

TOWN OF SCHERERVILLE

SCHERERVILLE, INDIANA

FIRE MERIT BOARD MEETING

February 5, 2026

The Fire Department Merit Board Meeting was called to order by President Roger Florkiewicz at 5:32 p.m., in the Schererville Town Hall Meeting Room, 10 E. Joliet Street, Schererville, IN.

Attendance was taken with the following Board Members present: President Roger Florkiewicz, Vice President Tim Arvanitis, Secretary Paul Petrie, David Turoci and Tom Fulk. Staff members present: Fire Chief Robert Patterson, Deputy Fire Chief David Meyer and Recording Secretary Jenn Chatel. Also present: Attorney Christian Bartholomew.

THEREUPON, Approval of the Minutes

David Turoci made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2025 meeting, seconded by Vice President Arvanitis. Motion Carries (5 – 0).

THEREUPON, Correspondence

ITEM A. Fire Department - NONE

THEREUPON, Old Business

ITEM A. FD – Continue Review of Merit Board Rules

Attorney Bartholomew noted that the board members should have a marked-up draft of revisions that were distributed via email. He further stated that the draft reflects changes previously discussed and approved by the Board. He highlighted revisions to Section 4, Item C (3), which addresses age requirements and lateral hires. He explained that the language now mirrors the applicable statutory language and provides that the age range is 20 to 40 years, with the age requirement not applying to individuals who have previously been employed as a member of the department. Attorney Bartholomew stated that the statutory language creates a distinction as to whether the age limitation applies solely to members of the department or to lateral hires from other departments. He noted that, although it may appear technical, it is significant from a legal standpoint. He further explained that under related pension statutes, lateral transfers may exceed the stated age limit provided they are able to complete the required years of service prior to retirement. However, the Merit Board statute specifically references membership in the department, which counsel interprets as referring to this department only. It was noted that, although the statute is ambiguous and may warrant legislative clarification, the draft language was left unchanged to reflect the current statute.

Additional revisions to Section 4 were touched on by Attorney Bartholomew, including provisions related to the selection of graders for oral interviews, noting the Board President will appoint two members to participate in the grading for the hiring process. He also advised that a minimum passing score of 70% applies to the written as well as oral component in the aptitude test and that the passing score for the in person oral interviews was intentionally left unspecified pending further data and review. Additional information regarding historic testing scores would be gathered by Chief Patterson and the Board will receive a recommendation from the department regarding an appropriate passing score for the in person interview at the next meeting.

ITEM B. FD - Update on Full Time Firefighter/EMT hires

Chief Patterson advised the board that one of the new hire candidates is moving right along. The second one is going to be reviewed by the PERF Board and then a determination made. Attorney Bartholomew explained further that the candidate passed the general aptitude test, etc. and the last step is review by the PERF Board to determine the candidate meets the psychological and medical requirements. One of the candidates is having their results being considered a little bit further by the pension board. The pension board attorney advised Attorney Bartholomew that he expects to get a decision from the pension board probably in the next week or two and if he does not pass the requirements, we will need to seek another candidate.

A motion was made that if a candidate is not approved by the local pension board or PERF as required, any such candidates will have their conditional offer revoked and a conditional offer can be made to the next candidate on the list. Tom Fulk made motion, Vice President Arvanitis seconded. Motion Carries (5-0).

ITEM C. FD - Update on Firefighter Pulido

Chief Patterson shared with the Board that Firefighter Pulido requested a hearing by the pension board which will be coming up on February 24th. Upon receiving the results of that hearing he will update the Board with additional information.

THEREUPON, New Business - None

THEREUPON, Reports

ITEM A. Fire Department - None

THEREUPON, Board Members

Vice President Arvanitis commended the Fire Department and its personnel for their safe driving practices while responding to emergency calls, noting the high number of miles driven annually and the absence of significant vehicle accidents. The Board expressed appreciation for the department’s efforts in minimizing liability to the Town and acknowledged that no major incidents were reported during the prior year.

THEREUPON, Business from the Floor - None

THEREUPON, Adjournment

There being no further business, Vice President Arvanitis made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Paul Petrie. Motion carries (5 – 0). The meeting was adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

ROGER FLORKIEWICZ
SCHERERVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT
MERIT BOARD PRESIDENT
A TRUE COPY

TIM ARVANITIS
SCHERERVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT
MERIT BOARD VICE PRESIDENT
A TRUE COPY