



# **TOWN OF GRIFFITH PUBLIC SAFETY BOARD**

111 N. Broad Street, Griffith, IN 46319

## **Meeting Minutes November 7, 2024**

The Griffith Safety Board was called to order by Chairman Jerome at 6:30 P.M. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Those in Attendance**

George Jerome  
Philip Vechev  
RoAnn Purgert  
Elizabeth Goral  
Sue Katona

Griffith Safety Board Chairman  
Griffith Safety Board Vice Chairman  
Griffith Safety Board Secretary  
Griffith Safety Board Member  
Griffith Safety Board Member

Rick Ryfa  
Melissa Robbins  
Greg Mance  
Roy Schoon  
Mike Andree  
Lauren Konagel

Town Council Police Department Liaison  
Town Council Fire Department Liaison – Absent  
Chief, Griffith Police Department  
Chief, Griffith Fire Department  
Deputy Chief, Griffith Fire Department  
Legal Counsel, Burke Costanza & Carberry

The following items were discussed:

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

#### **1. October 3, 2024 PSB Meeting Minutes**

PSB Member Vechev made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 3, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Public Safety Board Meeting as presented.

PSB Member Katona seconded the motion.

Motion carried 5 – 0.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Announcements made at tonight's meeting.

### **COMMUNICATIONS/REPORTS**

#### **1. Griffith Police Department**

Chief Mance announced the Griffith police officers are doing their Annual Fund Raiser (No Shave November), which will raise funds for the Northwest Indiana Cancer Kids Foundation, which helps families with children battling childhood cancer. Officers just held a Pop-Up Coffee Shop which raised

several hundred dollars, and they will be Bussing for Beards on November 19, 2024, at Bridges' Scoreboard Restaurant and Sports Bar, to raise additional monies for NW Indiana Cancer Kids.

Chief Mance then read the monthly report for September 2024.

2. **Griffith Fire Department**

Fire Chief Schoon read the monthly report for September 2024.

3. **Griffith F.O.P. Lodge #161**

There was no representative present tonight from Griffith F.O.P. Lodge #161.

4. **VEST**

Cpl. Ghrist advised the total VEST hours worked for October 2024 was 824 hours. The top volunteer was Mike Andree, Sr. with 317 hours. Honorable mentions go out to: Tom Gindl (293.5 hours), Ruth Gindl (49.0 hours), and Fermin Lopez (36.0 hours). The total hours for Year 2024 is 8,434.25. Total membership is 14.

5. **Town Council Liaison**

Councilman Ryfa announced the Town Council will start conducting interviews for a new Chief of Police within the next 30 days.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There were no matters of "Old Business."

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Griffith Police Department seeks approval and adoption of Griffith Police Department's:
  - a. Policy 430 First Amendment Assemblies
  - b. Policy 311 Canines
  - c. Policy 701 Personal Communication Devices
  - d. Policy 704 Cash Handling, Security and Management
  - e. Policy 801 Lake County Emergency Communications
  - f. Policy 805 Protected Information
  - g. Policy 803 Records Division
  - h. Policy 804 Records Maintenance and Release
  - i. Policy 806 Animal Control
  - j. Policy 326 Subpoenas and Court Appearances
  - k. Policy 325 Media Relations
  - l. Policy 427 Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs)

PSB Member Katona made a motion to approve and adopt Griffith Police Department's Policies listed above as Items a. through l (specifically, Numbers 430, 311, 701, 704, 801, 805, 803, 804, 806, 326, 325, and 427) as presented.

PSB Member Goral seconded the motion.

Motion carried 5 – 0.

2. Griffith Police Department seeks approval to purchase six (6) squad cars (2023 Dodge Chargers), to include the upfitting and installed markings for a price not to exceed \$306,000.

PSB Member Purgert made a motion to approve the purchase of six (6) squad cars (2023 Dodge Chargers), to include the upfitting and installed markings for a price not to exceed \$306,000.00  
PSB Member Vechey seconded the motion.  
Motion carried 5 – 0.

