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Sheriff

OFFICE OF THE FRANKLIN COUNTY

SHERIFF

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January 3, 2023

Franklin County Board of Commissioners
Franklin County Elected
Franklin County Administrator
1016 N. 4th Avenue
Pasco, WA 99301

In November of 1883, Franklin County was established when it broke away from Whitman County. The new county's residents established an electorate voting system for their representatives at a county level. I am sure that our county leaders at the time had a fervent desire to control their destinies and develop their own leadership skills, roles, and vision of what they wanted Franklin County to become.

Approximately 139 years later, I am certain that this county never envisioned being subservient to another county, relegating themselves to bow to the desires of their fellow commissioners across the river. Nor did they anticipate giving others permission to push them into the nosebleed section, relegating them to observer status while another county government controlled them and their community. I am certain when our county citizens voted in their commissioners over the years, they did so intending that those commissioners would lead the county and not follow others because of financial concerns.

Leadership is described in many ways. The definition of leadership is to influence, inspire, and help others become their best selves, building their skills, and achieving goals along the way. You do not have to be a CEO, manager, or even a team lead to be a leader. Leadership is a set of skills – and a certain psychology – that anyone can master. Leadership is not a zero-sum equation.

[What is Leadership? The ultimate guide - Tony Robbins](https://www.tonyrobbins.com/what-is-leadership/)

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** Honor * Integrity * Trust*

I hope that in 1883 our leadership asked themselves why they were forming a county government just as we should be asking ourselves the same question in 2022-2023. Why was county government formed? What was county government's purpose in representing its community members? Why do we now place ourselves as a county into a subservient position with the State and one of our neighboring counties? These questions are more important today than ever in the history of this county.

I have lived and worked in Pasco and Franklin County since 1978. For the majority of this time, I have worked in the law enforcement arena in this community. I have had a front row seat to the politics of municipal and county governments where I have watched them devouring each other, leveraging their personal agendas, and attempting to get others to pay their way. This theme has occurred over the span of four decades or more.

We cannot afford this big brother mentality any longer. Nor can we rely upon someone else to take care of our citizens. Big brother is going to continue to stomp us into the ground until we are insignificant.

In my opinion, there are a few extremely important things to consider and begin implementing in 2023 if we are to continue on the right trajectory.

- **Permanent County Administrator:** Current trends in municipal and county government show us that communities are choosing executives from within their own communities without outside assistance. They are grooming their choices from within to better serve their community. This concept is a true partnership between government and community.
- **Outside Facilitator:** Hire a professional facilitator to assist in developing a set of long-term goals and objectives - a facilitator who is not controlled by political personalities. The facilitator should assist in development of a three-, five-, and ten-year strategic plan for Franklin County. The facilitator should be free to hear from all elected county employees, employers, and key community members.
- **Franklin County Courts Director:** Franklin County has lagged behind in this arena, again placing us in a subservient position to others. This position could and should oversee and coordinate our superior, district, and juvenile court systems on behalf of Franklin County.
- **Franklin County Human Services Director:** This position is desperately needed to help Franklin County to take control of its own public health issues. Let us imagine and realize our own Franklin County Health Department, Recovery Center, Social Detox, and other facilities to address health issue challenges.

I know your very first protests will be about how we cannot afford this, but you can no longer use that as an excuse. We could argue that funding could start with withdrawing the amount of money from Benton County that Franklin County pays into Benton County administrative salaries. It is a start; is it not? The people of this county are demanding more out of us.

A partnership is described as a **formal arrangement by two or more parties to manage and operate a business and share its profits or failures**. The Benton and Franklin County partnership does not fit this description by any stretch of the imagination.

I call upon the elected of this county to begin to lead in 2023 and not follow others. Everything we do as an organization should be done in the best interest of Franklin County citizens and their towns and cities within Franklin County.

Let us begin the process, make the tough decisions, and begin acting like the eighth-fastest growing county in the United States. We must demand that equal partnerships take place or decide where we will be taking the people of this county in the near future. The time is now to begin the process of strategic planning with our community leaders, local businesses, and the Franklin County citizens we have been elected to serve.

At days end we should all be striving to represent the best interests of our county and its citizens. The measurement of success and progress should be. "Do our citizens feel safe and secure in their city-county and home?" There certainly is more to county government then being good stewards of the tax dollar.

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Cc: Sheriff's Facebook Page
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