

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF PIKE TOWNSHIP,**  
**MARION COUNTY, INDIANA**

**November 19, 2019**

**Attendance:** Peggy Simmons, Marcia Lomax, Steve Anderson, Claudette Peterson and David Willis. **Present:** Annette Johnson.

- 1) **Approval of October 8, 2019 Meeting Minutes.** Minutes were reviewed by the Board and members of the public. No proposed changes to minutes by the Board. Steve Anderson moved to approve the minutes. Peggy Simmons seconded the motion. Motion carried without opposition.
- 2) **PTFD Report.** Written report circulated by Chief Borel. Chief came to thank the Board for their support following his year of service. Trustee announced that the Township planned to celebrate Chief Borel on December 20 at the new headquarters.

President Willis commented that although he has only known Chief Borel for less than a year, he feels like he has known him for a lifetime. Willis commended Borel for always being "Johnny on spot."

Steve Anderson also expressed gratitude for Chief Borel's service to the Department.

Pike Resident Wolley explained that he had worked on previous governmental transitions and had always been impressed by Chief Borel and his work within IFD. Wolley emphasized that the community has seen Chief Borel's work over the last year and is very proud of him.

Chief Borel displayed his appreciation for the support and delayed his PTFD report until later in the meeting.

- 3) **2020 Salary Resolution.** Board took time to review 2020 salary resolution. Deputy Trustee explained that this resolution was dependent on the PTFD Union's pending vote. If the firefighters voted down the proposed contract, their 2019 rates would be in effect for 2020.

Peterson raised concern about the proposed 10K salary increase for Trustee Johnson. Peterson reiterated her dismay about Trustee driving a new vehicle.

Peterson also raised concern about Deputy Trustee salary, believing it was too high. Deputy Trustee explained that she is a licensed attorney and works hard for the Township.

Anderson asked if Judge Stephens is satisfied with the proposed 2020 court staff salaries. Judge agreed that salaries as written in the resolution are what was previously negotiated between him and the Trustee and are acceptable to him.

Peterson asked if Court salaries are comparable with other Courts. Judge Stephens explained that Pike Township used to be ahead of the curve in terms of staff salaries but has since fallen behind. Judge believes the 2020 salaries catch his staff up to market rate.

Simmons asked why there was such a disparity in pay among the Court staff. Judge explained that the top three employees have been with the Township for quite some time, which is reflected in their pay.

Deputy Trustee explained that the civilian longevity schedule rewards employees who have served the Township for over 4 years.

Willis asked the Board if anyone had any more comments on the proposed 10K increase to Trustee Johnson's salary. Peterson again expressed disapproval over Trustee's use of a Township vehicle. In Peterson's opinion, Trustee uses the vehicle for non-Pike Township related activities. Anderson commented that if this is the case, the State will catch on and deal with Trustee Johnson accordingly.

Deputy Trustee explained that Trustee Patton lowered her salary by 20K before leaving office in order to ensure that Trustee Johnson would not be paid the same as what Trustee Patton made. She further explained that Trustee Johnson is not asking for the full 20K, but merely half of the amount her salary was lowered.

Anderson stated he had no issue with the Trustee's use of the vehicle or the proposed raise.

Simmons agreed with Anderson. Simmons explained that she was initially mad that Trustee Johnson did not tell the Board she would be driving a new car, but has since moved passed the issue.

Anderson said from his prior experience, when using a pool car, you don't want to be driving one that is broke down and in disrepair. He doesn't take issue with Trustee driving a newer car.

Lomax also stated she had no issue with the Trustee's proposed salary increase.

President Willis opened the floor to Public Comment:

- Ron Hendrix (Union President) – Explained he has been around for 31+ years, working in Pike Township. He wanted to briefly applaud the Trustee for how active she is in the community.
- Wolley – Echoed Ron's statement and approval of Trustee's use of the vehicle. Wolley believes the residents of Pike should be proud of how active Trustee is in the community.
- Tony Thomas – Recently moved back to Pike. As a former commissioner from California, he believes that Trustees are in high command and are often asked to



serve outside of the community. Thomas also approved of the Trustee's use of the vehicle.

