

March 5, 2024

**State of Illinois
County of Cook
Village of Stickney**

The Board of Trustees of the Village of Stickney met in regular session on Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at 7:07 p.m. in the Board Room, 6533 W. Pershing Road, Stickney, Illinois.

**Upon the roll call, the following Trustees were present:
Trustees White, Milenkovic, Kapolnek and Hrejsa
Absent: Trustees Torres and Savopoulos**

Trustee Hrejsa moved, duly seconded by Trustee Kapolnek to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024.

**Upon the roll call, the following Trustees voted:
Ayes: Trustees White, Milenkovic, Kapolnek and Hrejsa
Absent: Trustees Torres and Savopoulos
Nays: None
Mayor Walik declared the motion carried.**

Trustee White, duly seconded by Trustee Milenkovic that the bills, approved by the various committees of the Board, be approved for payment, and to approve warrants which authorize the Village Treasurer to draw checks to pay the bills, to be signed by the authorized signers, as provided for by the Ordinances of the Village of Stickney.

**Upon the roll call, the following Trustees voted:
Ayes: Trustees White, Milenkovic, Kapolnek and Hrejsa
Absent: Trustees Torres and Savopoulos
Nays: None
Mayor Walik declared the motion carried.**

Trustee Milenkovic moved, duly seconded by Trustee White to approve the request to promote Mark Kozelka to Deputy Chief of Police

**Upon the roll call, the following Trustees voted:
Ayes: Trustees White, Milenkovic, Kapolnek and Hrejsa
Absent: Trustees Torres and Savopoulos
Nays: None
Mayor Walik declared the motion carried.**

The Mayor proceeded with the ceremony of swearing in Mark Kozelka as our new Deputy Police Chief. The Deputy Chief's wife had the honor of placing his new gold star on his uniform.

Trustee White moved, duly seconded by Trustee Kapolnek to approve the appointment of Ashley McDonald to Watch Commander.

**Upon the roll call, the following Trustees voted:
Ayes: Trustees White, Milenkovic, Kapolnek and Hrejsa
Absent: Trustees Torres and Savopoulos
Nays: None
Mayor Walik declared the motion carried.**

At this point, the Mayor pointed out that this is an important day for our Police Department. Mark Kozelka was singled out by the Mayor. "Mark made it through the ranks and has accumulated twenty-eight years with the Village." Watch Commander Ashley McDonald was asked how many years she has been in the Police Department. She has been here eleven years. The Mayor told us that she had been promoted to Corporal and then she attended Staff and Command School at Northwestern University. Now the Mayor has the opportunity to promote her to Watch Commander with the approval and support of the Chief, the Police Department and the Village Board. The Mayor is very proud of Mark and Ashley.

The Mayor proceeded to swear Watch Commander Ashley McDonald in. Her husband pinned her new gold star on her uniform.

Trustee Hrejsa moved, duly seconded by Trustee Kapolnek to approve the request to swear in Jose Virgen as an Auxiliary Police Officer.

Upon the roll call, the following Trustees voted:
Ayes: Trustees White, Milenkovic, Kapolnek and Hrejsa
Absent: Trustees Torres and Savopoulos
Nays: None
Mayor Walik declared the motion carried.

The Mayor proceeded to swear in Auxiliary Police Officer Jose Virgen. His mother pinned his star on his vest.

The Mayor provided his congratulations.

MAYOR'S REPORT: The Mayor introduced Anthony Quiroga. He is a full-time police officer and does not have to go to the police academy. The Mayor proceeded to swear in the new Police Officer Anthony Quiroga.

The Mayor thanked the police for showing up. He asked them to be careful out there. This is a big police night for us.

The Mayor asked Frank Figueroa to step forward. He showed everyone the plaque that will be presented to the newly retired Deputy Chief Frank Figueroa. The following tribute timeline was given of his time served on the Stickney Police Department:

Part-time Auxiliary Officer: June 27, 1999 to September 9, 1999
Full-time Dispatcher: January 3, 1997 to September 9, 1999
Patrolman: September 10, 1999
Sergeant: December 3, 2012
Deputy Chief: June 16, 2009
Deputy Chief: June 20, 2020
Retirement: February 29, 2024

The Mayor said that Frank was his dispatcher. Then he reminisced on their time together. The Mayor then focused on Watch Commander Kevin McGuire. The Mayor worked on a few cases with Frank. The Mayor was sad when Frank told him of his choice to retire. The Mayor described Frank as a hardworking, dedicated, get-the-job-done individual. If you asked him a question he obtained the answer for you. He will be missed. The engraving on the plaque said: The Stickney Police Department recognizes Deputy Chief Frank Figueroa for your twenty-five years of dedicated service.

to the citizens of the Village of Stickney and the Stickney Police Department. Congratulations on your retirement.

