

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I have been a resident of Round Valley for over 47 years, and in previous meetings, I have requested that you not extend permits for growing Cannabis on rangeland in Mendocino County as there has been so much difficulty with environmental protection and human safety around oversight of illegal grows in our area. However, as you can see from the Sheriff Kendall's request for additional deputies, he appears to want more staff to provide for the safety and well being of the citizens of our county..

I do have, however, a specific request for you. I believe we need at least one deputy sheriff stationed here in Covelo who would be able to practice community based policing which encourages and supports community based justice. The response time for all emergencies, assaults, robberies or altercations here is too long!. With a sheriff in residence, as we have had in the past, the community members come to know, trust, and understand the way the sheriff's deputies are part of the whole community. He or she can then support our youth, our elders and our families when troubling situations arise and where and when healthy programs bring us together.

I believe that Sheriff Kendall has great respect for and attachment to this community and understands our strengths and also our challenges. I think a first priority is providing assistance in this northern part of the county and I request that you specifically provide for a deputy sheriff to be sited here. That is a direct appeal to you today; that any action you take includes the siting of one or two deputy sheriffs in our community.

There has, further, been no resolution of the terrible disappearance of Khadijah Biritton, a young Covelo Native woman who was taken at gun point and has never been seen again. Perhaps having a deputy here would help solve this case and bring much needed closure and justice to the family, to friends, and to the community in general.

I am also deeply disturbed that one of the two slides which accompanied the Sheriff's proposal included the image of a black man lying on the ground, his hands tied behind his back. Including that photograph with the request for more deputies, is bewildering and dismaying to the public. There are so few black men in our county and this image of a black victim of violence suggests racist fear mongering. I am dismayed that this kind of photograph was attached to any request for more police personnel, no matter what the reason. Using an image of a black man hog tied on the ground is incendiary and unnecessary. I urge whomever chose to apologize for its publication. Racism must be called out wherever it is manifested.

Thank you for reading and considering my comments.

Respectfully,

Paula Fugman