

GRIFFITH PUBLIC SAFETY BOARD

August 11, 2022

The Griffith Safety Board was called to order by George Jerome at 6:30 P.M.

Those in Attendance

George Jerome	Griffith Safety Board Chairman
Liz Goral	Griffith Safety Board Vice Chairman
RoAnn Purgert	Griffith Safety Board Secretary
Phil Vechey	Griffith Safety Board Member
Sue Katona	Griffith Safety Board Member
Rick Ryfa	Town Council Police Department Liaison – Absent
Melissa Robbins	Town Council Fire Department Liaison – Absent

The meeting opened with the pledge of allegiance. The following items were discussed:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of July 7, 2022 Minutes
Motion by PSB Member Liz Goral
2nd by PSB Member Sue Katona
Motion carried 4 – 0 (Phil Vechey abstained)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

There were none.

COMMUNICATION / REPORTS

1. **Griffith Police Department**
Chief Mance read the monthly reports for June 2022.
2. **Griffith Fire Department**
Chief Schoon read the monthly reports for June 2022.
3. **Griffith FOP Post 161**
Corporal Beck advised there was nothing to report.
4. **VEST**
Corporal Ghrist read the monthly reports for July 2022.
5. **Town Council Liaison**
There was no Town Council Liaison present.

OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Swearing in of Probationary Officer Travis Priester PE #84.
PSB Member Phil Vechey swore in Probationary Officer Travis Priester. Chief Mance read the following biography on Officer Priester:

"Travis Priester is 27 years old and is a 2013 Clark High School graduate. He has prior experience as a public safety officer with the Lakes of the Four Seasons community and is an accomplished musician of 15 years."

2. Swearing in of Probationary Officer Jakoby Perry PE #85.
PSB Member Sue Katona swore in Probationary Officer Jakoby Perry. Chief Mance read the following biography on Officer Perry:

"Jakoby Perry is 24 years old and is a 2017 Merrillville High School graduate. He has prior experience as a correctional officer with the Lake County Sheriff's Department, and as a reserve police officer with the New Chicago and Hobart Police departments."

3. Swearing in of Probationary Officer Austin Tucker PE #86.
PSB Member RoAnn Purgert swore in Probationary Officer Austin Tucker. Chief Mance read the following biography on Officer Tucker:

"Austin Tucker is 24 years old and is a 2016 Crown Point High School graduate. He has prior experience in both the labor and service industries, and he is active with the Army National Guard where he serves in the military police."

4. Promotion of Corporal Kevin Strbjak to the rank of Sergeant. Commander J. Sibley read the following biography on Sergeant Strbjak:

"Sgt Strbjak was sworn in as an officer in July 2010. He is a graduate of Valparaiso University with a bachelor's degree in Political Science minoring in Sociology and International Law. Sgt Strbjak also completed a master's degree in Sports Administration from Valparaiso. Sgt Strbjak then went onto pursue and complete a Master of Public Administration degree from Indiana University. Both graduate programs were completed while being a Griffith Police officer."

Sgt Strbjak served in the patrol division and was promoted to corporal. Shortly thereafter he was appointed to the detective bureau where he worked for nearly 4.5 years handling numerous narcotics, firearms cases, and other major cases. In late 2019, Sgt Strbjak returned to the patrol division and took on the role of a K9 handler with his partner K9 Deno.

Sgt Strbjak has had many other duties that have ranged from evidence room custodian, field training officer, general instructor, emergency vehicle operations instructor, pursuit intervention technique instructor, DHE officer, a member of the multiagency STOPS Team and was a NWR SWAT negotiator.

Sgt Strbjak would like to thank his family, especially his wife, for being there during this journey."

PSB Chairman George Jerome swore in Sergeant Strbjak.

5. Promotion of Officer Jason Jaques to the rank of Corporal.
Commander C. Burrow read the following biography on Corporal Jaques:

"Officer Jason Jaques is a 1997 graduate of Michigan City High School. Jason then attended Purdue University and received his Bachelor degree.

Jason enlisted in the United States Army reserve and served as a combat vet in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. Officer Jaques served for 8 years and obtained the rank of SGT E-5.

On January 10, 2011, Jason was sworn in as a Griffith Police Officer. In his time here, he has served as a Primary Instructor, a handgun instructor, a patrol rifle instructor, a Taser instructor, and a Physical Tactics instructor. He has also been certified in bicycle patrol, ATV patrol, is a certified breath test operator, a Glock Armorer and has obtained his SRO certification.

Officer Jaques was the 2021 recipient of the Texas O. Minter Award for community service. We are proud to promote Officer Jason Jaques to the rank of Corporal."

PSB Chairman George Jerome swore in Corporal Jaques.

6. Promotion of Officer Jeff Beck to the rank of Corporal.
Lieutenant. P. Sines read the following biography on Corporal Beck:

"Officer Beck graduated from Calumet High School in 2001 and went on to receive an Associate's Degree from ITT Tech in the field of Multimedia, and received a Bachelor's Degree in 2007 from the Illinois Institute of Art.

Officer Beck joined the Cedar Lake Police Department in 2010 as a V.I.P.S. member which is equivalent to Griffith V.E.S.T. He worked as a V.I.P.S. Officer for 3.5 years, earning the rank of Corporal. He then joined the Cedar Lake Police Department as a Reserve Officer for 6 months. January 2014, Officer Beck was sworn in as a full-time Police officer our department.

In 2015, he received a Commendation and was also honored by District 1 for a Life Saving Award, when he and another officer entered an apartment with dense smoke and limited visibility. They located an unresponsive female in the back bedroom and pulled her to safety.

As a member of the Griffith Police Department, Officer Beck is on the Rules and Regulations Board, is a field training officer, and on the MIRT Team to assist people seeking assistance with addiction. Officer Beck has held various positions within the FOP, including President and Secretary.

Officer Beck would like to thank his wife Jenn, his children Jack and Amara, along with the rest of his family for their love and support throughout his career."

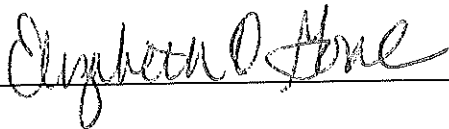
PSB Chairman George Jerome swore in Corporal Beck.

QUESTIONS / COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR


There were none.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

George Jerome 

Liz Goral 

RoAnn Purgert 

Phil Vehey 

Sue Katona _____