

GRIFFITH SAFETY BOARD

July 11, 2013

The Griffith Safety Board was called to order by Chairman Marker at 7:00 p.m.

Those in Attendance

Jim Marker	Griffith Safety Board Chairman
Gary Sutton	Griffith Safety Board Vice-Chairman
Liz Goral	Griffith Safety Board Secretary
John Volkmann	Griffith Safety Board Member
Glen Gaby	Town Council Liaison
Gregory S. Mance	Chief of Police
Roy Schoon	Fire Department

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

Approval of June 20, 2013 minutes: Motion by Secretary Goral
2nd by board member Volkmann
Motion carried 4-0.

Reports: Griffith Police Department

Chief Mance read the monthly report for June

Chief Mance read a letter of thanks from Highland Police Chief Hojnicky for our department's collaboration with Highland in arresting two suspects from an armed pharmaceutical robbery in Highland and two similar armed robberies in our town.

Chief Mance reported that typically the month of June is the busiest month of the year for police activity but over a 5 year period, June 2013 has had the least case reports.

Over the past month of service the K9 has been used in multiple arrests.

Bicycle patrol has started with officers patrolling the parks, bike path and neighborhoods. The public has reacted positively to these new patrols.

Griffith Fire Department

Chief Schoon read the June monthly report.

Chief Schoon reminded everyone of the annual fundraiser dance that will be held Saturday, July 13, 2013 from 6:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. The band Relics will be providing the music.

VEST

Co-Liaison Gang reported that the VEST members have completed numerous training classes.

FOP Post 161

Nothing at this time

New Business

GPD SOP (Standard Operating Procedures)

A motion by Vice-Chairman Sutton to accept the Griffith Police Departments Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) as presented, seconded by board member Volkmann. Motion passed 4-0.

GPD Recognitions & Commendations

Town Council President Gaby and Vice-President Ryfa presented the following certificates of recognition:

Citizens

Patricia Kireta – On May 11, 2013, at approximately midnight Mrs Kireta looked out her window and observed a subject surreptitiously looking into her husband's vehicle with a flashlight. Mrs. Kireta verbally addressed the subject and asked him what he was doing. At that time the subject listened to a seconded subject who was not previously seen, and quickly departed the area. Mrs. Kireta immediately contacted the police and provided a thorough description of the subject and his last known direction of travel. Through her efforts and diligence the responding officers were able to establish a perimeter in the area which resulted in locating both subjects involved. Upon further investigation it was revealed the subjects were responsible for numerous area thefts from vehicles. Thanks to Mrs. Kireta's actions these criminals were identified and removed from our streets and charged with criminal offenses. Also resulting was the recovery and return of stolen property. It is the willingness and diligence of citizens such as Mrs. Kireta that helps maintain the peace and safety of our community with no tolerance for criminal activity as such. We are proud to have Mrs. Kireta as a residence of the Town of Griffith.

Terrence Velligan – June 5, 2013 police received a report of a disturbance in an alleyway in which shots of a firearm had been reported. Officers converged on the area as reports of two opposing groups being involved were fleeing the area. Through the active reporting of area citizens officers we able to detain almost all of the individuals who were involved and present during the incident however initially the weapon was not found. Mr. Velligan witnessed a portion of this disturbance which included observing a subject discard a firearm into the shrubs as he fled the area. Mr. Villigan contacted police and reported his observations talking to officers which resulted in the recovery of said firearm. Mr. Velligan willingness to get involved not only allowed police to recover a significant piece of evidence and charge offenders with felony charges but also preserved the safety of the community ensuring the weapon did not fall into the hands of curious children or unauthorized persons. It is our pleasure to express our appreciation to and for Mr. Velligan for his actions. Actions such as his and his willingness to get involved are critical to the preservation of our community and the pursuit of those who would disturb our peace and sense of safety.

Crime Watch

Deborah Fizer – It is a pleasure to recognize Ms. Fizer for her consistent effort and accomplishments over years to build, enhance and maintain Griffiths Neighborhood Crime Watch Program. It is the selfless contributions of the citizens such as Ms. Fizer that set an example for our other citizens to follow in the preservation of our community. Her efforts no doubt have made a difference we are proud to be associated with.

