October 12, 2011

Chair Andy Duyck
Washington County Board of Commissioners
155 N First Avenue
Hillsboro, OR 97124

Re: Recommendation to Appoint Patrick Garrett - Washington County Sheriff

Dear Chair Duyck,

In September of 2002, I appeared in front of the Washington County Board of Commissioners and was honored to be appointed as the 31st Sheriff of Washington County. Since that time, I have been twice elected by the voters to continue in that position. As I neared my retirement date and the end of my career with the office, I considered the most important task yet undone was to evaluate the knowledge, skills and abilities of potential replacement candidates, and then to make a strong recommendation to your Board regarding my conclusions as to who our next Sheriff should be.

As I have considered my decision in this matter over time, I have concluded that the next Sheriff must possess the management skills necessary to manage an agency of 540 employees, hundreds of volunteers, and an annual budget of over $77 million tax dollars. The candidate must also be technically knowledgeable in all aspects of law enforcement, civil law, and in jail operations. Because the Sheriff’s Office has made great strides towards professionalism and elite service in all of these areas, the candidate should be one who will continue many of the successful programs and traditions established over the last decade. I also feel strongly that the next Sheriff should be one who is a partner with other county departments, a partner with the County Administrative Office, a partner with the Board, and a person who recognizes that relationships with all local government partners is essential for Sheriff’s Office administration.

With those criteria in mind, I am fully confident in recommending that the Board appoint our current Undersheriff, Pat Garrett as the next Sheriff of Washington County.

For most of Undersheriff Garrett’s 23 years at the Sheriff’s Office he has worked to prepare himself for the Office of Sheriff. Pat worked every law enforcement certified position at this office. His experience includes narcotics investigations, tactical team operations, and Field Training Officer. As a patrol sergeant in 1997, Pat earned the Award of Valor for de-escalating a potentially deadly situation that involved a suicidal subject armed with a .308 hunting rifle, after the subject pointed the weapon at deputies. Pat’s conduct that day exemplifies his leadership style - lead from the front and make the difficult decisions necessary in this business.
Pat also served as a division commander of our Jail. To learn best about the corrections field, Pat volunteered to attend the Basic Corrections Academy in 2004, thereby becoming state certified in corrections. Today, Pat is one of the few individuals in Oregon to hold Executive Level Certification in both the Corrections and Enforcement professions. I see these certifications as critical in preparing any individual to hold the Office of Sheriff.

Pat's leadership is underpinned by hard work, ethics and integrity. As a lieutenant and commander, Pat maintained high standards of performance in his division, while developing enduring partnerships with community leaders and our partner agencies so invaluable to our shared successes. He led the Sheriff's Office efforts to communicate police and jail service information to voters so they were well informed when considering whether to continue law enforcement levy services. As my Chief Deputy, he became well versed in key office-wide support requirements, such as budget preparation, hiring the best candidates, training and long range planning. Rounding out his experience across the entire spectrum of operations for a Sheriff's Office of 540 that serves a population of over 545,000, Undersheriff Garrett currently provides oversight and leadership for three divisions - Patrol, Jail and Investigations.

Pat has worked throughout his career to improve himself academically. He earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Portland State University in 2003. In 2007, Pat graduated from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy in Quantico, Virginia. During the summer of 2010, Pat attended the JFK Seminar for State and Local Government Executives at Harvard University.

Pat further developed his leadership and academic strengths through 25 years of service in the United States Army Reserve, and is presently a Lieutenant Colonel. Since 9/11, Pat mobilized twice to serve his country overseas. Most recently, Pat served with an infantry battalion in South Baghdad for a year, earning both the Army's Bronze Star Medal and Combat Action Badge.

In every position Pat has held in this Office, he has excelled. He has held command positions in the Sheriff's Office since 2002, and has been a division commander since shortly after my selection as Sheriff. In 2004, he was promoted to Chief Deputy (third in command), and in June of this year to Undersheriff.

I have had an opportunity to evaluate and interact with Pat throughout his career and I am convinced that he is fully supportive of several key management strategies important to the success of this Office. Those include modeling our key policies after national law enforcement standards (CALEA), state jail standards (OSSA jail standards), and national jail medical standards (NCCHC).

His experiences in managing the Sheriff's Office HR function have given him invaluable experience in selecting the right person for the right job - from initial selection of candidates to promotional decisions. Since 2004, Pat has been responsible for oversight of our training programs and has insured that the Washington County Sheriff's Office is one of the highest trained corps of law enforcement, corrections, and civil deputies in the country.

Pat is a strong believer in preparing our supervisors for their role, regardless of their level of responsibility. He has participated in preparing supervision academies and is a local instructor in many of the courses designed to prepare supervisors for success. Finally, Pat recognizes the importance of holding this agency accountable to the voters of Washington County. Our system of accountability measured through performance measures, routine division status reports, annual reporting, and strong communication to the Board and to our citizens are all supported by Pat and are systems that he will continue to improve.
In watching Pat work and improve his skills over his career, I am confident that Pat believes strongly that integrity is not negotiable when it comes to individual conduct and responsibility. He is fully prepared and committed to maintaining the elite culture and standards that this agency is now known by.

In closing, it is with the highest level of confidence that I endorse Pat Garrett as the 32nd Sheriff of Washington County. He will serve the citizens of Washington County with honor and distinction.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss this appointment, should you have any questions.

With Highest Regards,

Rob Gordon
Washington County Sheriff

RG/kmb

cc: Commissioner Greg Malinowski
Commissioner Roy Rogers
Commissioner Dick Schouten
Commissioner Bob Terry
County Administrator Robert Davis