- Judge Stephens stated that Trustee Johnson makes less than some of the other Trustees and she is doing just as much. In his view, there should be no problem with the 10K salary adjustment. Judge believes Trustee Johnson's salary was reduced improperly by the previous Trustee. He also believes that Trustee Johnson could have sued the Board.
- Township Counsel Steve Buschmann explained that state statute says that a Trustee's salary cannot be reduced to lower than the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the prior Trustee's term. He doesn't know what the numbers are in this circumstance, but that is what the statute says.
- Simmons said that when Trustee Johnson came in, Simmons was weary. But now she sees how much Johnson is doing for the community. She is "all over the place" and she is being super active in the community.
- Peterson explained that she is not trying to take away from what Trustee does and applauds Johnson for being involved.
- Willis commented that he wants the Township Board pay to go up in 2021.

Anderson moved to approve the Salary Resolution. Lomax seconded the Motion. Motion carried 4-1 with Peterson voting against it.

#### **4) PTFD Report Continued**

- Borel is proud that the last class had nearly ½ minorities, including women.
- PTFD just completed a promotional process. Chief Borel was very happy with everyone's grades, which were all over mid 80s. PTFD promoted its first African American Battalion Chief, one Hispanic as Captain, and another African American to Lieutenant.
- Pike Resident Wolley offered special words of praise for Chief Borel. In Wolley's view, it is difficult for a black man to get this type of opportunity. Wolley was proud to see an African American man moving a department forward.
- Chief Borel explained that when it comes to increasing diversity, it is all about recruitment. Currently, IFD Black FF Union is recruiting hard, but not in Pike. Next year, Chief Borel hopes that IFD Black FF Union will come and help with recruiting in Pike.
- Willis explained that most of the Pike firefighters earn a paycheck paid for by Pike taxpayers, but then take that money somewhere outside of the Township. To him, it is important that we not only hire a diverse staff, but we work on retaining staff that lives in the Township.
- Chief Borel said hopefully incentives can be put in place to recruit folks that live in Pike Township. In their last recruit class, Wayne Twp had over 100 minorities apply. Pike Twp had only 6.
- Trustee Johnson explained that she is looking for a new Fire Chief in light of Borel's retirement. She hopes to have a new Chief in place at the start of 2020, but may need an interim Chief for the first quarter of the year. Trustee explained she is working with Chief Borel and Ron Hendrix to identify the best candidates for the position.

- Anderson asked if there was any more movement on dive team equipment. Borel explained there will be a public auction soon.

## 5) **Court Bonuses**

While working on the Township budget, Deputy Trustee identified some inconsistencies with the Court pay. It appeared to the Deputy Trustee that the top paid Court staff were not receiving longevity pay. Deputy Trustee explained that perhaps Trustee Patton had a reason for this, but Deputy Trustee doesn't know what it is.

Judge explained to the Board that back in June, he and Deputy Trustee started talking about court salaries. He believes his top staff members weren't getting longevity and his bottom tiered people were underpaid. Accordingly, depending on what is left in his various categories (100s, 200s, 300s, 400s), he would like to give each of his staff members \$2500 at the end of the year.

Board expressed that this should not be a reoccurring issue, but they expressed willingness to approve the Judge's request.

Deputy Trustee explained that we need to get confirmation from the Township accountant that there are enough funds remaining in the Court budget to fulfill this request, the total cost being \$17,000.

Board agreed to regroup on December 2, 2019 to assess if the Judge's request can be fulfilled.

## 6) **Fay Biccard – Community Service Contract** – Trustee Johnson explained that Fay Biccard is facing some financial trouble and asking for assistance. Trustee would like to pledge \$1000 from the general fund to Fay Biccard's emergency rental assistance program.

Peterson wants to see some sort of structure to understand how Fay Biccard gives out money.

Willis and Anderson explained they are supportive of Fay Biccard's work.

Resident Wolley stated that Fay Biccard is part of the Township and part of the community and believes the Trustee's office should support them. Lomax moved to approved the resolution authorizing payment to Fay Biccard. Anderson seconded the Motion. The Motion pass without opposition.

## 7) **Trustee Updates**

- Coffee with a Cop was today
- Hired a new community outreach coordinator
- HOA meetings are still going on.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Secretary of the Board Marchenox

Attested by Annette M. Johnson