Verna Mary Gottschammer & David Hennagir – These individuals are another example of exceptional citizens who step forward to assist in ways that benefit the community. It is with great pleasure that I recognize Mrs. Gottschammer and Mr. Hennagir for their efforts in support of the Griffith Neighborhood Crime Watch. Every month these two individuals process and review information from the Griffith Police Department records which ends up being posted on the Police

Blotter on the Police Departments website. It is through their efforts that many of our citizen's stay informed about crime and events within Griffith. We are grateful for their efforts and dedication to the community and appreciate them with the knowledge that what they do truly does make a difference.

Police Chief Mance and Lieutenant Gang presented the following certificates of commendation:

Det. Lt. Matthew Argadine – This certificate of commendation serves as recognition for the valorous efforts displayed on May 8, 2013 when police received a report of an armed and suicidal subject inside of an apartment with a potential hostage also inside the apartment. Dressed in civilian attire, he selflessly placed himself in harm's way as he established contact at the apartment door under the auspices of being a regular citizen. His actions allowed officers to move into a position whereby the suicidal subject was able to be quickly detained and preventing a potentially tragic event. Lt. Argadine's actions not only preserved the safety of innocent people inside the apartment, but his fellow officers as well. Several weapons were removed from the apartment. Lt. Argadine's actions are of credit to himself and the Griffith Police Department.

VEST

Dale Hess

Mike Andree

Larry Atkins

Edward Bacon

William Harding

Raymond Plopper

Mike Czerwinski – It is our honor as members of the Griffith Safety Board and center of our community to take a moment to recognize the selfless effort of our towns VEST, Volunteer Emergency Services Team. These VEST officers that you see before you are consisting behind the scenes and not often enough recognized or known for their volunteering contributions. We are very proud of their team of individuals that make up VEST. They are always on call to aid not only the Griffith Police Department and the Griffith Fire Department but neighboring agencies and communities as well. No matter what the hour, no matter what the weather these exceptional volunteers respond at a moment's notice to provide a valuable service. These VEST officers provide traffic control at major accident scenes keeping responding crews safe while on scene, provide the daily and professional service of funeral escorts that travel throughout Griffith, preform patrol duties alerting police to hazardous conditions and suspicious behavior and aid citizens and first responders in many, many other ways. They are individuals that provide our first responders with safe scene or provide our citizens with the best possible care when in need. As their duties continue to expand and they continue to provide a daily service, it is paramount that they be recognized and the community be made more aware of their contributions and accomplishments. Gentlemen it is with great pride that we present this token of appreciation to you on behalf of a grateful police department, a grateful fire department and a grateful community. Thank you very much for your selfless service we are very proud of you. Thank you.

GPD Vehicle Update

Lt. Gang reported that eight of the new vehicles are at PDS being uplifted, three are currently in at Thomas Dodge with one more to follow. He hopes to have all vehicles ready for the road by the end of July.

Announcements

Nothing

Questions/comments from the floor.

Karl Grimmer of 724 Forest expressed his opposition to the implementation of take home vehicles. He questioned the benefit to the citizens of Griffith of take home vehicles sitting in other communities while officers are off duty. Chief Mance and Lt Gang explained the policy for out of town officers that is covered in the SOP.

Town Council Liaison Gaby asked about the animal shelter following numerous emails by members of the public prior to this meeting. Mr. Gaby extended an invitation to these individuals to attend this meeting but they did not attend. Liz Canty of 314 E. Main St., an active volunteer with Treasured Friends, spoke on the condition of the pound and the excellent care given to the animals by our Animal Warden. Ms. Canty also extended an invitation for volunteer in the upgrade of the shelter. Gloria Redmond of 17507 White Oak Ave. Lowell, a Cook County Sheriff in Chicago and an animal control volunteer for Gary, was in attendance and spoke highly of Animal Warden Litke and the job she does. Town Council Vice-President Ryfa explained that a new shelter is being planned with funding to come through donations. Chief Mance explained that an email was received about a month ago from a concerned citizen about the condition of the shelter and the care that is given to the animals there. Chief Mance knew the allegations were not warranted but took it upon himself to personally visit the shelter to check out the concerns. But being a layperson he reached out to some individuals with experience in this area and received positive responses about our facility. Chief Mance wanted to state on record that we are very lucky to have Sandi and the care that she gives. In regards to the new building Chief Mance has a meeting Saturday with a person who is sort of an expert in this type of fundraising for animal shelters as well as a meeting on July 24 with a building design engineer, Sandi and one volunteer. The present facility does have some issues but numerous repairs are being made to maintain the facility until the new building is available.

Town Council Liaison Gaby also extended a thank you to the VEST volunteers.

Meeting adjourned 7:40 p.m.

/lep