

Starke County Sheriff's Office
Merit Board Meeting Minutes
01/06/2025

Opening:

Meeting was called to order at 5:25pm by Brad Hazelton. The meeting was held at Starke County Justice Center, in the court room.

Present:

Merit Board Members: Brad Hazelton, Tom Belork, Phil Cherry, and Denise Cultice

Sheriff's Department: Sheriff Jack Rosa, Chief Deputy Wayne James, Matron April Wilhelm, Corporal Jack Hudgens, Detective Charles Leonhardt, Deputy Daniel Byrd, and Deputy Chad McDonald

New Business:

- Merit Board has approved and welcome back Jack Hudgens has returned as a full-time deputy and then has been promoted to Corporal.
- The take home car policy may need to be revised. Chief Deputy James stated that if officers will be considerate of using patrol cars as personal vehicles, that can help lower the expense and wear and tear on the vehicles. This has been tabled indefinitely.

Board members and officers agree that the department needs new vehicles, versus the continued purchase of used vehicles. Deputy McDonald suggested that new radar and accessories would be beneficial. Detective Leonhardt discussed how the littler things, such as equipment, incentives, etc. go a long way with officer satisfaction when the wages are low. Board members and officers all agreed and offered to attend upcoming county meetings to discuss these issues with county officials. Phil Cherry suggested putting together a list of all fleet info to present to the county at these meetings.

- Recent & upcoming events

January 15th - Coffee with A Cop & a Prosecutor, 5pm – 7pm at the Rabbit Coffee Company

March - Citizens Police Academy – scheduled for the 2nd in March

Any other new business

- Brad Hazelton advised that he will try to have a representative from 1st Source Insurance available for our next meeting to discuss retirement. Annual letters for the officers are usually issued near the end of January. Matron Wilhelm advised that the most recent reports were given to the Sheriff and the annual letters haven't arrived yet, but these would be provided as soon as received.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn at 5:51pm by Tom Belork, second by Denise Cultice, all approved. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by: April Wilhelm