The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by President, Andrew Dale.

**Members Present:** President, Andrew Dale, Vice President, Linda Gray, Secretary, Qiana Clemens, Kevin Coley and Mike Whited.

Others present: Chief, Daniel Burford, Attorney Mark Ervin and Recording Secretary, and Samara White.

**Recognizing Fallen Firefighter, Don “Hev” Caylor:** President Andrew Dale acknowledged the recent loss of Assistant Chief Don “Hev” Caylor of Ridgeville Volunteer Fire Department in Randolph County. He then invited Chief Burford to address the Commission regarding the incident.

Chief Burford informed the Commission that Assistant Chief Caylor passed way in the line of duty early Sunday morning while responding to a structure fire. He noted that his was a significant loss for Ridgeville Volunteer Fire Department and the surrounding community.

Chief Buford then invited Kevin Coley to speak. Commissioner Coley shared that he had the privilege of serving with “Hev” and proceeded with the following remarks:

“Hev was the kind of guy that no matter what time of day it was, he was always there for the call. I can still remember the ice storm back in 2005 when Ridgeville lost power for eight days. Hev’s wife and daughters showed up at the station and were cooking meals for those who couldn’t. Whenever there was a department event, Hev and his entire family were involved—they were an integral part of the community. You could always count on him. Hev was a great guy, a dedicated firefighter, and will be a true loss to the community.”

Following these remarks, Chief Burford requested that all in attendance stand for a moment of silence in honor of Assistant Chief Don “Hev” Caylor

**Removal of Item from Agenda:** President Andrew Dale announced that Ethics Training will be removed from the agenda for this evening and will be postponed to next month.

**Approval of the February 13, 2025 Meeting Minutes:** After review from the commission, Mike Whited moved to accept the minutes as presented, Kevin Coley seconded, and the MFMC accepted with a unanimous vote.

**Chief Burford:**

Chief Burford presented the 9-month evaluations for the probationary firefighters in the 1st and 2nd Battalions. He noted that he expects to receive the 3rd Battalion evaluations shortly and will present them at next month’s meeting. Chief Burford stated that the reports are outstanding and the probationary firefighters are preforming very well.

Chief Burford reported a formal complaint of misconduct that was submitted to him for review of the commission. The formal complaint of misconduct was on behalf of Battalion Chief Scott Hahn, Captain Kelly Morey, and Lieutenant Chris Deeds. The formal complaint was handed over to President Andrew Dale as the Muncie Fire Merit Commission Rules and Procedures states.

**Attorney, Mark Ervin:** Brief Report on Disciplinary Matter 2025-01, Mark wanted to advise that a hearing officer has been selected by both parties. Brandon Murphy will serve the administrative hearing officer for that and there will be a first prehearing conference set for April 10th. At that time, they will address procedural matters and anything else that needs to be addressed preliminary to getting that scheduled.

**Conditional Offers of Employment:** Chief Burford informed the commissioners that there were four openings on the department, and proposed initiating the process by extending conditional offers to five individuals-acknowledging that one of the four may not ultimately pass the fit-for-duty. He then requested that Linda Gray read the top three names on the eligibility list, starting at number 23. Linda Gray read the following names: Conner Hensley, Nathan Wilson, and Eric Jordan. Chief Burford noted that Nathan Wilson respectfully declined an appointment to the Muncie Fire Department, and is currently employed elsewhere.

Subsequently, Chief Burford asked for the next set of three eligible names. Gray read: Connor Hensley, Eric Jordan, and Luke Seber. Chief Burford then requested that the commission to extend a conditional offer of employment to Conner Hensley. Qiana Clemens moved to extend the offer, Kevin Coley seconded the motion, and the MFMC voted unanimously to accept.

Next, Chief Burford requested the top three names on the eligibility list. The names provided were, Eric Jordan, Luke Seber, and Bennett Weitzel. Chief Burford respectfully recommended that the MFMC offered a conditional offer of employment to Eric Jordan. Mike Whited moved to extend a conditional offer to Eric Jordan, Qiana Clemens seconded, and the MFMC again voted unanimously to accept.

Following that, the three names were read: Luke Seber, Bennett Weitzel, and Bryce Winningham. Chief Burford the requested that the commission extend an offer of employment to Luke Seber. Qiana Clemens moved, Linda Gray seconded, and the MFMC voted unanimously to accept.

Chief Burford subsequently requested the next set of three names: Bennett Weitzel, Bryce Winningham, Ryan Partin. Chief Burford asked the commission to extend an offer of employment to Bennett Weitzel. Qiana Clemens moved to extend the offer, Mike Whited seconded, and the MFMC voted unanimously to accept.

For the final conditional offer, Chief Burford requested the next three names on the eligibility list, and those names were: Bryce Winningham, Ryan Partin, and Jason Hale. He then requested that the commission extend the offer to Bryce Winningham. Mike Whited moved, Qiana Clemens seconded and the MFMC voted unanimously to accept.

**Commission’s Favor Regarding Filed Complaint Rule and Procedure #6 C (2) (3):** President Andrew Dale briefed the process when receiving a complaint which is under rule and procedure number 6 C-2-3. The complaint originally went to President Andrew Dale, and he determined that it had no validity, which then it was appealed by the individual where it went to the Muncie Fire Merit Commission. Mike Whited stated that the five commissioners met three weeks ago for about three hours going over the material that was presented. Mike Whited then moved that the complaint filed by Troy Dulaney under the commission’s Rules and Procedures, Chapter 6, section C, item three against the Chief Daniel Burford of the Muncie Fire Department is without merit as previously determined by the Muncie Fire Merit Commission President, that no disciplinary hearing is granted. Vice President Linda Gray added that the MFMC members believed that the allegations that had been made in the documentation are such that they need to be investigated and should forward them to the fire chief. President Andrew Dale asked Mike Whited if he was comfortable with that information being part and parceled to his motion and Mike Whited agreed. Andrew Dale then asked for a second in which Kevin Coley seconded, followed by a roll call vote where all MFMC were in favor and accepted unanimously.

**Promotional Testing Update:** President Andrew Dale mentioned the anticipation of a promotion process at the last meeting and what the favor might be for the entwining into that process continuing to use the annual evaluation or not. President Dale gave MFD personnel 30 days to share their thoughts on that matter with one day being left, commissioners Mike Whited, and Vice President, Linda Gray have received 7 emails and appreciate their input on the matter.

Motion to adjourn made by Secretary Clemens at 6:16pm, seconded by Vice President Gray, and MFMC voted unanimously to accept the adjournment.