

Published: December 5, 2016, 11:16 AM

8

A Vancouver man is accused of impersonating a police officer as part of a ruse to try to kidnap and rape women, according to a probable cause affidavit. Investigators have identified two victims, but the prosecution says there could be more.



Shannon "Shawn" Stover, 46, appeared Monday in Clark County Superior Court on suspicion of first-degree kidnapping, two counts of first-degree rape, first-degree unlawful possession of a firearm and a felony fugitive warrant out of Clackamas County, Ore.

The allegations stem from an incident in which Stover allegedly kidnapped and blindfolded a woman, took her to his residence and raped her in a recording studio in his garage, Deputy Prosecutor Patrick Robinson said.

"It's definitely one of the more unique and troubling cases that I've had as a prosecutor," Robinson said.

Stover has an extensive criminal history in Oregon, Robinson said, and is on probation in Washington County, Ore. He said Stover may be facing a "third strike" — under the state's three-strike law, offenders convicted three times of certain violent and sexual felonies receive mandatory life sentences.

He asked that Stover be held on \$1 million bail, in addition to the \$40,000 bail set in the fugitive case. Judge Daniel Stahnke granted the request.

On Nov. 26, a man, identified by police as Stover, arranged to hire a woman for escort services. He gave her directions to the 11200 block of Southeast Maxon Road in Vancouver, a remote and fairly dark, dead-end road, court documents said.

A friend gave the woman a ride to the location at about midnight. As they were looking for the address, a speeding car came from behind blocking their way. The car activated flashing red and blue lights and appeared to be an unmarked police vehicle, the affidavit said.

Stover, dressed in what looked like a police uniform, got out of the car and shined a flashlight in the woman's eyes, court records said. He then pointed what appeared to be a handgun at the victim and ordered her out of the car, saying it was a sting operation, according to court documents.

He handcuffed and placed the victim in the front of his vehicle and threw the friend's keys somewhere nearby, according to the affidavit. The victim said she thought she had been arrested, court records state.

Stover allegedly threatened the victim, using a stun gun as he transported her, court records said. He ordered her to keep her head down and drove her to a residence, where he blindfolded her, the affidavit said. He warned her to comply and said if she didn't she would "end up in a ditch," court documents show.

He then raped her multiple times and afterward ordered her to shower, the affidavit said. Stover put the still blindfolded woman in a different vehicle and dropped her off at about 2 a.m. in the 500 block of Northeast 104th Avenue, according to court records.

A witness saw the victim standing in the road next to a tan-colored Chevrolet Tahoe, which sped away. Another witness found the victim wandering around the area and offered her assistance, the affidavit states.

The victim didn't report the rape to police until she was later urged by the good Samaritan, who saw a press release about a nearly identical incident, court documents said.

In that case, the victim was contacted Nov. 27 by a man, believed to be Stover, who wanted to hire her escort services. He directed her to meet him in the 11200 block of Southeast Maxon Road, according to the probable cause affidavit. The woman escaped her attempted kidnapper, who chased her down and shocked her with a stun gun before fleeing the area, court records said.

Search warrant

Stover was arrested Saturday on a felony warrant following a traffic stop in Vancouver, the affidavit states. Police later served a search warrant at his home in the 14600 block of Southeast Eighth Street and found two firearms in his bedroom, including a loaded .223 rifle and Smith & Wesson 9 mm handgun, according to court documents.

Police also found vehicles matching the descriptions of those used in the kidnapping, as well as a police-type uniform with a security emblem badge, an exterior vest with the word "police" on it and a badge emblem, a wig, utility belt and flashlights, court records said.

Stover's garage and home contained multiple video recording devices, police said, and his garage was set up like a photo studio with a bed. Police seized a camera, video equipment, his cellphone, computer drives and other digital media devices, the affidavit states.

Investigators reviewed some of the electronic evidence, which captured the rape, according to court documents.

Stover refused to cooperate with police during an interview and was booked in the Clark County Jail, court records said.

Robinson said Monday that the investigation is ongoing and that investigators have more digital evidence to review. He anticipates there will be additional charges.

Stahnke appointed Stover an attorney in both the kidnapping and fugitive cases. He will be arraigned Dec. 16.

Anyone with information related to the investigation should call the Vancouver police tip line at 360-487-7399.