3. Griffith Police Department seeks approval to purchase one (1) undercover vehicle (make and model yet to be determined) for a price not to exceed \$36,000.

PSB Member Vechey made a motion to approve the purchase of one (1) undercover vehicle (make and model yet to be determined) for a price not to exceed \$36,000.  
PSB Member Katona seconded the motion.  
Motion carried 5 – 0.

4. Griffith Fire Department requests permission to hire the following candidates:
  - a. Joshua Bertossi – Station 31
  - b. Cole Slater – Station 31
  - c. Patrick Thompson, Jr. – Station 33
  - d. Jorge Velazquez Mendoza – Station 33

PSB Member Vechey made a motion to approve the Griffith Fire Department's hiring of the following candidates:

- a. Joshua Bertossi – Station 31
- b. Cole Slater – Station 31
- c. Patrick Thompson, Jr. – Station 33
- d. Jorge Velazquez Mendoza – Station 33

PSB Member Goral seconded the motion.  
Motion carried 5 – 0.

5. Griffith Fire Department will be swearing in the following Probationary Firefighter to full status:
  - a. Ronnie Mitchell – Station 33

Assistant Chief M. Andree advised Ronnie Mitchell started with Griffith Fire in November 2023. He was the last of the 17 hired that year. Ronnie was a transfer from Lake Ridge Fire Department where he served for seven (7) prior years. He is a 2013 graduate from the District 1 Fire Academy. Ronnie has been serving our community well throughout the last year, and we are proud to have him as part of our team.

PSB Member Goral swore in Probationary Firefighter Ronnie Mitchell to full status. Chief Schoon presented Firefighter Mitchell with a Certificate of Promotion. Assistant Chief Andree presented Firefighter Mitchell with his badge.

6. The EMS Board will be making a presentation to the Superior Ambulance crews that responded on June 29, 2024 to the 900 block of Arbogast reference a fireworks incident

Mr. Robert Bubala thanked the Public Safety Board for allowing them to be here tonight. Mr. Bubala and Ms. Dorothy Soverly stood, and Mr. Bubala stated they were here to make a presentation to two (2) Superior Ambulance crew members; namely, Paramedic Robert Madon, and EMT Jody Jiminez. Mr. Bubala then advised the following:

"On June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at approximately 9:30 P.M., first responders responded to a disturbance in the 900 block of N. Arbogast. Griffith Police arrived and immediately learned it was a horrible firework accident. A large mortar had exploded sending chunks of concrete hurling hundreds of feet into a large crowd, several houses,

and numerous vehicles. The scene was quickly recognized as a mass casualty situation having multiple injuries of differing magnitudes.

Superior Ambulance 3161 responded to the incident, which was staffed by Robert Madon, Paramedic and Jody Jiminez, EMT. Upon arrival, the scene was noted to be chaotic with over 50 people present. The crew was directed to a child that was noted to be critically injured during the explosion. The ambulance crew wasted no time in removing the patient from the chaotic scene with the assistance of Griffith Police Officer T. Watkins. The crew performed lifesaving interventions and rapidly transported the child to the closest facility where a Trauma Team was waiting.

The crew's quick action and critical thinking are a contributing factor to not only the patient's survival, but also to the child making a recovery.

The Town of Griffith Emergency Medical Services Board appreciates the work of Paramedic Robert Madon and EMT Jody Jiminez not only this evening, but to the work they perform daily for the citizens of Griffith."

Robert Bubala and Dorothy Soverly presented Paramedic Robert Madon and EMT Jody Jiminez with Certificates of Accommodation.

#### QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR


There were no questions or comments received from the floor.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:43 P.M.

  
George Jerome, Chairman

  
Philip Vechey, Vice Chairman

  
RoAnn Purgert, Secretary

  
Elizabeth Goral, Member

  
Sue Katona, Member

Minutes Prepared By:

  
Joan Kolodziej, Recording Secretary