



P.O. Box 1, Rohrersville, MD 21779-0001

cppv@upshotmd.org

Responses to Questions for 2010 Sheriff Candidates

The Citizens for the Preservation of Pleasant Valley was created, in part, out of a frustration that elected officials and bureaucrats ignored this part of the County. We are a 501 (c) 3 organization interested in providing education and forums for citizens in the area on topics of interest.

All sheriff candidates who filed by the deadline received a questionnaire with the following ten questions. In addition, they also received an invitation to attend our Meet the Candidate's Night on July 21, 2010. Only minor editing changes were made to accommodate for space, the words provided are their own.

Question 1: The response times to citizens' calls at this end of the county can be 45 minutes or longer. Do you think this is a problem? What do you propose to do about it if you do?

Doug Mullendore: The response times to South County and other outlying areas is definitely too long. While we have been successful in reducing crime in the County as a whole by over 15 percent in the last three years, the outlying areas have seen long response times as a result.

Central Booking became operational in May, 2010 and puts our police officers back on the streets more quickly when they make an arrest. This has already helped to reduce the response times to South County. Prior to Central Booking the average response time to calls in South County was 31 minutes. Since the opening of Central Booking the average response time decreased to 26 minutes.

I plan to implement laptop computers with field reporting in our cruisers later this year. This will keep our deputies on the street and permit them to do reports from their cruisers rather than needing to go into the station. This will significantly decrease the response times to South County because we will have more deputies on the street at any given time.

One of the best ways to increase response times to any call for service is for all law enforcement agencies to implement AVL (Automatic Vehicle Location) so that all on-duty units from any police agency will have their location shown on a map in the Communications Center and on the laptops in the field. Supervisors and dispatchers will know where units are at any given time and can use this information to re-position units for faster response times. Dispatchers can automatically dispatch the closest units to the call. The Sheriff's Office will be implementing this technology with the mobile data implementation later this year. However, the only other agency to implement this technology is the Smithsburg Police Department. All police agencies must be convinced to implement AVL so this technology can allow law enforcement to improve services to our citizens.

Jim Woods: A response time of 45 minutes is an unacceptable condition. While long response times may occur for non-police, or non-priority calls, 45 minutes would be an unacceptable time.

Response times are impacted by a number of variables. Call load at the time of call, call priority, need to back up units and administrative requirements (arrests, warrants, etc...). However, having said this, I believe there are remedies that could reduce the average response time and improve unit availability to the southeast county area.

The Sheriff's Office patrols in 8 of 9 districts. Units are assigned either east or west and are used accordingly. I will assign cars to more permanent districts and by policy limit the reassignment of those units from their assigned areas.

In addition, I have spoken with the Commander for the Hagerstown Barracks of the Maryland State Police regarding this matter. The State Police Duty Office will make every effort to adjust the State Patrol pattern to accommodate the southeast area of the county when the assigned deputy is away from that area. The use of specialized units to augment patrol efforts will further boost the patrol activities for this area of the county.

Question 2: Deputies do not carry fingerprint kits in their cars. Do you think it would be helpful if they were trained and had kits with them? Is there other equipment or training that could be made available that would help deputies?

Doug Mullendore: The information contained within the question is inaccurate. All Sheriff's Office cruisers are equipped with basic fingerprint kits and other crime scene processing equipment. All deputies have been trained in the use of this equipment and receive additional training during our annual in-service training.

In addition, we have trained several deputies on each shift as crime scene technicians. These deputies have additional crime scene processing equipment and are available to any deputy on the shift who needs their help in processing crime scenes.

Our criminal investigators are fully trained to process all crime scenes and have advanced equipment assigned to them. They are available to deputies on an on-call basis when it is determined that additional crime scene processing resources are needed.

The Sheriff's Office has also joined with the Hagerstown Police Department to provide forensic scientists as part of the Western Maryland Regional Laboratory located at the Hagerstown Police Department. These forensic scientists will respond to any major crime scene and provide technical expertise and equipment that is second to none. Therefore, there is absolutely no excuse for a deputy not to process crime scenes when there is something to process. However, I must point out that crime scene processing is not as simple as it appears on television and often these fingerprints cannot be lifted because the object is porous and does not provide a usable fingerprint.

