

Richardson Co Commission Hears Dispute

(KTNC) - A dispute between Richardson County Sheriff Randy Houser and Emergency Management Director Jim Gerweck was aired publicly during the Richardson County Commission meeting Tuesday.

Sheriff Houser presented Commissioners with a six-page letter, detailing what he says is a lack of responsiveness from the Emergency Management Department to various requests he's made since he took office nearly two years ago. (play audio :19)

The main complaint Sheriff Houser expressed concerns needed upgrades to the county's radio communication system – specifically moving the Humboldt repeater to a better location. (play audio :32)

Houser said it cost about one thousand dollars to fix the lock in question. In addition, Houser says the Sheriff's Department doesn't have access to an emergency trailer the county has had since 2007. Houser said he'd like to use that at crime or accident scenes. He also claims emergency management vehicles and trailers take up a majority of space at the Armory, where the Sheriff's Department would like to store impounded vehicles or the spare patrol vehicle.

Gerweck responded to the letter, which he saw for the first time Tuesday. He said there are a lot of misunderstandings contained in the letter. (play audio :24)

Gerweck said much of the problem with the radio system stems from lack of training on the part of Sheriff's Department personnel, and he said he's offered to provide the training.

Sheriff Houser responded when Commission Chairman David Sickel told Houser and Gerweck they needed to find a way to work together. (play audio :53)

Houser closes his letter by asking commissioners to either remove Gerweck from his position as the Director of Emergency Management, or removed from control of the county radio system and courthouse security management.

Commissioners repeatedly told Houser and Gerweck during the 45 minute session that they need to find ways to cooperate with one another.

Houser presented Commissioners with a bid for \$7400 to move the Humboldt repeater to the top of the water tower. That will be discussed further at next week's meeting.