

# Board Meeting Minutes

## October 15, 2024

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF PIKE TOWNSHIP

MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

Chairperson David Willis called the Board Meeting order at 5:38 P.M.

Board members present were Chairperson David Willis, Steve Anderson, Burnice Head, and Claudette Peterson. A quorum was confirmed. Cynthia Oda was absent.

Also present were Beth Marsh, CEO, Bookkeeping Plus, Steve Mills, Union Rep for Pike Township Fire Department, Jeff Beam, Fire Chief, Annette Johnson, Trustee and Phyllis Robinson, Financial Administrator.

Chairperson David Willis gave the board members a chance to review minutes and called for a motion to approve the Board Minutes from the September 19, 2024 Board Meeting. Motion by Burnice Head to accept the minutes as presented for September 19, 2024. Seconded by Steve Anderson.

Next on the agenda was the Budget Adoption for the 2025 Budget.

Beth Marsh, Bookkeeping Plus, said the budget has been presented and the Public Hearing, all that needs to be done is to Adopt the Budget. The total budget is \$55,239,706 broken down by:

-General Fund is \$2,099,643

-Township Assistance is \$1,155,154

-Township Fire and E.M.S. is \$48,194,909

-Cumulative Fire is \$3,790,000

The Adopted Tax Levy will be for the Township Fire and E.M.S. is \$27,902,078 and for Cumulative Fire is \$2,113,719. Any questions about the budget.

Claudette Peterson has a couple of questions regarding salaries. Beth explained that this is just the Budget Adoption and that the salary resolution is next.

Chairperson David Willis ask for motion to adopt the budget. Motion to adopt the budget for 2025 was made by Steve Anderson. Seconded by Burnice Head. All in favor. Claudette is voting yes to adopt the budget but is hesitant to approve the budget

when she has concerns in reference to the salary resolution as presented. Claudette said we are to approve the budget before we go over the salary resolution. Jeffrey Bellamy is not here so Claudette wanted some clarification from him on how it relates to the budget in conjunction with the salary resolution.

Beth explained to Claudette that the budget is the amount that has been allocated for that and the Salary Resolution is within the budget, budget can be higher than the resolution and vice versa, but they are two independent items and can be adjusted. We have to approve the budget first without discussions about the salary resolution. Beth said she can answer questions that Claudette has. Claudette, we are being responsible for the taxpayer dollars, she has questions for the Trustee and Chief. Claudette had some concerns about the salaries at the level they are 4 years ago during covid when the Chief had a \$18,000 dollar increase and the Trustee had \$5,000, but asked for \$10,000, had reservation then and said no on approval of the budget then.

What justification do we have for the Chief, Deputies, and Battalion Chiefs for the salaries to be where they are now. Beth said the Fire salaries are based on their contract which is 3.5% increases across the board and Township and Assistance is 5% across the board, cost of living is high this year which is the reason for the 5%. Trustee Johnson said when meeting with the Chief, Beth and others, no one is getting more than another just 5% across the board for all. Trustee said she feels really fiscally responsible, 2% was added to Fire to make 5% across the board. The Judge was in agreement so the Court side and Trustee staff were given 5% across the board.

Didn't want to go overboard. Claudette ask what salaries are based on and if the Chief was contract. Beth responded both the contract and the increase, the Chief is not contract.

Chief Beam said the contract covers up to a Battalion Chief. Chief and the Deputy Chiefs are merit and some Division Chiefs are and some are not merit, Chief is not merit. So not to have disparity all get a percentage across the board and are base salaries. Doesn't have anything to do with longevity, technical pay, college incentive pay, etc., as listed on the Salary Resolution each year. Chief only receives salary, could receive longevity. E.M.S not operating in the capacity, but the knowledge and maintaining certification. So in reference to the Chief's Salary (using as an example) does not take into account longevity, uniforms, etc., Chief could be eligible for longevity. Claudette wanted to know how longevity affects the salaries in the resolution for the Fire. Chief Beam said \$402 a year from 3 through 20 years, \$302 from 21 to 25 years, \$202 from 26 to 30 years, and then drops down to \$100 per year.

After discussion Chairperson Willis asked if all in favor to adopt the 2025 Budget. None opposed. Claudette is for the record voting yes but wants to note that she has concerns to the way the salaries are headed. Not to go back but justification for why the Chief's salary is so high now is due to the \$18000 approved during Covid, Claudette's feeling is that we should be mindful of taxpayer dollars and not compare us to big cities.

The previous chief compared Pike to Noblesville, Fishers, or Carmel and we are a Township and that creates a false equivalency. Chief Beam said he would disagree with whether a township or city doesn't really make a difference. The salaries are based on the run load whether it be Pike or an IFD battalion, would be the same run load and Pike's salaries are right in line with Cities, Towns, or Townships in the surrounding counties. The Chief would disagree about the disparity, the Battalion Chief's in Pike maybe make \$500 more than IFD. Claudette said she is only saying that we have 5 or 6 stations and we are the size of a Battalion and not all of IFD.

Steve Anderson said our fire department is one of the best not just in Indiana but in the country. Our number one rating on the insurance is very important. You pay for what you get. In the surrounding areas other Fire Departments are looking to snatch our people away just for the training and knowledge they have and we need to pay them.