The Sheriff's Office will be providing more advanced crime scene processing training to other deputies as time and funding becomes available.

Jim Woods: Deputies assigned to the patrol division are equipped with basic fingerprints kits and receive training in the use of these kits while in the Police Academy. If the situation would fall beyond the skills or application of the fingerprint kit assigned, and the case justifies more advanced techniques, there are deputies with additional training or the Maryland State Police will provide crime scene technicians to assist.

Question 3: With three states and four counties making it easy for criminals to cross boundaries, and with the state DNR and federal National Park (NP) law enforcement jurisdictions in Pleasant Valley, citizens often find it confusing and difficult to address concerns. Are there any working agreements and are they adequate?

- a. Please describe where you think there is room for improvement in the County's policing in coordination with other jurisdictions and what you would do to implement your ideas?**
- b. For example, NP law enforcement can detain someone who has committed a crime, but they cannot arrest them and instead have to wait for a deputy. Is there something you can do about that?**
- c. How will you keep local citizens informed of what to do, who to call, etc?**

Doug Mullendore: Jurisdictional authority and boundaries can be very confusing and often frustrating. The Washington County Sheriff's Office does have Memorandums of Understanding with all of our federal, state, and local law enforcement partners. However, federal and state law often limits the ability of some of these law enforcement agencies to provide services in areas outside of their jurisdictional boundary. For example, the National Park Service Police does not have legal authority to make arrests in areas that are outside of their jurisdictional boundaries. I do not have the ability to provide them this authority. Only a change in federal and state law could provide them this authority. This is why a National Park Service Police Officer must detain a suspect and await a deputy's arrival before the person can actually be arrested.

The Washington County Sheriff's Office has an excellent working relationship with the National Park Service Police and the Department of Natural Resources Police. The Sheriff's Office works closely with these agencies in South County and we work as a Task Force to address some of the illegal activities occurring within the South County area.

Jim Woods: Any concerns or issues are to be presented to the Washington County Sheriff's Office or the Maryland State Police. These are the two primary law enforcement agencies task for the needs of the County.

While the National Park Service (NPS) and the State Department of Natural Resources Police (NRP) do operate within the southeast areas of the County, they limited. NPS is a federal agency assigned to the primary enforcement of the federal law and regulations on National Park property.

The DNR police are assigned to the primary function of the enforcement of wildlife and Natural Resource laws.

These agencies are available to support the Sheriff's Office or State Police on a case by case basis, where appropriate. If an NPS or DNR unit were to detain a person relative to a crime, they are bound by law and administrative policy to hold that person until local law enforcement (ie. WCSO/MSP) can respond and take custody.

This also applies when a State Police Officer or Deputy detains a person for a crime under the primary jurisdiction of the NPS or DNR, the person would be detained until the appropriate agency responds to take custody.

- a. Currently there are several memorandums of under standing between the various law enforcement agencies operating within the boundaries of the county. As Sheriff I would continue to meet with and

review all areas of potential cooperation between these agencies and host regular meeting to explore areas of improved cooperation and support.

b. As explained above, there are jurisdictional limitations placed on the NPS and the DNR. In emergency's all agencies work together, however the handling of a call is finally determined by what agency has the primary jurisdiction.

c. Providing a liaison to each of the County's sub-jurisdictions will facilitate the openness of communications between the citizens served and the WCSO. I am primarily concerned with establishing solid lines of communication.

Question 4: At the public safety meeting CPPV held last summer, we were told that two sheriffs are required to respond to a security system alarm call. However, when there was a series of break-ins, one sheriff responded to each 911 call and it took as long as 45 minutes to respond. Furthermore, we were told that responding to security alarm calls took up most of the time within the sheriff's department. Do you feel that this is a good set of policies? Do you have any suggestions for better coverage in this area?

Doug Mullendore: There are a number of call types that require a minimum of two police officers to respond. Burglar alarm activations is just one of these call types. Some of the other call types are active domestic incidents and crimes in progress. The response requires two police officers, but not necessarily two deputies. We often collaborate with other police agencies to assist one another on these call types. These call types are high-risk situations where the potential for encountering a suspect is high and the potential for violence is also high. This is a nationally accepted policy and is a good policy.

