

DESCHUTES WOMEN SPEAK OUT PRESS CONFERENCE ON 10/26/2020

This morning, the Sheriff's Office started receiving questions about a press conference held this morning by Deschutes Women Speak Out, concerning claims of harassment and gender discrimination brought by previous employees of this Office at that press conference.

The Sheriff's Office takes every complaint by current or former employees seriously. This is evidenced by the long-standing Sheriff's Office practice to inform our partners in County Human Resources and County Legal of such complaints and conduct an investigation. In fact, the Sheriff's Office has employed outside investigators to conduct these investigations. We have always done that when there have been any complaints of harassment or discrimination. Crystal makes a good point to not say "always", how about "this has been the historical practice of how this office has investigated these complaints.

Sheriff Nelson "I am disappointed that Mayor Russell and Gena-Goodman Campbell did not reach out to me to discuss their concerns and learn Sheriff's Office procedure on taking complaints before taking a stance on an issue."

Since taking office, Sheriff Nelson has increased the numbers of female patrol deputies by approximately 20%.

Sheriff Nelson "The timing is interesting, as this announcement appears to be election and debate related. I find this not to be coincidental." "People not in line with the Sheriff's Office mission and values will not work here, that is not what our taxpayers deserve." In addition, I have been informed this press conference was organized by We Win Strategies, the same company currently being used by my opponent."

A number of these claims involve two pending lawsuits. Claims by this group have been investigated by outside investigators and have been unsubstantiated.

This office has not received a report of hazing of a female employee. The former employee cited by the group as a victim of hazing worked for the Sheriff's Office over ten years ago for a previous administration.

Since taking office, Sheriff Nelson has followed a stance of holding employees, regardless of gender, accountable for their conduct. Not everyone likes to be held accountable for his or her actions.