The next Town Hall meeting with Sheriff Jeff Dickerson is scheduled in the South Columbia County area for November 15. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. in the St. Helens High School Auditorium.

The meeting is designed to give Columbia County residents a greater understanding of the service reductions and looming devastating cuts that are forecast for the sheriff's office, and to invite citizen involvement in the planning for what we will be doing as soon as next year.

This year, the sheriff's office suffered more than $1million dollars in reductions, leading to the loss of sworn positions, reduced ability to respond to calls for service and massive reductions in jail beds. More reductions are expected next year. The potential for loss of entire sheriff's office programs are a very real possibility.

Citizens are urged to join the sheriff at the high school for an update on planning for next year and to offer their own thoughts on the loss of services or future cuts to sheriff's office programs.

"We had our first Town Hall meeting in Rainier," said the sheriff. "Although the turnout was light compared to the seriousness of topic, the questions and comments were outstanding, and we had a lot of people sign up for a tour of the jail."

Those attending the meeting November 15 will also be given an opportunity to sign up for a tour of the jail.