I can tell you for a fact that two deputies were dispatched to some of the burglaries that have occurred in South County. In some of these cases it was determined that the suspect had already fled the scene and a second deputy was not needed and their response was cancelled prior to their arrival. In other cases the dispatcher determined from the caller that the suspect was not on scene and therefore, only one deputy was dispatched. We try to utilize our resources in the best possible manner.

Please see my answer to Question 1 for my response on how to provide better coverage.

Jim Woods: Because of the inherent liability associated with alarm responses, these calls must be handled. The dispatching of two deputies is a necessity should the alarm be actual or in-progress. Regarding a break-in, any major crime will facilitate a multi-unit response, however, if the crime is not an in-progress call, a single unit is dispatched to handle the initial report.

This action preserves the limited police resources available.

The key factor generating a single or multi-unit response is:

Is the call an in-progress event (potential for death or serious injury)

Is there an Officer or Citizen life safety issue

As stated in a previous question, the assignment of a deputy to the southeast area of the county would help reduce the response time for calls for service and provide an active patrol presence in the area.

Question 5: What distinguishes you from your opponent?

Doug Mullendore: I have over 32 years of law enforcement and criminal justice experience. Twenty eight of those years have been with the Washington County Sheriff's Office. I have a Bachelor's Degree in criminal justice administration. I am also a graduate of the FBI National Academy for criminal justice executives. Only about two to three percent of law enforcement officers are sent to and graduate from the FBI National Academy. I am also a graduate of the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development School. I have completed numerous law enforcement training classes and supervisory and management training over my 32 year career. I have a sincere interest in the professionalism of the Sheriff's Office and the protection of our citizens.

The Sheriff is responsible for more than just providing law enforcement services. The Sheriff is also responsible for the Detention Center and Judicial Services. I have a vast amount of management experience and training in all areas of criminal justice. I have been your Sheriff for the last four years and have demonstrated my ability to manage an agency that has a \$21 million budget and employs over 270 personnel.

The Detention Center houses approximately 400 inmates on a daily basis. The potential for civil litigation from the operation of the Detention Center is extremely high. The Sheriff must be knowledgeable and possess the skills to manage this facility appropriately so that civil litigation does not cost the taxpayers the usual high cost of litigation.

I have improved the training, equipment, and professionalism of the Sheriff's Office over the last four years as your Sheriff. I have spent countless hours working to improve the level of services the Sheriff's Office provides to our citizens.

Jim Woods: I believe what distinguishes me from my opponent is philosophy. I am people oriented. I believe the Sheriff is a leader, and should work to the betterment of his agency and the public served. I see my role as being active and involved in the county and its sub-communities by being present when possible, attending local functions and actively reaching out to the citizens I serve.

While I embrace technology, I recognize that it is only a tool and that tool is only as effective as the men and women using it. I feel that an over dependence on technology is flawed, because technology alone does not solve problems. People working together solve problems and resolve issues.

Question 6: Currently, there is a big push on illicit activities law enforcement in the County, i.e., gang, drugs, etc.

- a. How are gang and drug law enforcement programs currently being carried out in Washington County? What would you do differently?***
- b. With easy interstate/jurisdictional access to small side roads, how is Pleasant Valley currently being protected from illicit activities? What would you do differently?***

Doug Mullendore: The Sheriff's Office has a Narcotics Task Force and a Gang Investigation Unit in conjunction with the Hagerstown Police Department. I have sworn in the officers of the Hagerstown Police Department as "Special Deputies" so they have full law enforcement authority throughout Washington County. The Narcotics Task Force and Gang Investigation Unit work collaboratively to combat drugs and gangs. Not all drug dealers are gang members, but most gang members are drug dealers.

In addition, we have trained our patrol deputies in both narcotics and gang investigations. Our deputies provide a lot of intelligence to these Task Force Units. Our Problem Oriented Policing Unit also conducts interdiction activities at UPS and FedEx so that drug dealers are not able to send their illicit materials through these services.

