

Starke County Sheriff's Office
Merit Board Meeting Minutes
9/04/2024

Opening:

Meeting was called to order at 5:03pm by Brad Hazelton. Meeting was held at Starke County Justice Center, in the downstairs squad room.

Present:

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

Sheriff's Department: Sheriff Jack Rosa, Chief Deputy Wayne James, Matron April Wilhelm

Approval of previous meeting minutes: motion to approve made by Denise Cultice, second by Bret Hansen, all approved.

Old Business:

Per the previous meeting, the rules & regulations need to be revised due to the levels of ranks being inaccurate, rules that are outdated or have been updated, and page numbers being out of sequence. Matron Wilhelm stated that these are still being revised and would be provided as completed.

New Business:

- Jack Hudgens has resigned effective August 16, 2024. We also retired his K9 partner, Mack, at this time.
- Ashley Vandemark has resigned effective September 1, 2024.
- Wayne James has been promoted to the Chief Deputy position. In addition, he has completed his 1-year probationary period as of 08/21/24 and needs merit approval. Motion to approve made by Phil Cherry, seconded by Bret Hansen, all approved.
- Nick Brown has been promoted to the Operations Commander position.
- Shelby Pickens has been moved from part-time to full-time patrol.
- We have two new K9's: Reaper and Csufi. Reaper is a dual purpose K9 who will partner with Deputy Kolin Mann who had an all-expenses paid three-week training course in Ohio. Csufi is a single-purpose bomb dog who will partner with Chief Deputy James. Csufi was donated to our department with the handler class taken at Vohne Liche.
- Recent & upcoming events
 - Drug Take Back Day – April 27th: 87 pounds of meds were collected between two locations in the county!
 - National Night Out – August 6th: It's estimated that 125-150 people came out to the event
 - Employee Appreciation Day: Held September 13th in and outside of the sally port. Well received!
 - Family Fun Day – September 21st: We rescheduled/cancelled/modified this event due to National Night Out in August and plan on incorporating the activities in with Trunk or Treat in October.
 - Trunk or Treat – October 26th

Any other new business

- Brad Hazelton asked what incentives would make officers want to come here to work part or full-time. Chief Deputy James advised that this county has been behind the times for a long-time and wages of \$25-\$30/hour for part-time help are common best practices.
- The full-time patrol position needs to be posted for three days, and a merit board meeting will be held following that for interviews.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 7:39pm by Tom Belork, seconded by Denise Cultice, all approved. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by: April Wilhelm