

Concern Expressed...Again Over Lack of Police Force

By Brittany Trandahl
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“Forty minutes is too long of a response time, stated Upton resident Mark Mitchell during the Town Council meeting on Monday, September 9. Mitchell recently had a situation at his home that required immediate help and after calling dispatch, the Weston County Sheriff’s Department sent a deputy, but it took him 40 minutes to reach the scene. “Nothing against the Sheriff’s Deputies, they do a great job, it’s just the response time that is the problem.”

He went onto say that previously, with the Upton Police Department, response time was two minutes at the most. He asked the Council what their plan is as far as trying to get more law enforcement.

“All of your points are completely valid and I don’t think you’ll find anyone on this Council that disagrees with any of them,” responded Mayor Nick Trandahl. “As for what’s being done, we’ve been advertising for officers through multiple channels with a couple bites, but no hires yet.”

Mitchell asked the Council, as a private citizen, what his responsibility is. “What are we supposed to do, when there’s a situation but no officers can be there,” continued Mitchell. “With the state of things, we’re asking people to handle it themselves and I don’t think that’s ever a good idea.”

“Correct me if I’m wrong,” asked Mayor Trandahl to Upton Police Chief Susan Bridge. “But its always a private citizen’s right to defend themselves and their property?”

“Yes, that is correct. You have the responsibility and freedom to protect yourself”, responded Chief Bridge. “Wyoming State Statute actually is very specific about property rights, however. You can’t run into your house, get a gun, and come out and shoot somebody. You can run into your house, lock your door and wait for the deputies to arrive.” She added that the Upton Police Department does currently have reserve officers coming in from other locations and that they are advertising for the open positions.

Councilman Justin Norman added, “We’re not going to stop trying, community policing is our number one priority.”

Mitchell ended with, “as a private citizen, whatever I can do to help, I will. I support the Town 100 percent, I’m just not satisfied with the way it is right now.”