MERRILLVILLE METROPOLITAN POLICE COMMISSION MINUTES
Merrillville Town Hall, 7820 Broadway

April 10, 2026

Regular Meeting called to order at 2:08 PM

ITEM I — PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL

William Poling – Police Commissioner Chairman, Present
Petar Dragojevic – Police Commissioner Vice Chairman, Present
Michael Rich – Police Commissioner, Present
Thomas Pawlak – Police Commissioner, Absent
W. Luther Cuttino – Police Commissioner, Present
Justin Murphy –Police Commission Attorney, Present
Konstantinos Nuses – Chief of Police, Absent
Shana Levinson – Chief's Attorney, Present
Matthew Vasel – Assistant Chief of Police, Present
Lori Sanfratello – Chief's Executive Director, Present

A quorum is present.

ITEM III — APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE March 6, 2026, REGULAR MEETING.

Commissioner Rich made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 6, 2026, Regular Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Dragojevic. 4 ayes, motion passed.

ITEM IV — APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE March 18, 2026, March 19, 2026 and March 27, 2026 EXECUTIVE SESSION.

Commissioner Dragojevic made a motion to approve the from the March 18, 2026, March 19, 2026, and March 27, 2026, Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Cuttino. 4 ayes, motion passed.

ITEM V — CHIEF'S REPORT

Assistant Chief presented the February 2026 Statistical Report; 401 Total Citations; 107 Adult Arrests; 3,692 Total Incidents; 15 Domestic Battery; 4 OWI Arrests.

Assistant Chief presented the March 2026 Statistical Report; 392 Total Citations; 108 Adult Arrests; 3,941 Total Incidents; 13 Domestic Battery; 83 State Reports.

ITEM VI INTRODUCTION AND ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS.

There was none.

ITEM VII OLD BUSINESS

Attorney Levinson states that this Letter of Resignation from Ofc. DeBenedetti that was originally tendered January 28, 2026, and we asked to table it to make sure he can move forward with his Disability Hearing. Attorney Levinson also states that she heard they are requesting another hearing and is requesting that the Commission Tables the Letter from Ofc. DeBenedetti at this time.

Commissioner Dragojevic made a motion to Table Ofc. DeBenedetti's Letter was seconded by Commissioner Rich. 4 ayes, motion passed.

ITEM VIII NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Rich made a motion to Ratify the 2026 Eligibility List and was seconded by Commissioner Dragojevic. 4 ayes, motion passed.

Commissioner Cuttino made a motion to Award Level II Commendations to Sgt. Schmidt, Cpl. Bunnell, Ofc. Reynolds, Ofc. Kijurna, Ofc. Knight, Ofc Hensley, Ofc Trotter-Borrelli, Ofc. Bartholomew, and Det. Earley and was seconded by Commissioner Dragojevic. 4 ayes, motion passed.

Commissioner Dragojevic made a motion to Approve New General Order 17.16 Therapy Dog Program and was seconded by Commissioner Rich. 4 ayes, motion passed.

Commissioner Cuttino made a motion to Approve New General Order 21.3 Domestic Violence by Police Officers and was seconded by Commissioner Dragojevic. 4 ayes, motion passed.

Commissioner Rich made a motion to Amend General Order 23.7 Longevity Allowance and was seconded by Commissioner Cuttino. 4 ayes, motion passed.

Commissioner Rich made a motion to Approve New General Order 27.11 Police Training Reimbursement and was seconded by Commissioner Cuttino. 4 ayes, motion passed.

Commissioner Dragojevic made a motion to extend Conditional Offers to Daniel Seel, Abiel Chavez, and Toni Pieczul and was seconded by Commissioner Rich. 4 ayes, motion passed.

ITEM IX PUBLIC COMMENT.

There was none.

ITEM X ANNOUNCEMENTS

Assistant Chief Vasel stated that May 14, 2026, at 10:00 am at the Community Center's South Lot will be the Departments Annual Inspections.

The next Police Commission meeting was set for May 1, 2026, at 2:00 pm.

ITEM XI ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Cuttino made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Rich. 4 ayes, motion passed

AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED at 2:26 pm.

Passed and adopted on this 1st day of May 2026.

Lori Sanfratello
Chief's Executive Director
Police Commission Secretary

William Poling
Police Commissioner, Chairman