

COHOPE REPORT - FEB. 8, 2007

The monthly crime statistics reported by Sheriff's Deputy Grey LaCerte did not indicate any unusual trends so Deputy Grey again discussed some disturbing numbers behind several categories. The Burglary category for January showed a number of 30. Of those, 15 were residential robberies and of those 11 were "unforced" where doors to the house were left unlocked or in 4 cases a garage door opener was left in an unlocked car parked outside. Motor vehicle thefts were up slightly and again the largest numbers involved cars left warming up (puffers) and keys left in unlocked cars - 1 instance again where a car was left unlocked and running at a day care center. To point out the seriousness of the "puffer" situation, a Deputy during his early morning rounds made a point of driving through a Columbine Knolls area (the Deputy at the meeting did not know what particular "Columbine Knolls" area) and counted 40 cars left warming up unattended. Walt Frankland, a Foothills Park and Recreation director, reported that as a result of the mill levy increase vote failing, there will not be a matching funds program this year and probably very few parks improvements projects either. He hopes to push for restoration of matching funds next year. This month's guest speaker was Kathy Hartman, our new County Commissioner. After she gave a short description of her career experiences in Social Services and Mental Health management that she believes qualifies her for the Commissioner she opened the session up to questions. Obviously there were many questions concerning snow removal and/or lack of during our recent storms. She responded that Jefferson County had all their available equipment and operators on 12 hour shifts, 7 days a week since Dec. 18th. She also described the priority system utilized to clear our streets. At this time the County Commissioners would not do anything different under similar situations unless we, the residents and voters wanted to spend more money on equipment and staff. She also responded to questions on the Belleview Ave. widening project to C470 which is underway and any future plans for widening Quincy and Chatfield Avenues. For the later two, the county is studying those streets for future projects but nothing is planned for the immediate future. There were many questions concerning what Commissioner Hartman described as an ongoing shortfall in the County Operations Budget - projected to be 8% this year. Apparently this has been a problem for sometime that the Commissioners have "fixed" by using reserve funds, which are not nearing depletion. Look for more on this in the community papers but also look for reduction in County services as the Commissioners try to solve the problem and balance the budget.

Larry