

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.

The Humboldt County Sheriff's Department failed this taxpayer when it came to investigating the burglary that happened at my home. I want to emphasize that nothing was done even though I informed them of who committed the crime. Evidence wasn't processed and not a single interview conducted with the suspects. I can only assume that my opposition of a government that is completely out-of-control is the reason for my case being swept under the rug. I invite every single person who works for the Sheriff's Department to contact me with information that they think will change my mind as to how this government office is being managed or in my opinion mismanaged. I will gladly use this soap box to admit the errors of how I perceive the problem. Please let me know. Communication is the key to any progress. After 9-1-1 was called it took four hours for an officer to respond. These suspects are responsible for multiple burglaries in Humboldt County and yet nothing was done. The items taken from my home were fenced and the money collected was used to buy meth and I'm sure the suspects were wasted all before the officer arrived at the scene of the crime. In looking into the 69 employees in the Sheriff's Department whose compensation package exceeded the \$100,000 per year mark, overtime jumps out as a major problem. In 2013 there was over \$1,100,000 paid out in overtime. This is not beneficial to the taxpayers of Humboldt County. Are the officers overworked? It appears that they are. Why are we not doing something about this glaring problem? A great place to start would be to reduce overtime by 75%. This savings could fund the hiring of ten new officers at \$85,000 per year each and we could increase the base salary of the existing officers. We are paying an astronomical price for the insurance coverage County employees receive. I know

that these employees are getting hit with having to pay a portion of their insurance and for the average employee this is a financial burden. It is time to completely change the way this benefit is being handled. I do not have vision or dental coverage and the medical premium for me and my wife is less than \$1,000 per month. We should eliminate dental and vision coverage. We could pay for two dental cleanings, an eye exam and one new pair of glasses every year for less than the insurance premiums. We should give every County employee \$1,500 per month to spend on insurance. Provide them with a cafeteria plan that they can pick and choose what type of coverage that is best for their family. This would save the taxpayers of Humboldt County millions of dollars that could be used to increase base pay, hire more police officers, give more money to the schools, keep the fire stations open and balance the budget without raising taxes. Unfortunately, the people in charge of the budgets are also receiving these outlandish benefits and they would rather raise taxes than make the necessary decisions that would greatly improve the quality of life in Humboldt County. These decision makers are afraid to take on the unions. The path we are on is devastating. The last report said the number of homeless people in our community has increased 25% since the last count. Remember this happened even though Humboldt County spends over \$400,000 every single day, 365 days a year on Social Services. We are fed up with what we are receiving for our tax dollar. Everyday our homeless and drug problems increase and public safety decreases.

This has been Tom Cookman with a Community Comment