

**Starke County Sheriff's Office**  
**Merit Board Meeting Minutes**  
**10/27/2025**

**Opening:**

Meeting was called to order at 6:34pm by Brad Hazelton. The meeting was held at Starke County Justice Center, in the court room.

**Present:**

**Merit Board Members:** Brad Hazelton, Tom Belork, and Denise Schacht

**Sheriff's Department:** Sheriff Jack Rosa and Matron April Wilhelm

**Old Business:**

- Approval of 06/05/25 meeting minutes. Motion by Denise Schacht, second by Tom Belork.
- Merit Board rules and SOP review – pages 30-39 were provided to board members for review.

**New Business:**

- Merit Board has approved Shelby Pickens and Nikolaos Zairis into merit status. Motion by Tom Belork and second by Denise Schacht.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Source Bank representatives advised that the retirement funding requirements have been caught up, and they provided all attendees with an investment presentation for the benefit plan.
- Matron Wilhelm provided the board with copies of a pay matrix for merit officers which was presented and tentatively approved by the county. This matrix provides pay increases after 5 years of cumulative service and again after 10 years of cumulative service. In addition, the 2026 budget includes the required minimum contribution for the retirement plan, and funds to purchase two new patrol vehicles.
- Recent & upcoming events
  - August 5, 2025 – National Night Out – over 180 participants and we raised \$1022.58 and a pickup truck load of donations for the Starke County Humane Society
  - October 24, 2025 – Pickens and Knox participated in Trunk or Treat at Bible Baptist Church
  - October 25, 2025 – K9 Donation at Pet Supplies Plus in La Porte.
  - October 30, 2025 – Trunk or Treat at the Sheriff's Department

**Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 7:02pm by Denise Schacht, second by Tom Belork all approved. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by: April Wilhelm