The Problem Oriented Policing Unit works with the Natural Resources Police and National Park Service Police to identify areas of concern for illegal activities in South County. This Unit coordinates undercover operations involving all of these law enforcement agencies to combat illicit activities in South County. I will work with the Maryland State Police to obtain additional resources for these undercover operations. The Sheriff's Office also takes calls from citizens who suspect that individuals are dealing drugs or are suspected of being a gang member. We combine this information with other accumulated intelligence to determine if an investigation is warranted.

Jim Woods: The directed enforcement against illicit activities (ie.. Drugs, gangs, etc..) has been a part of the Washington County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) operations plan. The addition of a gang unit (presently 1 deputy and 1 officer HPD) is a fairly recent initiative.

I feel that having those specialized unit conduct operations throughout the county would be helpful in interdicting criminal activity. Currently these units function in the Hagerstown City and outlying metro area, as this represents the greatest concentration of criminal activity.

However, in recent times we have begun to see a shifting of these illicit activities into the outlying communities. By adjusting the operational responses to include these outlying areas we can impact criminal behavior and curtail its presence in our more rural areas.

I would deploy our Drug and Gang operations into these areas to impact this issue. In addition, the Traffic Interdiction Unit was formed to conduct criminal interdiction operation on our streets.

Since its inception, the unit has been hamstrung with collateral duties that take it out of its element and limit its ability to act in the manner in which it was trained.

The deployment of these resources into the community, on an unannounced and irregular pattern will work to improve law enforcement services and enhance citizen safety.

Question 7: In the past, there have been neighborhood watch areas. Some of our Neighborhood Watch callers have expressed concerns that the Sheriff's office doesn't seem interested in their calls.

a. What are your views on community policing?

b. Is the Neighborhood Watch program important to the department and its work? If so, how can the department keep lines of communication open?

Doug Mullendore: Neighborhood Watch Programs are a very valuable resource for the Washington County Sheriff's Office. Citizens know more about what should or shouldn't be going on within their communities. The Neighborhood Watch participants act as our eyes and ears. Neighborhood Watch participants should call 911 to report any suspicious activities they observe. It is the function of the 911 Center to dispatch personnel to these situations.

The most successful Neighborhood Watch Programs have regular meetings with their members and a liaison deputy is assigned to advise the group. These meetings facilitate the exchange of information from

the members to law enforcement and for law enforcement to share pertinent information with the members of the Neighborhood Watch. I would welcome this type of Neighborhood Watch Program in South County. I believe this would improve the relationship with South County and open the lines of communication between South County and the Sheriff's Office.

Jim Woods: The neighborhood watch program is a great program, but it is not a primary duty of the Sheriff's Office. Neighborhood watch programs are the result of community efforts and are supplemented by law enforcement, not run by law enforcement.

In the Southeast area of the county, the major issue facing a neighborhood watch program is the openness of the area served. In more densely populated areas neighborhood watch programs are more effective. The key to any neighborhood watch program is the participation of the local citizens. The Sheriff's office or other law enforcement agency acts as a support unit to such efforts.

As Sheriff I would gladly provide some training and support services to any neighborhood watch group. However, the efficiency of a neighborhood watch program rests in the hands of the citizens themselves. With regard to community policing, that is the single greatest philosophical difference between Mr. Mullendore and myself. I am people oriented and community minded. As discussed earlier, I feel that an over reliance of technology is a failure to community police.

Neighborhood watch programs provide the community with a sense of self-determination and ownership, and provide the law enforcement community with an observational resource. The difficulty will be how the information is processed between the watch groups and local law enforcement.

Question 8: What are the top three law enforcement issues that you feel the department is facing? How do you plan to address those concerns?

Doug Mullendore: The three top issues for law enforcement are illicit drugs, the continued increase in gang members and organizations, and the increase in domestic violence incidents within the County, including South County.

The Sheriff's Office continues to partner with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and other law enforcement agencies to combat illicit drugs in our communities. I will continue this relationship. I will also continue to provide the Prescription Drug Drop-Off Program throughout the County. This Program gets expired and unused prescription drugs out of our homes, out of the hands of those who abuse them and disposes of them in an environmentally safe and friendly manner. I also feel we need to do more to provide treatment for those with addictions so we can rehabilitate them and make them productive citizens again. This will ultimately help to reduce crime as well.

