



MEDIA RELEASE

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RE: Amherst police officer Aaron Graham promoted to rank of sergeant

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – Aaron Graham, a veteran constable with the Amherst Police Department, has been promoted to the rank of sergeant.

“It’s surreal right now. It’s just been a few short days,” Graham, said of the promotion that went into effect in mid-September. “I have a lot of learning to do.”

“We are very proud of Aaron’s accomplishments over the last 11 years,” Police Chief Dwayne Pike said in announcing the promotion. “He has taken a leadership role in many of the things he has been involved with and has a natural ability to coach others and teach what he has learned during experience as a police officer.

“He has taken advantage of every opportunity given to him, which has resulted in his promotion to sergeant. We are very fortunate that those who applied were all excellent candidates.

“I look forward to working with Sgt. Graham and want to welcome him to our leadership team.”

Graham, who grew up just outside Truro, began thinking about becoming a police officer while working as a warehouse supervisor.



Aaron Graham, an 11-year veteran with the Amherst Police Department, has been promoted to the rank of sergeant. (Tom McCoag / Town of Amherst)



“I thought I could help people in my community,” he recalled.

Graham said he was influenced as well by the late Mike Griffin, an RCMP officer and friend.

“He felt that I had the qualities that were suited to the position of a police officer,” he said. “I listened to him. I respected Mike Griffin.”

So, in the mid-2000s, Graham quit his job as a warehouse supervisor in order to attend the Atlantic Police Academy in Summerside, P.E.I. While there, he received his on-the-job training with the Halifax Regional Police Department.

Graham graduated from the academy in August 2008. He was initially hired by the Summerside Police Department, but then fate intervened in the form of a phone call from former Amherst police chief Ian Naylor.

“I was on the road from Summerside, where I’d just done my orientation, when he called and offered me a position here,” he recalled. “I decided this is where I wanted to be. I liked the community; it was bigger than Summerside and it was closer to where I grew up.”

He joined the force as a constable in November 2008.

“I started on patrol, where we all do. Four or five years later, I started doing the acting-sergeant role, where I filled in for the sergeant whenever the sergeant was absent,” he said.

In 2016, he became a member of the Cumberland Street Crime Unit, a joint taskforce between the RCMP and Amherst Police Department. He stayed with the unit for about three years before moving back to regular patrol duties as an acting-sergeant.

Then, with the pending retirement of Sgt. David Lepper, he was given the opportunity to work in an acting role in the major crime unit. Then in June of this year, he applied for the job of sergeant and was the successful candidate.

During those years, Graham has taken several courses from the RCMP, Atlantic Police Academy and Dalhousie University that aided in his evolution as a police officer. That training included everything from how to write warrants to interviewing to investigative techniques to how to manage major cases to communication.

An advocate for mental health, he is also the department’s mental readiness trainer and a PEER member, someone who helps first responders and others deal with of the natural reactions that affect people during a serious incident.

As a sergeant in the major crime unit, Graham is responsible for the larger files – like major frauds and assaults – investigated by the department. In some cases, he will take the lead on the file, on others he will assist the investigating officer.

“It comes down to managing resources and the direction the investigation is going,” he said.



Graham is looking forward to the challenge and to working with every member of the department.

“When you work on a platoon, and I’m speaking from experience, you work two day shifts, a swing shift, then two nights. As a result, there are members of the department that you see infrequently,” he said. “With this new role, I work with whomever is on day shift, so I get to see all the officers. I look forward to that.”

He’s also looking forward to helping people flourish.

“I like to see people succeed,” Graham said. “When I see people succeed and I’ve played a role in helping them succeed, that’s the most rewarding part of the job.”

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