Chairperson David Willis asked for the motion to approve Salary Resolution. Motion by Steve Anderson to approve the Salary Resolution for 2025 as presented. Seconded by Burnice Head. All in favor, none opposed. Claudette Peterson voted yes but wants salary resolution concerns listed in the minutes.

Claudette asked when is the contract up. Chief Beam said it is renegotiated in 2025 for 2 years through 26.

The next item on the agenda is the Financials by Beth Marsh, CEO Bookkeeping Plus

At September we are 3/4 way through the year should be at 75% of budget. For General Government, Personal Services are 43%, Supplies at 42% and Other Services was 33%. Capital Outlays for General were over but some items can be moved to repairs, overall spent 48% of budget. The same is true for Small Claims Court.

Small Claims Court has Personal Services 59%, Supplies 22% and Other Services 22%. Capital Outlays are over for Small Claims, will make adjustment since only 53% of budget spent.

Assistance is on target. Welfare Administration Personal Services was 34%, Supplies at 30% and Other Services at 65%, Capital outlays are also over which can be adjusted, total budget spent is 37%.

Township Assistance for Medical, Hospital and Burials at 8%, pretty much burials, and Other Direct Poor Relief 41%. Total budget spent is 67% for Assistance.

Fire spent 67% of total budget. Personal Services at 66%, Supplies at 74%, Other Services at 75% and Capital Outlays were 28%.

Cumulative Fire finished at 11%. Everything is in line with the budget and we should be in good shape for the end of the year.

The preliminary AFR for September is also included (which shows the details of Vendors spending by each category) for General Township, Small Claims, Welfare Assistance, Other Direct Poor Relief Fire, and Cumulative that you receive every month.

Beth asked if there were any questions.

President Dave Willis then asked for a motion to approve the September Financials.

Motion by Burnice Head that the Financials for September 2024 be accepted as is. Seconded by Steve Anderson. All in favor, none opposed.

Next on the agenda is Jeff Beam, Fire Chief. Chief Beam sent the September 2024 Monthly Report to Board Members today.

Chief Beam said the Fire Department is under 11,175 incidences with 80% being EMS runs. That is 8% greater than 2023.

Engine 64 is out of service due to an accident to be repaired, expected to return at the end of this month.

Ladder 64 and ladder 67 are both out. May have seen Brownsburg Ladder, which they want back, so will be using Speedway and work through the shortage of our Ladders.

Ongoing process hiring for EMS to complete in December, opportunity to bring on 4 more EMS's to fill the vacancies.

Had a good month last month with community Outreach events. Participated in the Fall Festival at the Trustees office, the Circle City Classic Parade, the Wellness Fair at the YMCA, Homecoming Carnival at Pike High School.

Learned they were the recipient of a Homeland Security Grant for \$300,000 for Security upgrades at the Fire Stations. Claudette wanted to know if there was opportunity for small business to be apart of that, if on the federal equipment list and have products that fit in the overall security guidelines. Claudette asked does

the federal require them to follow a particular a protocol for spending on the project. Chief said they do not.

Finally, on October 4th, attended the Indiana Emergency Response Conference Pike Township Fire Department was the proud recipient of the LIFE award which is the Leadership and Fitness Excellence Award, also include \$1,000.

Samantha Scott was presented with the Fire and Life Safety Educator of the Year Award. Trustee wanted to have public education vehicle

And not to steal the Trustees Thunder, but Trustee Johnson received the Elected Official of the Year Award from the conference.

Trustee Annette Johnson will have some fall activities, will assist 25 families for Thanksgiving and 50 Families for Christmas. Also on Friday, the Cancer Support Center is having a Community Day from 4 -7 PM. Our Firefighters will be grilling hamburgers and hotdogs at the Cancer Support Center as their way of giving back to the community. Trustee really appreciates our Fire Department, if they are asked they do and support the community.

Pat Magneson - wanted to say thank you to the Pike Township Fire Department and all they do, accolades to the Firefighters.

Debra Bluit - wanted to applaud the Firefighters for how they handled a car wreck in front of her home at 56 and Georgetown that she witnessed in person. Amazing seeing them taking the people out of the cars. Wonderful to see them in action in our Township.

Claudette Peterson - Doesn't want the Fire Department to think she doesn't appreciate their service, but as a board member she has the responsibility to ask the questions that no one wants to hear. Secondly, she wants to thank Steve and David for their 42 years of service and thank Mr. Head as well who along with her have a few years.

Steve Mills, Union Rep for Pike Township Fire Department reported that yesterday was the 2nd Anniversary of the death of Josh Ramirez. He was honored on the Local 416 Wall. Chief Beam and Trustee showed up to support him and his family. He appreciates their support. Trustee asked Steve to give his title again. Steve said he is Lieutenant on Engine 6, but also Pike Township District Union President, just

trying to get to know everyone. Trustee said Steve did a fantastic job reading the names on the Wall for the memorial services.

After no more comments, Chairperson David Willis adjourned the meeting at 6:17 P.M.

Next Board meeting: TBD