Jessica Prokop (/author/jprokop)

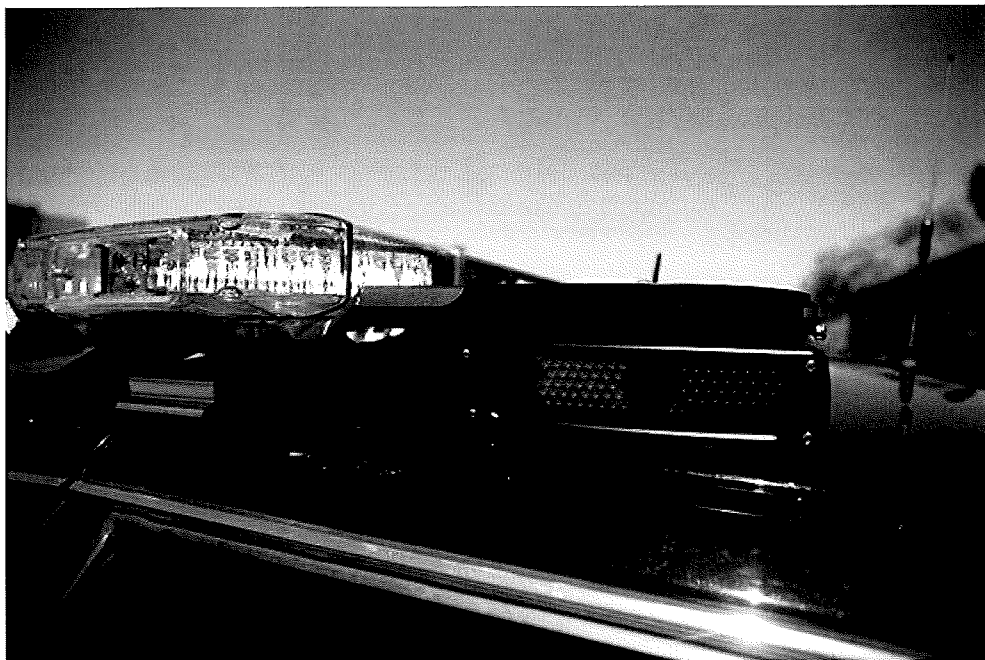
Columbian Courts Reporter

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👤 @jprokop16 (<https://twitter.com/jprokop16>)

✉ [Send an Email \(mailto:jessica.prokop@columbian.com\)](mailto:jessica.prokop@columbian.com)

Cop impersonator arrested a week after handcuffing woman during kidnapping attempt, police say



A 46-year-old man was arrested in Vancouver on Dec. 3 after police say he impersonated a police officer, handcuffed a woman and tried to kidnap her on Nov. 27. *(The Oregonian/OregonLive/file)*



By **Everton Bailey Jr. | The Oregonian/OregonLive**

[Email the author](#) | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on December 05, 2016 at 12:09 AM, updated December 05, 2016 at 12:20 AM

A 46-year-old man was arrested Saturday after Vancouver police say he **impersonated a police officer a week ago**, handcuffed a woman and put her in his car.

Shannon W. Stover was booked into the Clark County Jail after investigators served a search warrant at a home in the 14600 block of Southeast 8th Street in Vancouver and found evidence linking him to the Nov. 27 impersonation and attempted kidnapping, police said. He also is suspected of being involved in other crimes that occurred the day before.

Vancouver police didn't reveal what Stover is accused of doing on Nov. 26. An investigation is ongoing and police said there may be additional victims of incidents similar to the Nov. 27 case.

Police ask anyone who has information that may help their investigation to call their tip line at 360-487-7399.

The woman handcuffed on Nov. 27 told officers that she and a male companion drove to meet another man she arranged to meet via social media, police said. After they stopped at the meeting spot, a car with flashing lights pulled up behind them, a man dressed as a police officer got out and pulled the woman out of her car.

The uniformed man then put the woman in handcuffs and put her in his car, police said. The woman and her friend then ran from the area after she suspected they weren't interacting with a real police officer.

The woman and her friend weren't injured. The uniformed man fled the scene in his car.

Stover is accused first-degree rape, first-degree kidnapping and unlawful possession of a firearm, Vancouver police said. He also has an outstanding felony warrant.

-- Everton Bailey Jr.

