

Wood River Police Ready For End Of Cash Bail

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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WOOD RIVER - Wood River Police Chief Brad Wells said his department has been prepared for the end of cash bail long before the Pre-Trial Fairness Act officially went into effect on Monday, Sept. 18. At Monday night's City Council meeting, Chief Wells assured the public that his department will work with the State's Attorney to continue keeping the city safe.

“We’ve done a lot of internal work to get ready for this morning,” Chief Wells said. “With the click of the calendar from the 17th to the 18th, Illinois is the only state in the land to be a no-cash-bail state.

“We’ve done a lot of meetings, a lot of preparation with our State’s Attorney, have a lot of procedures in place, we feel like we are ready for that. The time from midnight last night until this morning, we’ve not had to deal with that issue, but obviously by the time the week ends will determine just how that’s going to affect us.”

Wells said his department will be creating a forum to track their statistics from now until the end of this year to see how they compare before and after the Pre-Trial Fairness Act went into effect. He said they’ve already been doing this to some degree for years by tracking who has been held in jail, how parolees were being treated, and “the things that they were getting by with.” He added that his department is trying to find a balanced approach to enforcing laws to encourage residents to be “good neighbors.”

“We’re not, per say, running people out of town - that’s not our intention, but like I told the Council when I swore in as Chief of Police, it’s my goal that everyone has a good neighbor,” he said. “My idea behind everybody being a good neighbor is that they live the way everybody would like them to live, with clean yards, not vehicles up on blocks, et cetera. We’re just enforcing those type things just to help people along to keep the complaints down.”

While this may be the end of cash bail in Illinois, Wells said it’s not the end of the world, or the end of Wood River.

“We’re doing what we can. We haven’t seen any problems yet,” Chief Wells said. “The sky’s not going to fall just because of this act, we’ll still do what we can to keep the city safe.”

A full recording of the Sept. 18 meeting is available at the top of this story, on the [Riverbender.com Facebook page](#), or on [Riverbender.com/video](#).