Retired Deputy Chief Figueroa said thank you for this acknowledgement. He thanked everyone here and the residents. It has been an honor to serve twenty-five plus years. He always told all the new people he has hired over the last few years what a good community this is. This is a town that loves their police. That made it very hard to walk away. I am leaving this place in good hands. Mark will do a wonderful job and so will Ashley. This police department will continue to thrive under the command of Chief Sassetti. Thank you.

The Mayor reminded people that March 8 is National Woman's Day.

CLERK'S REPORT: People were reminded that the next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 20 due to the Presential Primary Election on March 19. She also asked people to go to the website voteforjudges.org to become educated on what judges to vote for. She then congratulated each and every one of you officers today. I especially congratulate Ashley. I have followed her all the way through her ranks. I am so proud of her. "Women Rule!" "You go girl."

TRUSTEE REPORTS:

All the Trustees congratulated the people receiving the new promotions in the Police Department.

Trustee White: He wished retiring Deputy Chief Figueroa well in his new endeavors.

Trustee Milenkovic: He announced there will be a Tree Board meeting on March 14, at 3:30 p.m. and they will be discussing the Arbor Day celebration.

Trustee Kapolnek: He congratulated Frank Figueroa on his retirement. We were reminded that on March 17, the Saint Pius Church campus will be conducting a pancake breakfast with the Easter Bunny. There will be eggs, sausage and pancakes and French toast and a drink. Support the church.

Trustee Hrejsa: He wished retiring Deputy Chief Frank Figueroa well. He thanked him for everything he has done for our new officers. You set the bar pretty high. Good Luck. He then reminded everyone that our Easter Egg Hunt will be March 23. There is a sign-up sheet for Stickney kids. It is also on the website.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Public Works Director Joe Lopez: The swings will not be put up until April or May. Sweeping is going on without restrictions.

Fire Chief Jeff Boyajian: He reminded us that this Sunday you need to move your clocks forward. He also asked people to check the batteries in the smoke and carbon-dioxide detectors. He congratulated all those promoted. He is glad to be part of the brotherhood/sisterhood with all of them.

Deputy Chief Jerry Chlada extended congratulations to the new promotions. Kevin McGuire extended his congratulations. Watch Commander Demato congratulated the promotions and the new hires.

Deputy Chief Mark Kozelka thanked everyone for their faith in him. He will do the best that he can. He congratulated Ashley and Anthony as well as Jose.

Police Chief James Sasseti: He congratulated Frank Figueroa and thanked him for everything he did for him, the Police Department and community as a whole. I appreciate everything that he has done. Thank you for your 25 years of service to the Village. He wished him good luck in his future endeavors. He then congratulated Mark and Ashley on their promotions. They are well deserved. I look forward to working with you. There are great things ahead. Congratulations were also extended to Jose and Anthony, welcome to our family. This truly is a family. I never realized it until I started working here. I say it from the bottom of my heart. This is not a job; it is a family. . . both the community and the employees. It is amazing. Thank you everyone. He then thanked the men and women of the police department for the hard work on a daily basis that they do. It is one of the safest communities in the area. It is not me, the deputies, the Village Board, it is these men and women that go out there tirelessly on a daily basis. They dedicate their lives to the residents and visitors of our Village. A round of applause was given to the men and women in BLUE.

Stickney Police 2023 Annual Report

In 2023 the Stickney Police Department saw a 43.31% increase in calls for service. In 2022 we answered 17,412 calls for service. In 2023 that jumped up to 24,953 calls. Without accurate records, I would go on a ledge to say that it is the most that this Village has ever seen. Even though we have seen an increase in service, we have seen a 12.63% decrease in crime in the community. This is completely attributable to what these men in women do on a daily basis in the community. This is my third annual report, and we have statistically reduced crime by double digits each year. This is a great feat considering what is going on in society today and what the surrounding communities are seeing.