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After Lively Discussion, Ordinance on Unmarked County Vehicles Tabled

By Christopher Brewer / cbrewer@chronline.com | Posted: Tuesday, January 6, 2015 10:22 am

An hourlong public hearing on a proposed county code amendment to provide exceptions for marking county vehicles for some special purposes yielded no action Monday after several in attendance expressed their disdain for the idea.

County commissioners held a hearing to discuss the county's possible adoption of a section of the county code that would allow for exceptions to the law requiring marked vehicles for some law enforcement, investigating, confidential and short lease purposes. State law dictates that, as a general rule, all vehicles used by the county have to be marked while used for public business or driven on highways — but the law provides for the aforementioned exceptions.

Glenn Carter, county civil deputy prosecuting attorney, spoke on the matter Monday and explained that the county was proposing the change to better define its own laws in the wake of an incident in Chelan County where a challenge was made by a citizen there to an unmarked sheriff's vehicle being utilized on duty. The county isn't changing its practices, Carter said, but rather more clearly defining an ordinance that governs them.

"We're doing this out of an abundance of caution," Carter said.

Carter further explained that the ordinance would primarily affect the sheriff's office, as deputies and detectives regularly use unmarked vehicles for investigative work.

"There are scenarios where an unmarked vehicle would provide additional protection to the officers involved," Carter added.

Hal Washburn, of Cinebar, questioned the proposal, asking Carter if there is a possibility an unmarked vehicle could be used to issue speeding tickets or patrol traffic.

"I assume law enforcement can be a fairly broad rubric," Carter said. "I haven't rendered an opinion on that, but just reading what the statute says, it says law enforcement use and that could be a fairly broad authorization."

In public testimony, Robin Roy, of Cinebar, said she felt uncomfortable with the proposal and noted that no members of the sheriff's department were present to further explain to the public how they would follow the policy.

"As a citizen of the county, I'm opposed to having the unmarked cars," Roy said. "It feels like entrapment. I don't think it works well for the citizens."

Washburn agreed, adding that he feels there was a safety element the county needed to take into account.

“I’ve heard stories about people being pulled over by someone with a light and siren,” Washburn said of people impersonating police. “It’s very dangerous to have unmarked cars out there doing normal police functions such as traffic stops.”

Commissioner Edna Fund noted that members of the sheriff’s office were busy dealing with flooding issues across the county and unable to attend the meeting; however, she received a text message from Sheriff Rob Snaza that said the department uses roughly 12 unmarked cars in its operations.

Chehalis resident Bob Bozarth and Centralia resident Dennis Shain both spoke to their opposition to the proposal, telling commissioners they also feel uncomfortable with the thought of being pulled over by an unmarked vehicle.

Former commissioner Ron Averill, of Centralia, disagreed with those who felt the ordinance was overreaching, stating his opinion that it is rather easy to distinguish a law enforcement officer and their vehicle from a phony.

“I think some of the public is missing the point. All the rules that apply to people using cars that are marked apply to people using unmarked cars,” Averill pointed out.

After Fund closed the hearing, commissioner Bill Schulte recommended another hearing at a future time to hear from the sheriff’s office on the matter to better address public concerns about the proposal.

“I would have to agree with members of the audience who say there are questions,” Schulte said. “Questions were brought up that I can’t answer and I’d hate to say ‘That’s what I thought I voted on.’ I’d rather invite the sheriff’s office in the discussion.”

Commissioners expect to revisit the issue at their Jan. 26 meeting, as a public hearing requires a 10-day notice by law.

New Hearing on Unmarked County Vehicles Scheduled for Jan. 26

By The Chronicle | Posted: Tuesday, January 13, 2015 10:49 am

A hearing on whether Lewis County can change its code to reflect a provision in state law for unmarked vehicles on official business will take place Jan. 26.

No action was taken after the Jan. 5 hearing on the proposed ordinance change that would have echoed a state of Washington law that requires vehicles be marked except for some law enforcement, investigative, confidential and short-term lease purposes. The proposal brought questions and negative reactions from several citizens, who questioned particularly why law enforcement needs to utilize unmarked vehicles in routine, not undercover, law enforcement work.

Members of the sheriff's office were not present at the hearing that day as the Emergency Operations Center had been activated due to flooding.

