



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RE: **Thirty-year veteran of Amherst Police Department promoted**

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – Brian Gairns, a veteran of the Amherst Police Department, has been promoted to the rank of staff sergeant.

“I am very proud and excited to have Brian as part of our management team,” Police Chief Dwayne Pike said. “He has the respect of the membership and staff and has a complete understanding of the future of policing and the challenges we face.

“Staff Sgt. Gairns has more than 30 years of experience with the Amherst Police Department and has worked closely with us through many of the changes we’ve experienced as a department over the past year. His experience, training and accomplishments will add to our ability to serve and provide an excellent police service to our community.



Staff Sergeant Brian Gairns (Tom McCoag / Town of Amherst)

“During his years with the Amherst Police Department, Brian has been heavily involved in community initiatives and programs. He shares our vision of community engagement and how we can best meet our objectives and plays a vital role in our departmental wellness plan.”

The third person to hold the staff sergeant rank in the force’s history, Gairns’ promotion took effect on July 19, 2019.

“I have some big shoes to fill replacing Scott White, who was a well-respected, long-serving



member the department,” Gairns said of the first man in the department to hold the rank.

White retired last year and was replaced by Tim Hunter. Hunter held the post briefly before being named the department’s deputy-chief earlier this year.

Gairns, who was born in New Brunswick, raised on Prince Edward Island and works and lives in Nova Scotia, gravitated to policing at a young age.

“Policing is in my family,” he said. “My dad was a long-serving RCMP officer, so was one of my brothers. I guess it kind of got instilled in me at an early age.”

During his time at the Atlantic Police Academy, Gairns received his on-the-job training with the Charlottetown Police Department. After graduating from the academy in 1988, he took on a term position with the Amherst Police Department in May 1989.

“I’ve been here ever since,” he said.

During his first year, he served as a uniform constable. Then, for three years, he performed the duties as a plain clothes drug section constable.

“That, too, was a term position, but it worked into a full-time position, the first in the history of the Amherst Police Department,” Gairns said.

He returned to the uniform ranks in 1993 when he resumed the platoon constable position. He also served for two years as a plain clothes detective sergeant attached to a platoon. In 2004, he was promoted to sergeant in charge of B Platoon, a position he held until his recent promotion.

As a platoon sergeant, Gairns was responsible for overseeing the activities of his platoon, which included delegating resources as well as managing personnel and investigations. As a staff sergeant, he now oversees the operation of four platoons, supervises the major crime section, monitors investigations, delegates resources and is involved in the department’s strategic planning.

Over the years, Gairns has taken many courses, including supervisory and senior management courses online as well as from the Canadian Police College and the Atlantic Policy Academy.

As he takes over his new role, Gairns noted that crime has evolved during his time with the department.

“There is more electronic crime, a lot more fraud as compared to even five years ago,” he said. “There is more international frauds and scams, embezzlement done via the internet and other social media.”

To emphasize his point, Gairns noted he was at a conference recently where one of the presenters asked the crowd of 300 – mostly police officers – how many had been assaulted. About 30 people put up their hands. When asked how many had received a text, phone call or



email that attempted to embezzle money from them, everyone's hand went up.

Policing has also evolved. When he started officers didn't have cameras in their cars, nor did they wear microphones or provide electronic disclosures to crown attorneys.

As he takes on his new role, Gairns said the position will enable him to continue to conduct daily police work, like taking an active role in investigations, while being more involved in the management of the department.

"I'd like to see an effective, efficiently run operation that will continue to grow our department," he said. "I look forward to working with the management team to find innovative ways to cut down our policing costs and deliver services that are suited to today's policing environment.

"After 30 years, I still enjoy the job. I love working with the members and staff, and I'd like to thank them for their patience with me as I learn my new position."

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