

Muncie Fire Merit Commission

December 12, 2024 Regular Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 6:18pm by Vice President, Linda Gray

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

Members Absent: President Andrew Dale

Others present: Attorney, Mark Ervin and Chief, Dan Burford

Approval of the August 8th Meeting Minutes:

After review from the commission, Mike Whited moved to accept the minutes as presented, Kevin Coley seconded, and the November 14, 2024 meeting minutes were accepted unanimously.

Chief Dan Burford:

Chief Burford indicated that he will have the new recruit evaluations ready for review at the January meeting. He also took a moment to express his condolences and executed a moment of silence for Winchester firefighter Rick Sanders who perished in the line of duty.

Attorney Mark Ervin:

No Business

Promotions:

- Due to the retirement of Lieut. Ronrico Isom, Chief Burford requested the top 3 names on the Lieutenants list. VP Gray read the following names
 - Caleb Maddox
 - Doug Nethaway
 - Seth James

Chief Burford recommended Caleb Maddox be promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. The motion was made by Mike Whited, seconded by Kevin Coley, and subsequently approved unanimously. Lieut. Maddox will begin Dec. 22.

- Due to the promotion of Lieut. Maddox, Chief Burford requested the top 3 names on the Sergeant's list. VP Gray read the following names
 - Michael Lehman
 - Jordan Julianey
 - Jerry Steigal

Chief Burford recommended Michael Lehman be promoted to the rank of Sergeant. The motion was made by Qiana Clemens, seconded by Mike Whited, and subsequently approved unanimously. Sergeant Lehman will begin on Dec. 22.

- Due to the retirement of Captain Brian Manship, Chief Burford requested the top 3 names on the Captain's list. VP Gray read the following names
 - Michael Cooper
 - Brad Golden—who has since retired.

Chief Burford recommended that Michael Cooper be promoted to the rank of Captain. The motion was made by Mike Whited, seconded by Qiana Clemens, and subsequently approved unanimously. Chief Cooper will begin on January 7th.

- Due to the promotion of Michael Cooper to the rank of Captain, Chief Burford recommended the rank of Captain, Chief Burford requested the next 3 names on the list. VP Gray read the following names:
 - Doug Nethaway

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- Seth James
- Brian Cook

Chief Burford recommended that Doug Nethaway to the rank of Lieutenant. The motion was made by Qiana Clemens, seconded by Kevin Coley and subsequently approved unanimously. Chief Burford also indicated that this promotion brings this position into alignment when Sgt. Sykes returns from his military service.

Presentation of the Denise Moore Stewardship Award

Chief Burford presented the award to Lieut. Shawn Farris. This presentation was met with a standing ovation for Lieut. Farris's service.

Comments:

- VP Gray reiterated the meeting schedule for 2025
- Michael Lehman made public comment requesting the Commission's reconsideration of the inclusion of evaluations in the promotional process, indicating his objection to this as a part of the process.
- Chief Burford indicated that the current promotional process list is only certified through Nov 15, 2025.
- Mike Whited expressed his opinion that there will never be a fair system.
- BC Sykes agreed with Commissioner Whited but suggested a pass/fail option.

Adjournment

VP Gray entertained a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Kevin Coley and seconded by Mike Whited and approved unanimously.