Lewis County Commissioner Bill Schulte recommended another hearing be set for another time, at which the sheriff's office could address the matter. Schulte said he acknowledged the questions brought up by the people who gave public testimony, and said he would rather the sheriff directly address the concerns.

The hearing is expected to take place Jan. 26 at the commissioners' weekly 10 a.m. meeting.

Unmarked Vehicle Ordinance Tabled Over Traffic Stop Concerns

By Christopher Brewer / cbrewer@chronline.com | Posted: Monday, February 9, 2015 5:07 pm

Twice the commissioners of Lewis County have held hearings to consider passing a law allowing certain uses of unmarked vehicles, and twice now no action has been taken on the issue.

Lewis County's legislative body has brought forth a proposal to provide an ordinance giving exceptions for a requirement to mark county vehicles, which include some law enforcement, investigative, confidential and short-lease purposes. The meeting was the second held since early January on the matter, which resulted in the issue being held over to a future meeting as several people expressed displeasure with the idea.

This time around, Sheriff Rob Snaza was on hand to give his thoughts and responses to public criticism of the proposal, which centered around using unmarked sheriff's vehicles for traffic enforcement.

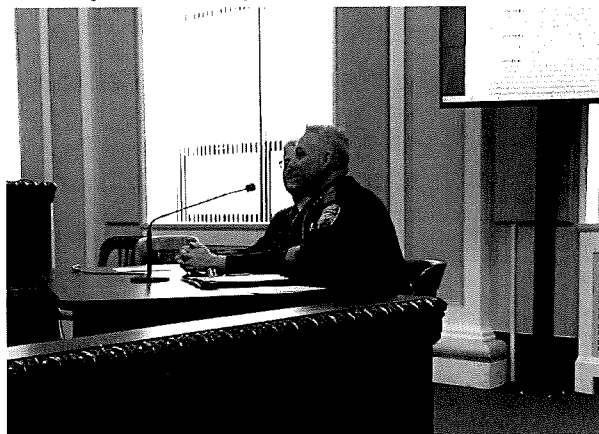
Sheriff Rob Snaza said it isn't the goal of the sheriff's office to simply use unmarked law enforcement vehicles to pull people over, and even sympathized with concerns brought up by several people during the public comment portion of the meeting. However, Snaza said, if a detective in an unmarked vehicle would see an obvious traffic violation, that detective would be beholden to the law and should pull the person over in the interest of public safety.

He also said he was sympathetic to people's caution on the matter.

"I truly understand the concerns of everyone involved in this," Snaza said. "We're initiating some town hall meetings and I think it's important that we discuss these issues. We can have these conversations outwardly."

The county has tried to adopt the ordinance in response to a situation in Chelan County, where a legal challenge was brought forth by a citizen on the legality of use of an unmarked sheriff's department vehicle on duty. County civil prosecuting attorney Glenn Carter noted that a state law is already in place governing use of unmarked vehicles.

However, some present noted that traffic enforcement isn't explicitly stated in the law, but the county ordinance would include a provision for such. Carter said some municipalities have interpreted the state law



Unmarked Vehicles

Lewis County Sheriff Rob Snaza, foreground, answers questions from area residents about a proposed change to a county ordinance regarding unmarked vehicles belonging to the county. Several people in a Monday morning commissioners' meeting expressed displeasure with the proposed ordinance citing safety concerns about being pulled over by an unmarked sheriff's vehicle. Adoption of the ordinance was tabled for the second time.

to allow it, but Lewis County is trying to do its own due diligence on the matter.

“Our interpretation in our office is that we need to ratify and show that we’re certain by adopting this ordinance,” Carter explained.

The concept of public safety was the primary concern of nine of 10 people who commented, imploring commissioners to not pass the ordinance. Similar concerns had prompted commissioners to table a January hearing on the same ordinance and ask Snaza to address people’s apprehensions directly.

Those who spoke out against the proposal stated they didn’t necessarily mind the majority of uses the county proposed in the ordinance — in fact most already being covered under Washington state law — but didn’t like the idea of traffic stops being conducted in unmarked vehicles for fear of police impersonators.

Walt Wilson, of Centralia, stated he served as a police officer and had a simple means of easing those fears during traffic stops.

“When we needed to make a traffic stop and we were in an (unmarked) car, we tried very hard to call a uniform car,” Wilson said. “When you use an unmarked police car you increase the chance of people fleeing ... and you increase the chance of danger to the public.”

