Mason County Sheriff Applies For Grants

Local News

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Shelton, WA - With the revenue short falls becoming a new way of life in Mason County, Sheriff Casey Salisbury is not just sitting back and taking it. Sheriff Salisbury directed his staff to look for revenue streams and grant opportunities to help take up the slack left by recent budget cuts. The Sheriff and his staff have applied for a total of five separate grants.The Mason County Sheriff's Office has already been allotted $77,445 from the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG). The Bureau of Justice Assistance also has three other funding opportunities available to law enforcement agencies. The Sheriff submitted requests for those grants this week.Under the provision of the FY 2009 Recovery Act - Assistance to Rural Law Enforcement to Combat Crime and Drugs there is grant funding available amounting to about 123 million dollars. The Mason County Sheriff's Office has requested $611,610 to fund three deputy positions, one corrections officer and an administrative assistant for the next two years. The administrative assistant would assist the Sheriff's Special Operations Group. Special Operations Group is tasked with drug enforcement and other high profile investigations.
A third grant, the Edward Byrne Competitive Grant Program from the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, has grant funding available amounting to more than 125 million dollars. Byrne Competitive Grants are similar to JAG grants and are focused on ensuring job growth and job retention. However, instead of providing grants based on a formula, the Bureau of Justice Assistance administers these funds based on a competitive application process. These grants help state and local communities improve the capacity of local justice systems. Under this grant provision, the Sheriff's Office has requested $283,135, to fund a Community Service Officer to deliver civil process, an Evidence Officer, and a statistical support position.

If awarded, these grants would be used to reinstate staff laid off on December 31, 2008, and to offset anticipated future cuts in staff so that badly needed existing programs could be maintained. Sheriff's Officials received conformation just yesterday from the Washington Association of Sheriff's and Police Chiefs (WASPC) that the 2008-2009 Registered Sex Offender Address and Residency Verification Program has been extended two more years. Between June 30, 2008 and July 1, 2009, Mason County received a grant in the amount of $91,814.65 to physically verify addresses provided to law enforcement by registered sex offenders. The purpose of this grant is to assist smaller jurisdictions in monitoring registered sex offenders by having sheriff's deputies physically verifying their addresses as often as quarterly depending on the level assigned to the offender. The grant is provided by the State of Washington and administered by WASPC. Funding amounts for the next two years starts on July 1, 2009, and will increase because the number of registered sex offenders in the county has increased. Presently Mason County has 120 level I sex offenders, 63 level II offenders, and 44 level III offenders. Level III offenders are the ones considered most likely to re-offend. Mason County currently has 11 registered sex offenders incarcerated and 5 are considered missing with warrants issued for their arrest. Sheriff Casey Salisbury said "Our Office is doing everything possible to maintain the highest level of public safety in the county. Regardless of funding levels our office remains committed to providing our citizens with the most value for their tax dollars."