

## **Muncie Fire Merit Commission**

### **January 8, 2026 Regular Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 6:09pm by President, Andrew Dale.

**Members Present:** President, Andrew Dale, Vice President, Linda Gray, Kevin Coley, Victoria Rose and Mike Whited.

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

#### **Election of Officers (President, Vice President & Secretary):**

Commissioner Mike Whited nominated Andrew Dale for President. The nomination was seconded by Commissioner Linda Gray. With no further nominations, the nomination was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Kevin Coley nominated Linda Gray for Vice President. The nomination was seconded by President Andrew Dale. With no further nominations, the nomination was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Mike Whited nominated Kevin Coley for Secretary. The nomination was seconded by Commissioner Linda Gray. With no further nominations, the nomination was approved unanimously.

#### **Approval of the December 11, 2025 Meeting Minutes:**

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the December 11, 2025 meeting. Following discussion, Commissioner Mike Whited made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kevin Coley. The motion passed unanimously, and the minutes were approved.

#### **Chief Daniel Burford:**

Chief Burford reported that three of the four lateral transfers approved by the Commission at last month's meeting began employment on Monday, January 5, 2026. He advised that one individual withdrew at the last minute and will no longer be joining the Muncie Fire Department. Chief Burford stated that the three remaining individuals are currently on duty, working hard, and are enthusiastic to be part of the department.

Chief Burford next informed the Commission that after the application process closed on December 31, 2025, he received an email over the holiday from an individual who had recently relocated to Noblesville. The individual, a firefighter from Ohio, learned that MFD's application process had closed two days prior. Chief Burford advised the Commission that it was their decision whether to accept the late application.

Commissioner Kevin Coley asked if there was any precedent for accepting a single late application. Chief Burford stated that while the application period has been extended in the past, the department has never accepted just one late submission. Commissioner Mike Whited expressed concern that allowing one applicant could require reopening the process for others.

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Commissioner Linda Gray stated she believed the deadline of December 31, 2025 should stand. The Commission reached consensus and declined to accept the late application.

Chief Burford then announced that CPAT testing will begin on Saturday, January 10, 2026.

Chief Burford next reported that additional vacancies will need to be filled, stating he had received another resignation letter from a firefighter who intends to laterally transfer to another department. He requested authorization to extend three conditional offers of employment.

Chief Burford provided an update on the current hiring list. The next eligible candidate, Zach Hart, has accepted employment with another department. The following candidate, Kaleb Wilson, previously declined the position. The next candidate, Lucas Sarvar, is currently deployed on active military duty and is expected to return in July 2026, making him unavailable to accept employment at this time.

Chief Burford requested that the Commission consider maintaining Lucas Sarvar as the number one candidate on the hiring list until he is able to return from active duty and accept a position. President Dale stated the Commission would proceed with business and address the request following discussion of the conditional offers.

Chief Burford then reviewed additional candidates on the list:

- Zachary Hart (declined due to other employment)
- Kevin Maddy
- Jake Myers (declined due to other employment)
- Cody Hartley
- Kristopher Atkinson (aged out and no longer eligible)
- Jason Nemesis (failed to maintain current contact information and therefore did not meet the requirements to remain on the active list)

Chief Burford requested approval to remove four individuals from the list: two for declining employment, one for aging out, and one for failure to maintain contact information.

President Dale returned the Commission's attention to Lucas Sarvar's status. Commissioner Mike Whited made a motion to keep Lucas Sarvar at the top of the hiring list. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Linda Gray.

Union President/Battalion Chief Jason Chafin addressed the Commission, citing historical precedent. He explained that during the 2003 and 2005 hiring lists, Andrew Niccum remained active on the list while deployed on military duty and was placed at the top of subsequent lists upon his return, as the hiring lists were treated as ongoing and perpetual.

Commissioner Whited amended his motion to allow Lucas Sarvar to remain at the top of each hiring list until he returns from active duty. Commissioner Linda Gray seconded the amended motion. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

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Commissioner Linda Gray then made a motion to remove four individuals from the current hiring list as outlined. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kevin Coley. The Commission voted unanimously to approve.

Chief Burford then requested authorization to extend conditional offers of employment to Kevin Maddy, Cody Hartley, and Nicholas Golden.

- Commissioner Linda Gray made a motion to extend a conditional offer to Kevin Maddy. Commissioner Kevin Coley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Commissioner Mike Whited made a motion to extend a conditional offer to Cody Hartley. Commissioner Linda Gray seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Commissioner Linda Gray made a motion to extend a conditional offer to Nicholas Golden. Commissioner Kevin Coley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Attorney Mark Ervin:**

No business from Attorney Mark Ervin.

#### **Rules and Procedures Release:**

President Andrew Dale stated that the Commission has completed an extensive update to the Rules and Procedures, noting that numerous revisions have been made over the years. He explained that the updated Rules and Procedures have now been consolidated into a single, organized packet to ensure clarity and consistency.

President Dale also took this opportunity to formally acknowledge **Victoria Rose**, a mayoral appointment, as the newest member of the Commission. He expressed that the Commission is pleased to welcome her and looks forward to her contributions.

#### **Update on 2026 Promotions & Hiring Process:**

President Andrew Dale stated that the promotional process is scheduled to take place during the first part of the spring. He further noted that the hiring process will continue during the second half of the spring as part of the department's ongoing staffing efforts.

#### **Adjournment:**

A motion to adjourn was made by Victoria Rose at 6:30p.m., seconded by Vice President Linda Gray. The motion carried unanimously.