

COUNTY OF BERRIEN
OFFICE *of the* PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
MICHAEL J. SEPIC
Prosecuting Attorney

JENNIFER L. SMITH
Chief Assistant Prosecutor



STEVEN P. PIERANGELI
Chief Trial Attorney

Press Release

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Benton Harbor police officer charged with misdemeanor offense

Reginald Gee, 36, of Benton Harbor, has been charged with and has pled guilty yesterday to the 1-year misdemeanor, Neglect of Duty. Gee misrepresented the circumstances of the recovery of a stolen car in a police report and to the county's central dispatch center.

On September 12, 2017, Bridgman police took a stolen vehicle complaint involving a 2003 Honda Element. As a result, a police report was generated, a BOL (be on the lookout for) was issued by the county's central dispatch center and the vehicle identification information was entered into the Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN) as stolen.

In the early morning hours of September 14, Benton Harbor patrol officer Gee reported to central dispatch he discovered the vehicle unoccupied in the parking lot of Wings and Things at 790 East Main Street in the City of Benton Harbor. A wrecker was called and the vehicle towed from the parking lot.

As part of their investigation to discover who may have left the vehicle abandoned at Wings and Things, a Bridgman patrol officer reviewed parking lot video.

That video, coupled with a Berrien County Sheriff's Department investigation and central dispatch recordings between Gee and central dispatch, disclosed that:

- Gee came across the vehicle in the Wings and Things parking lot while it was occupied.
- Gee had a conversation with the individual operating the vehicle.
- Gee received word from central dispatch the vehicle was stolen during that conversation, or shortly thereafter while that occupant was still in the immediate vicinity.

The investigation revealed Gee and the occupant knew each other. The driver/occupant's identity and potential charges is still under investigation.

A police officer is charged with the duty "to apprehend a person in the act of violating the law of this state." In this instance, the subject operating a stolen car is in possession of stolen property, a felony.

Gee was sentenced to fines and costs of \$535. Gee's employment status at the Benton Harbor Department of Public Safety is in administrative proceedings.

Press release available at County Web site:

<http://www.berriencounty.org/ProsecutingAttorney/pressreleases>

