



PROBABLE CAUSE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL Investigations Division

		Officer Status:	File Review Required
Case Number:	003-370-05-24	Officer Name:	Ronald O' Brien
Is the Officer on POST Probation?	☐ YES ☒ NO	Officer Certification:	Basic Jailer
If Yes, Case Number:		Is the Probation History Included?	☐ YES ☐ NO
Is there a companion case?	☐ YES ☒ NO		
If Yes, Case Number(s):			
Did Parent Agency Complete Internal Investigation?	☐ YES ☒ NO		
Was there a Criminal Investigation?	☒ YES ☐ NO		
If Yes, agency responsible for criminal case:	Burke County Sheriff's Office		
Is criminal case included?	☒ YES ☐ NO		
Is criminal case concluded?	☒ YES ☐ NO		
Is Officer Currently Employed?	☐ YES ☒ NO		
If Yes, Current Agency:			
Did Officer submit a response to POST?	☐ YES ☒ NO		
If arrested: Did Officer self-report?	☐ YES ☒ NO		
Polygraph/Voice Stress Administered?	☐ YES ☒ NO		
Results of Polygraph/Voice Stress:	Please select:		
Is a juvenile involved?	☐ YES ☒ NO		

Executive Summary

On or about 10/03/2022, the Burke County Sheriff's Office received a complaint that Officer Ronald O' Brien may be impersonating a law enforcement officer. Officer O' Brien has an active Jailer certification through the State of Georgia but has never held a Basic Peace Officer certification. Officer O' Brien has not worked for a law enforcement unit since 2011, but was employed as a code enforcement officer with a small municipality at the time. It was reported that Officer O' Brien was using vehicles outfitted with emergency equipment (blue lights) to stop pedestrians and to conduct traffic stops. Witnesses were interviewed who reported how Officer O' Brien had stopped them and presented himself as a law enforcement officer. Officer O' Brien had two vehicles which were outfitted with emergency equipment (blue lights) and one displaying "K9" lettering. Officer O' Brien's vehicle was searched and assorted items related to law enforcement were found inside of the vehicle. Officer O' Brien told investigators that he was "one of us," and claimed he was retired from the VA Police. During questioning, Officer O' Brien claimed to have a "P.O.S.T. number" because everything from his federal job transferred over. He made the claim several times that his federal credentials transferred over to POST during his interview. On 10/03/2022, Officer O' Brien was arrested and charged with Felony – Impersonating a Public Officer. On 03/11/2024, as part of a negotiated plea deal, Officer O' Brien pled guilty to the charge. He was sentenced under the First Offender Act to one year's probation.



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Case Number: 003-370-05-24

Violations: Felony – Impersonating a Public Officer

Separation Status: Not Employed in Law Enforcement

Officer/Candidate: Ronald O'Brien
Okey No: O155952

Exhibits:

- A. All POST documents
- B. Witness List
- C. Burke County Sheriff's Office Information
- D. Burke County Clerk of Court – Case Disposition
- E. Officer Fact Sheet

Narrative:

On or about 10/03/2022, the Burke County Sheriff's Office received a complaint that Officer Ronald O'Brien may be impersonating a law enforcement officer. Officer O'Brien has an active Jailer certification through the State of Georgia but has never held a Basic Peace Officer certification. Officer O'Brien has not worked for a law enforcement unit since 2011, but was employed as a code enforcement officer with a small municipality at the time. It was reported that Officer O'Brien was using vehicles outfitted with emergency equipment (blue lights) to stop pedestrians and to conduct traffic stops. A criminal investigation was initiated.

Investigators went to Officer O'Brien's residence where they located a vehicle outfitted with equipment as reported. This vehicle belonged to the municipality. City administrators later told investigators that they had never authorized Officer O'Brien to install the equipment in the vehicle. They spoke with Officer O'Brien who told them that he was "one of us." When asked to explain, Officer O'Brien claimed he was retired from the VA Police. Investigators requested that Officer O'Brien come to their office to talk with them.



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Officer O'Brien arrived at the agency driving a Yukon, which was also outfitted with emergency type equipment and "K9" lettering. During questioning, Officer O'Brien claimed to have a "P.O.S.T. number" because everything from his federal job transferred over. He made the claim several times that his federal credentials transferred over to POST during his interview. Officer O'Brien's vehicle was searched and assorted items related to law enforcement were found inside of the vehicle. Investigators spoke with the administrators for the municipality for which Officer O'Brien worked as a code enforcement officer. They admitted they had not conducted a thorough background investigation into Officer O'Brien. They said that his code enforcement duties did not require him to perform any law enforcement type duties, and he should not be performing them as part of his job.

Witnesses were interviewed who reported how Officer O'Brien had stopped them and presented himself as a law enforcement officer.

On 10/03/2022, Officer O'Brien was arrested and charged with Felony – Impersonating a Public Officer.

On 03/11/2024, as part of a negotiated plea deal, Officer O'Brien pled guilty to the charge. He was sentenced under the First Offender Act to one year's probation.

DISCIPLINARY HISTORY

None Noted

CRIMINAL HISTORY

None other than that annotated above.

VIOLATION

It is hereby asserted this individual is in violation of the following sections of O.C.G.A. 35-8-7.1 (a)(4),(6),(7):

In accordance with O.C.G.A. 35-8-7.1 (b) (1), the Probable Cause Committee makes the following recommendation to the Council:



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Chairman, Probable Cause Committee
Date:

Chairman, POST Council
Date:

SHIELDS OF SHAME