

PIKE TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT MERIT COMMISSION
4881 WEST 71ST STREET
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46268

President: Steve Buschmann
Vice President: NaTrina DeBow
Secretary: Russ Sipes

Members: Steve Hendrixson
Nancy Poore

January 21, 2026
Regular Meeting

An Executive Session was held prior to the Regular meeting. No decisions were made during the Executive Session.

ATTENDEES:

Merit Commission – Stephen Buschmann, Russ Sipes, and NaTrina DeBow.

Pike Township – Chief Jeff Beam and HRM Jill Smith

CALL TO ORDER:

At 1826, President Buschmann called the meeting to order. As noted above, an Executive Session was held prior to the regular meeting to review one applicant for the position of Probationary Firefighter. There were no decisions made. The meeting began with The Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Copies of the November 19, 2025 minutes were distributed for review. President Buschmann asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Secretary Sipes made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice President DeBow and approved by all.

AGENDA/NEW BUSINESS:

The next item on the agenda was the Election of Officers. Secretary Sipes made the motion to retain current officers. The motion was seconded by Vice President DeBow and approved by all.

The next item on the agenda was the 2026 Meeting Schedule. Meetings are normally held on the third Wednesday of each month. If there is not business to review, the meetings are cancelled. This schedule is compatible with each of the Committee members' schedules. Secretary Sipes made the motion to approve the schedule, Vice President DeBow seconded and the motion was approved by all.

Officer Appointment Information
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Officer Name	Appointing Authority	Term Start Date	Term Expiration Date
Stephen Buschmann	Pike Township Trustee	January 1, 2025	December 31, 2028
NaTrina DeBow	Pike Township Board	January 1, 2023	December 31, 2026
W. Russell Sipes	Pike Township Trustee	January 1, 2023	December 31, 2026
Steve Hendrixson	Pike Township Fire Dept.	January 1, 2025	December 31, 2028
Nancy Poore	Pike Township Fire Dept.	January 1, 2023	December 31, 2026

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President Buschmann stated that the Commission had reviewed one applicant in the executive session. President Buschmann asked for a motion to approve the following applicant:

Applicant 24-038

Secretary Sipes made the motion to approve the applicant, Vice President DeBow seconded, and the motion was approved by all.

Chief Beam requested the first three names from the Battalion Chief Promotion eligibility list. He stated that there are a number of retirements happening at the beginning of 2026 and he would like to be prepared to promote a Battalion Chief once all the moves happen and the vacancy remains. President Buschmann stated that once names are given by the Commission from the list that the Chief has 6 weeks to promote or he would need to come back to the Commission. There is only one name on the list. President Buschmann asked for motion to present the name Brent Goolsby to the Fire Chief for Promotion. The motion was made by Vice President DeBow, seconded by Secretary Sipes and approved by all.

There were three employees who were recommended for promotion from Probationary FF to FFI: D. Gahimer, K. Holman, and S. Scott. Chief Beam stated that these firefighters have completed all the necessary training and were eligible for promotion on December 30, 2025. Vice President DeBow made the motion for promotion, Secretary Sipes seconded, and all approved.

There were five employees who were recommended for promotion from FFI to FFII: W. Burnside, A. Gould, J. Holloway, L. Weathersby, and J. Wilson. Chief Beam stated that these firefighters have completed all the necessary training and were eligible for promotion on January 8, 2026. Vice President DeBow made the motion for promotion, Secretary Sipes seconded, and all approved.

There were six employees who were recommended for promotion from FFII to FFIII: K. Bennett, C. Hankenson, T. Jones, J. Kindred, Z. Kunkel-Ruiz, and B. Woods. Chief Beam stated that these firefighters have completed all the necessary training and were eligible for promotion on January 17, 2026. There is one employee that did not meet the training requirements and they have not been presented for promotion. Vice President DeBow made the motion for promotion, Secretary Sipes seconded, and all approved.

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There were two employees that have fulfilled their year as Probationary Captains: G. Roberts and D. Pitts. Chief Beam stated that these two were eligible to have probationary status removed on January 16, 2026. Vice President DeBow made the motion for promotion, Secretary Sipes seconded, and all approved.

Chief Beam stated that the current hiring list expires in September. He would ask the Commission for approval to start a new process. President Buschmann stated that there is no need for the Commission to approve the start of a hiring process. The Commission would only need to hear and approve if any changes were being made to the process.

MISC. BUSINESS:

Chief Beam had no miscellaneous department business and there was no Merit Commission Business.

ADJOURNMENT:

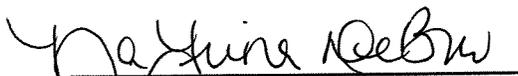
President Buschmann asked for a motion to adjourn meeting at 1836. Secretary Sipes made the motion to adjourn, Vice President DeBow seconded, and all were in favor.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 21, 2026


Stephen Buschmann, President

absent
Steven Hendrixson, Member


Natrina DeBow, Vice President

absent
Nancy Poore, Member

absent
Russell Sipes, Secretary

Signed February 18, 2026