

## Sheriff Expects Addition of Police to Enhance Enforcement in County

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Next year, the Auburn Police Department will cease to exist and law enforcement services will be provided throughout Nemaha County solely by the Sheriff's Office. The City of Auburn recently approved a contract with the Nemaha County Board of Commissioners for the Nemaha County Sheriff's Office to assume duties formerly performed by Auburn Police.

Sheriff Brent Lottman told the newspaper, "Hopefully, this change will not decrease law enforcement for anyone. In fact, it should improve it as we will have the same number of law officers and have eliminated the 'boundary issue'."

He added, "We will now be just one layer of administration and hopefully it will streamline the process. The County Sheriff's Office will now have 10 officers available and the City of Auburn will now have 10 officers available."

Lottman said the City's ordinances will be enforced. For instance, sheriff's officers will be ticketing owners of unlicensed cars and issuing citations for nuisance properties when warranted."

The sheriff said the same priorities for law enforcement will be followed. Crimes against people receive top priority, with crimes against property next in line. Traffic control and nuisance actions are the lowest in importance, but take up most of the officers' time.

The current Auburn Police Department telephone number (402-274-4977) will remain in service after Jan. 1st, but the dispatcher will answer the phone as Nemaha County Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's telephone number is still 402-274-3139.

The Sheriff's Office will assume possession of the Police Department property, including its patrol cars. Lottman said remarking of the cruiser vehicles from Auburn Police to County Sheriff is a lower priority and more of a cosmetic issue. "It will just be a County Sheriff's officer who will be driving that cruiser" he commented.

Lottman said complaints from Auburn residents about issues in the community can be directed to the Sheriff's Office and don't have to first be reported to Auburn City Hall staff.

While the first year of the contract calls for a \$283,000 payment by the City of Auburn to Nemaha County, provisions exist to review this amount prior to the start of the second and third years so changes can be made to such cost variables as health insurance coverage and fuel prices.

Lottman said, "We intend to make sure that Auburn residents pay a fair prices for the law enforcement services that they receive and that Nemaha County taxpayers living outside of Auburn don't have to pay more because of the change."

He said scams seem to be a big issue at present and the sheriff encourages anyone who receives the offer of a gift too good to be true to ignore it because it is [too good to be true]. Lots of the scams originate overseas and that makes them harder to prosecute.

Thefts are another common report investigated by law officers. Lottman said two vehicles were stolen recently in Auburn and items of value have been taken from vehicles and garages.

Marijuana continues to be the most prevalent drug, while synthetic drugs such as K-2 are becoming increasingly popular. Prescription drug abuse and occasionally methamphetamine use are also noticed in the county. Lottman said a problem remains with narcotics and

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anti-depressants, particularly people who try creative ways to access the drugs and then either use them or sell them on the black market.

“If you think the price of legal drugs is high, you should see what illegal drugs costs. The cost of drugs on the black market is ridiculous,” he said.

“Law officers find a lot of their time is taken up by domestic issues, but not necessary the most serious which involve assaults. We are asked to solve problems between neighbors when the parties involved possibly haven’t even spoken about the issue(s) yet. People used to be more responsible years ago and tried to settle smaller problems without bringing law enforcement into the picture.”

“Also, activity originating from the Department of Health & Human Services personnel involving parents separated from their children has become increasingly common. While we used to receive no more than a few legitimate calls per year of child abuse, we are now getting three or four calls per week involving less serious domestic issues,” Lottman said.

The sheriff said law enforcement officers typically deal with only two to five percent of the population and has contact the other 95 percent with the general public in such instances as vehicle crashes and traffic citations.

### 2013 Sheriff’s Officers

After Jan. 1, 2013, the Nemaha County Sheriff’s Office will consist of the following:

Sheriff Lottman, who has served in that capacity since being elected in January of 2003 and who was a Nemaha County Sheriff’s Deputy prior to then from August of 1997.

Harold Silvey, chief deputy, who has been on the force since 2004.

Dan Johnson, lieutenant, who joined the force in 2011.

Jesse Blaser (2007), Casey Moyer (2008), Matt Kadavy (2010), and Dan White, who has been on the force part-time since 2010. Deputy White formerly served as the Auburn Police Chief for 10 years, as a police officer for five years prior to then and was a Nemaha County Sheriff’s Deputy for six months before that.

Current Auburn Police officers who will become Nemaha County Sheriff’s Deputies are longtime officer Eric Adams; Jeff Timmerman, who has been a policeman here for about six years; and Jon Neeman, who joined the force in 2011. Adams was a jailer-dispatcher from 1984-88, then served as a sheriff’s deputy until joining the Auburn Police Department in 1991.

To help the public become better acquainted with the Nemaha County Sheriff’s personnel, this newspaper will publish officer profiles in the coming weeks.

Lottman said Nemaha County also currently employs seven jailer/dispatchers.