

## Josephine (JO) County (CO) Justice System (JS) & Public Safety Services (PSS)

**JO CO Justice System & Public Safety Services** The 2012 expiration of federal funding for services resulted in two JO CO proposed levies as a solution. Both levies failed. *“Is JO CO providing a minimally adequate level of public safety services?”*<sup>1-4</sup>

**2008 NewsWithViews Interview Of Sheriff**<sup>5</sup> The following are selected quotes from this interview.

In 2007, I was elected by the voters of Josephine County to be their Sheriff, my first and continuing priority is seeking solutions to the long-term funding problems that have faced the Josephine County Sheriff’s Office for decades. While there were initially several potential solutions, the possibility of establishing two Special Service Districts, dedicated to funding the services provided by the Sheriff’s Office, quickly became the most viable. The [taxing] district model was selected for three primary reasons:

- Provides long-term funding,
- Provides a stable funding source, which will facilitate long-term planning by the Office, and
- Provides sustainable funding, not subject to local or national political whims.

1. Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society (HNA&HS). July 9, 2013. *Justice System Exploratory Committee*. Hugo, OR. 2. HNA&HS. July 24, 2013. *Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society’s Mission*. Hugo, OR.  
3. HNA&HS. July 9, 2013. *All Voters & Votes Are Legitimate*. Hugo, OR.  
4. HNA&HS. July 24, 2013. *Government Needs Support*. Hugo, OR.  
5. Gilbertson, Gil. July 22, 2008. *Sheriff Seeking Stable Funding for His Office*. Gilbertson is the Josephine County Sheriff, for NewsWithViews. Josephine County, OR. <http://www.newswithviews.com/Gilbertson/gill.htm>  
6. Josephine County Board of County Commissioners. February 6, 2013. *Formation of a County Service District for Law Enforcement Services Pursuant to ORS Chapter 451: Josephine County Law Enforcement District*. January 18, 2013 weekly business session, first public hearing. Grants Pass, OR.

## Sheriff Seeking Stable Funding Through Special Service Taxing Districts

**Special Service Taxing District 1** includes all residents of Josephine County, including Cave Junction and Grants Pass. This district is organized to include those services that the Sheriff’s Office is mandated to provide, and that benefit every resident equally. These services include the baseline services that must be staffed, yet will also support some of the functions provided in District 2, such as the Records Division as well as the Dispatch/Communications Division. The services provided by this district include:



*Sheriff Gil Gilbertson*

- Adult Jail Operations
- Civil Process Service
- Search & Rescue Coordination
- Emergency Management
- Law Enforcement Records
- Dispatching/Communications
- Administrative Services

All of these services are required, or inferred, under Oregon law, and most of them are specifically assigned to the Sheriff—no other law enforcement agency is statutorily required or authorized to provide these services.

**The total number of potential employees working to provide the services of District 1 will be capped at 76, with the majority, 51, working to staff the Josephine County Adult Jail for full capacity.** Any additional employees will be funded from other revenue sources.

**Special Service Taxing District 2** includes only those residents living outside the City of Grants Pass. This district is organized to include those services that the Sheriff’s Office is mandated to provide, but primarily benefit those residents living outside Grants Pass.

## Split Taxing District

The services provided by district 2 include the following.

- Patrol Services, including 911 response
- Major Crimes Investigations
- Narcotics Investigations
- Business/Crime Analysis
- Contract Patrol Services

Under Oregon Revised Statutes, these services are also mandated, or inferred, of the Sheriff’s Office. **The law allows each County Sheriff to determine the levels of service they will provide, however, they retain the requirement to provide those services essential to maintaining the peace within the county. Under District 2, total employees funded by local revenue will be capped at 52,** and as with District 1, any additional employees needed to fulfill the Office’s mission will have to be funded with other revenues.

**The primary responsibility of District 2 will be to provide Patrol services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.** With stable, consistent patrol services comes the need for adequate and timely investigations, as well as crime analysis to focus efforts on identifying and addressing community-wide crime trends. Contract Deputies have been included in District 2, however these positions are fully reimbursed contracts, but due to Office safety issues, they cannot be staffed without Patrol services.

**2013 Split Taxing District**<sup>6</sup> On February 6, 2013 Sheriff Gilbertson stated it was his position that citizens should only pay for the services they receive and he suggested instituting a split taxing district. A tax rate of \$1.17 to \$1.20 per \$1,000 assessed value would create the availability of 222 jail beds, utilizing the jail facility in the manner for which it was designed.

**Want more information?** Contact a member of the *Exploratory Committee*.

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## Exploratory Committee's Mission

**Mission** An independent Justice System and Public Safety Services Exploratory Committee (*Exploratory Committee*) to investigate the JO CO Justice System & Public Safety Services (JS&PSS) issue was formed under the leadership of the Hugo Neighborhood Association and Historical Society (HNA&HS).

Big picture ideas for the exploratory effort include the following.

1. Identifying the JS&PSS issue.
2. Identifying the JS&PSS sub-issues for research and analysis.
3. Identifying a range in level of services
4. Identifying a range of costs for services.
5. Identifying revenues for services.

The ultimate goal is an adequate justice system and public safety services. Is it possible to have a higher level of service for a lower cost? The purpose of the *Exploratory Committee* is to gather information adequate enough to understand the JS&PSS issues. This includes educational outreach efforts.

The *Exploratory Committee's* purpose is limited to investigating and researching the JS&PSS issues. It will not make evaluations of right or wrong, nor make recommendations on how to vote.

The contents of this brochure are expressions of the opinions and beliefs of those that contribute based on their thoughts and experiences. Hopefully, their efforts will assist the public toward informed decision-making.

- Donations Are Not Tax Deductible -

Edited by Mike Walker, Members, Exploratory Committee

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Mike Walker, Education Chair



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### *Justice System Exploratory Committee*

<http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/justicesystemexploratorycommittee.htm>

### Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

<http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/>

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# JO CO SHERIFF SEEKING STABLE FUNDING: 2008

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Justice System & Public Safety Services Series

### Jo Co Sheriff's Office

*Your Sheriff's Office*  
<http://jocosheriff.us/your-sheriffs-office>



**Final September 1, 2013**

*Hugo Justice System Exploratory Committee*