Our Detective Division consists of Detective Sergeant Cruz Ortiz and Detective Ramski. The Chief now directed our attention to the power-point screen to observe that our calls are evenly spaced out except for during the afternoon hours of Friday and Saturday weekends. We received a grant in 2022 that came through in 2023 through the Bureau of Justice Assistance. We were then able to secure K-9 Hans in 2022 and put him into service in 2023 at zero cost to taxpayers. We now have two fully trained multipurpose dogs on the street. We utilize their hours to reflect call volume based on the history of it. They work from 3:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m., which is our heaviest period of calls. We do make operational changes to combat the calls for service. In summer months we see a higher call volume in afternoon hours. We use these statistics that direct our operations. He then thanked Watch Commander Jaczak for constantly getting these for us through the portal.

To continue with the Detective Division, they initiated forty-seven investigations and closed twenty-six of them resulting in Felony and Misdemeanor arrests. They recovered a total of ten firearms and authored twenty search warrants. Which is no easy task. To get them approved by the States Attorney Office is no easy task. We also received help from a Major Case Assistant Team Joint Task Force in 2023 assisting us seven times in major or complex investigations.

Over the last few years we have added license plate readers and live streaming video in strategic locations within the Village that were approved by this Board. They continue to pay dividends in respect to identifying and apprehending people who commit crimes in our community. This initiative has helped in our investigations.

On January 1, 2023 we appointed our first group of Watch Commanders. We created that rank. In doing so we are able to keep organizational structure aligned and increase our overall supervision and maintain an adequate span of control. We have one Watch Commander per shift. They are each responsible for personnel assigned to that respective group. It has worked out well for us.

In 2023 we purchased a new fleet of squad cars. We switched from the traditional black to white squad cars. The theory behind this is that the day of sneaking up on criminals while crime is in progress is over. The white cars are more visible within the community to prevent crime before it even happens. These cars are working well for us.

During the third quarter of 2023, along with the Safety Act, we saw changes in how we can arrest people. There were changes to mandated training officers were required to take which included increased unfunded training. Initially we had some difficulties, as all law enforcement agencies did in meeting their training guidelines. We have overcome those difficulties, and we are 100% compliant with the law. There are challenges in not being able to arrest people like we traditionally used to.

We are still working with our grant writer trying to secure grants. In 2023 we received the Illinois Department of Transportation STEP grant for putting additional officers on the street for various traffic initiatives. In 2022 we received the C.O.P.S. Grant. We have already received \$91,973.01 as part of the \$500,000.00 Grant we were awarded by the Department of Justice. We deployed a second K-9 in 2023. Officer Guzman and K-9 Hans have already hit the streets. That was paid 100% by the Bureau of Justice Assistance in the amount of \$22,400.30 for which the Village was reimbursed. There are some pending Grant awards that will help offset the cost of the body-worn cameras that we deployed back in 2022. We are continuing to find funding to offset the cost of the body-worn cameras.

On August 5, 2023, the Stickney Police Department held an open house. Unfortunately, there was a deluge of rain. It was well received by our residents. Therefore, we are going to have an open house this year. This year it will be on August 5, 2024. Everyone is welcome to come.

In 2024 we continue to monitor numerous social issues that are occurring around the area. We are very strategically positioned to react to any situation that should arise.

We are in the preliminary stages in planning for the Democratic National Convention and any overflow issues that Chicago may see as a result of the convention.

In conclusion, he gave a heartfelt thank you to the Mayor and the Board for their unwavering support of himself and the police department and the fine men and women that are before you. Without that collaborative support, we would not be as successful as we are. He is in his 31st year of Law Enforcement. He is amazed at how this group that we have assembled here is very successful. Things are going in the right direction here. It is not about what we do as an administration, but what they do on a daily basis. Copies of the report were given to the entire Board.

The Mayor thanked him for the great report.

Trustee White moved, duly seconded by Trustee Milenkovic that the meeting be adjourned. Upon which the Board adopted the motion at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Village Clerk, Audrey McAdams

Approved by me this 20th day of March, 2024

Jeff Walik, President