Snaza said people have a right to drive to a well-lit area, pull over and ask the deputy who conducted the stop to identify themselves with their badge that shows their status as an employee of the sheriff’s office. He even suggested people could call 911 on their cell phone and confirm it in fact is a deputy making the stop, but several commenters countered saying cell phone service isn’t available in many rural areas.

Commissioner Bill Schulte noted that the state law’s provisions are interpreted differently across several jurisdictions, and three local agencies that also conduct traffic stops in unmarked vehicles include the police departments of Centralia and Chehalis, in addition to the Washington State Patrol.

Former county commissioner Ron Averill, the only member of the public to support the proposed ordinance during the meeting, explained in his public comments that the State Patrol utilizes unmarked vehicles as a method of effectively combating road rage, in essence going undercover when responding to a call or observing assaultive behavior.

After the comment period, Schulte and fellow commissioner Gary Stamper addressed the concerns brought up, and recommended tabling the ordinance once again while commissioners work with legal counsel and sheriff’s office officials to find a workable solution.

“Reading this and listening to the questions, I think maybe we need to work this somewhat. We do not come into these hearings with decisions already made,” Schulte said. “There’s no guarantee it’s going to pass today. I ask that we sit with the sheriff’s and prosecutor’s office ... and rework this a little bit.”

“I think we probably have some unanswered questions, and with a little more support here we could answer those questions,” Stamper said.

Snaza, in his final comment on the matter, said he hoped to reassure the public that the mission of the sheriff’s office is to protect citizens, not create an atmosphere of fear or uncertainty.

“The sheriff’s office has no intent of establishing a fleet of unmarked cars to go out and stop people,” Snaza said. “The whole purpose of this is to do the right thing. Your concerns are our concerns too.”

Commissioners will revisit the issue for a third time in their March 9 public meeting.

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Christopher Brewer: (360) 807-8235

Letters: Commissioners Must Rise to Occasion on Unmarked Vehicles; Support for Napavine School Bond

By The Chronicle readers | Posted: Friday, March 27, 2015 8:55 pm

Commissioners Must Rise to the Occasion on Unmarked Vehicles

Now is the time for the Lewis County commissioners to rise to the occasion. April 6 will be the third part of the hearing on Title 10 of the County Code Enumerating Excepting to Marking County Vehicles. We are witnessing is the balance of powers at work. This is very refreshing to see.

Sheriff Rob Snaza and the Lewis County Prosecutor's Office have requested that the Lewis County commissioners pass Ordinance 1257 to enhance the state RCW.

Snaza states that due to a court case heard in Chelan County, he wants to make sure that Lewis County is legally covered by law to operate unmarked vehicles.

The first two parts of the hearing were very revealing, as there were questions that were left unresolved partly because the sheriff was dealing with the flood we were having on the day of the hearing. For the other part of the equation, the people showed up to hold their feet to the fire.

For the second part of the hearing, the people returned in greater numbers. Approximately a dozen of us asked questions and gave testimony. In both sessions there was only one who spoke in favor of passage.

The people of Lewis County have reason to be concerned if the commissioners grant passage to Ordinance 1257. The state RCW 46.08.065 already addresses all of the concerns that the sheriff has verbally expressed at the hearing.

Lewis County has been for some time now using unmarked vehicles for undercover work. The two items that are different between the state RCW and the proposed ordinance is this: sheriff vehicles used for traffic control and the ability to assign unmarked vehicles to the county jail, the county prosecuting attorney's office and the county juvenile court service.

On Feb. 9, the sheriff's department was authorized to purchase five new patrol cars. Under the writing of this proposed ordinance they could be assigned to the department, listed above, unmarked.

Do you know the faces of all employees in Lewis County? How would we know they are using these vehicles for official business or personal use at our expense?

The citizens of Lewis County want our peace officers to be just that, peace officers.

We want them to be approachable, we want them to be definable, we want them to be our friends and we want them to serve and protect us and stay within the bounds of the Constitution.

I think all employees of Lewis County should be pleased to drive a vehicle with the Lewis County logo on them. After all, they work and live in the best county of state as far as I am concerned.

Please go to <http://lewiscountywa.gov/> and view part 1 and part 2 of the hearing dated Jan. 5 and Feb. 9. Also email BOCC@lewiscountywa.gov or call (360) 740-1102 and let them know your thoughts.