I will work with other law enforcement agencies to increase the number of gang investigators working in our community. Currently, there is one deputy from the Sheriff's Office and one police officer from the Hagerstown Police Department. The additional personnel are needed to track the more than 400 validated gang members and 700 affiliate gang members in our County. This will get them off the street and back in jail when they commit crimes.

Domestic violence incidents are a growing crime in our County and South County is no exception. These situations are very volatile and dangerous for both the victims and the police officers who respond to these incidents. I established a Domestic Violence Unit this year to work with victims of domestic violence to keep them safe. I am also starting a pilot GPS Monitoring Program later this year that will

allow the courts to order electronic monitoring of offenders who have violated domestic violence protective orders.

Jim Woods: The three top issues of concern for the Sheriff's Office are in my estimation: MORALE – BUDGET – STAFFING.

Morale: In recent years I have observed firsthand the fall of morale within the Washington County Sheriff's Office. I have had the opportunity to speak with employees who again and again express their concerns for the agency's direction and the welfare of its people.

Morale has a direct correlation to services rendered. Low morale does equate to lack luster service and lower performance. The opposite is also true, improved morale impacts the quality and efficiency of service to the community. Any multi-million dollar enterprise closely monitors morale and routinely works to improve employee conditions because they know, that highly motivated people produce quality results.

Budget: We are experiencing some of the hardest times financially. Budgets are under strain and frozen, while calls for services have increased. I feel that a full review of the Sheriff budget is in order. Each program and expenditure must be carefully reviewed to see if it is necessary and impacts the community in a meaningful way.

Resource savings can then be applied to areas of operation that directly impact community services. If you as a citizen must live within your means and meet your responsibilities, then we as your Sheriff's Office must do likewise.

Staffing: No law enforcement executive would say he has enough staff to handle the job. However, when calls for service continue to rise, demands for support services and specialization appear, staffing becomes an issue.

I feel that some of the current administration's expenditures would have better served our community had they encompassed hiring of personnel, rather than an over-reliance on technology. People solve issues, not technology.

Question 9: How do you or would you measure the department's public safety success?

Doug Mullendore: There are two ways to measure the agency's effectiveness. The first is conducting statistical analysis of reported crimes and the other is conducting surveys of our citizens to indicate the public's perception of crime and the effectiveness of the agency.

While the Sheriff's Office has always measured reported crimes and our ability to reduce reported crime, we have not conducted citizen surveys. I will implement a certified citizen survey that will provide proven surveys that will give true indications of the public's perception of crime in the County and how effective the Sheriff's Office is at dealing with these situations.

Jim Woods: I feel that given the current circumstances faced by the Sheriff's Office (budget, staffing and morale) the over-all rating would be satisfactory.

There are areas of improvement to be made, and with a change in philosophy and an orientation toward true community policing, performance and efficiency will improve. However, we must never rest on our

laurels. The review process of every facet of the Sheriff's operations must be an on-going and aggressive project.

Coupled with a greater community involvement and that from the TOP down, we will see expanded services and more productive services.

Question 10: What do you think about using electronic devices to deter speeders on roads in the area?

Doug Mullendore: I am not an advocate for speed cameras in situations as you are suggesting for South County. First, the successful administration of a speed camera program is resource intensive and costly to the citizens. While the speed cameras would capture speeders at first, potential violators soon learn where the cameras are and simply slow down in the immediate area but increase their speed as soon as they pass by the area. This will only serve to move the problem from one area to another.

A speed camera program does not penalize the actual violator in most circumstances because the civil citation is sent to the vehicle owner and not the operator. This is how the current law is setup when operating a speed camera program. Therefore, in my opinion speed cameras are a means of generating revenue in high volume traffic areas, but has little or no impact on actually deterring speeding.

Jim Woods: If by electronic devices you imply speed cameras and such, I am opposed. The Constitution of the United States establishes the right to face your accuser.

While technology is a great tool, it must never rise to the position of supplanting human responsibility. The deployment of speed monitoring devices for the purpose of measuring potential problems, is a viable and proper use of such technology.

Once a problem has been verified, then the deployment of human resources to conduct enforcement is justified. Then those deputies must come into court and testify to the manner in which the enforcement was conducted.