I encourage our commissioners to do the right thing on April 6 in exercising their balance of powers with a no vote.

Bob Bozarth

Chehalis

Support Urged for Napavine Bond on April Ballot

I am writing in support of the Napavine School District bond election on April 28. As a grandparent of three grandchildren in Napavine schools, I am proud of the accomplishments that the students of Napavine schools have accomplished over the years. The staff and administration have worked hard to make sure that our children have had a stellar and supportive educational experience.

However, the time has come to improve the facilities that have become outdated and in need of a major overhaul. It is time to move the seventh- and eighth-graders out of the portables. It is time to move the high school students out of the hallways and into a new commons space during mealtime.

It is time to return the elementary gym to the elementary school students for PE classes that are currently being held in the multipurpose room.

Likewise, with the passing of this bond, Napavine patrons will provide two more classrooms to the elementary school campus to accommodate the growth in our bulging younger student population.

And the passing of this bond will make our secondary school environment a more safe and secure campus.

Our kids need these improvement today in order to meet the demands of tomorrow that require all students to be prepared as college and career-ready citizens.

Our community has spoken loud and clear that it wants an improved school facility that will sustain our students' educational needs for decades to come.

Some have argued that this bond comes with too high of a price tag.

Please remember that we have some of the lowest interest rates available to us today — and that construction costs have historically and will most likely increase if we wait until later to try and make the necessary improvements that our aging schools require.

There is a tremendous amount of pride in the town of Napavine and wonderful support for our schools and students in our community. And rightly so. It is the finest place that many, yes on April 28 — for the future success of our kids and grandkids. Thank you.

Bill Sullivan

Napavine

County Approves Unmarked Vehicles Ordinance

By Kaylee Osowski / kosowski@chronline.com | Posted: Tuesday, April 7, 2015 10:34 am

Three public hearings and a few tweaks later, elected officials passed an ordinance pertaining to Lewis County's unmarked vehicles.

The Board of County Commissioners OK'd the ordinance Monday after hearing from representatives with the sheriff's office and prosecutor's office as well as taking public testimony.

"We've had meetings. We've adjusted," Commissioner Edna Fund said. "I think we really appreciate the input from individuals, and we have a better product than we had at the beginning."

Nearly a dozen citizens spoke against the ordinance and one person spoke in favor.

Much of the public's opposition was to law enforcement pulling drivers over in unmarked vehicles, and the commissioners as well as staff hoped that changes to the ordinance would show that is not the intent.

"I do not intend and this board does not intend to encourage unmarked vehicles to do traffic stops," Commissioner Bill Schulte said. "... It is my intent today to adopt state law to provide operating instructions and guidelines to our sheriff's (office)."

Civil deputy prosecuting attorney Glenn Carter said the sheriff's office's intended primary use of unmarked vehicles is during confidential investigations into things like drug crimes, human trafficking and other similar illegal activities.

A change to the ordinance regarding traffic control includes allowing deputies in unmarked cars to conduct stops if they witness a crime of traffic infraction and are the closest or best available to respond or in special enforcement circumstances.

State statute allows for law enforcement officers to use unmarked cars for certain duties such as undercover and investigative purposes. It also allows for exceptions when it comes to unmarked cars being used for traffic control. Following a lawsuit in Chelan County, the commissioners wanted to pass the ordinance to clarify when unmarked sheriff's office vehicles can be used.

Undersheriff Wes Rethwill attempted to provide clarification between marked and unmarked vehicles to hearing attendees. He said the office currently has four unmarked vehicles, two of which have interior lights.

It has another 16 vehicles that do not have sheriff's office decals, but have various features that legally make them marked vehicles, including things like external roof lights, interior strobe lights, large roof antennas and spotlights, among other things. Each vehicle does not have every feature. The remaining vehicles in the sheriff's office's fleet of about 70 have decals labeling them as belonging to the agency.

Rethwill said the ability to use unmarked vehicles gives the agency another tool to investigate situations, and that they will be used appropriately.

Some members of the public said if they are stopped by an unmarked vehicle they don't plan on stopping because it could be someone impersonating a law enforcement official. Rethwill said if that occurs, he urges citizens to report it so authorities can investigate the situation.