

# St. Charles Board of Fire and Police Commission FY 25/26 Annual Report

## Board Makeup and Overview

The St. Charles Board of Fire and Police Commission consists of five members who represent St. Charles residents and are appointed by the mayor.

Commissioners:

- Chairman: Patrick Reed
- Secretary: Geoff Pretkelis
- Member: Wedge Lazenby
- Member: Mary Jo Knipp
- Member: Robert Rooney

The commission meets monthly on the second Monday of each month. Meetings are open to the public, except when specific personnel matters are discussed. Most meetings are held at St. Charles Fire Department. Additional special meetings may be held depending on business items.

The Board held 13 meetings during FY25/26.

Responsibilities of the Commission Include:

- Maintaining eligibility lists for fire & police hiring and promotions.
  - Overseeing the testing and hiring of sworn fire and police candidates.
  - Overseeing promotional examinations for fire lieutenants, fire captains, battalion chiefs and police sergeants.
- Conducting disciplinary hearings for fire & police personnel pertaining to removals, suspensions and discharges.

## Rules & Regulation Updates

The City of St. Charles Board of Fire and Police Commission Rules & Regulations is the governing document that outlines the Board's standard operating procedures and scope of authority. Much of the document comes from Illinois state statute pertaining to fire and police commissions, as well as hiring and disciplinary matters. In early 2026, the Board worked with City of St. Charles staff to resolve an issue of tied scores on an eligibility list. A tiebreaker solution was agreed upon by the board and approved March 2, 2026, adopted by City Council April 6, 2026, and published April 8, 2026.

## FY25/26 Operating Budget

During FY25/26, fire and police commission operated on a budget of \$57,750 which is included in the overall budget for the Human Resources Department. Budgeted funds are used for:

- Job postings for testing dates
- Professional services to administer testing for new hires and promotions
- Background checks, including polygraphs
- Post offer psychological and medical examinations
- Legal fees that arise from questions or conflicts
- Training for commission members
- Membership of the Illinois Fire and Police Commissioner Association

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## FY25/26 Highlights

### Hiring

The Board was kept busy meeting the public safety staffing needs throughout the year. Recruitment cycles were run for entry-level firefighter, fire lieutenant, fire captain, fire battalion chief, entry-level police officer, and certified-eligible police officer. It should be noted that due in part to the diligent recruitment efforts of the Board, the Fire Department achieved full staffing for the first time in recent history.

The Board conducted a total of 60 interviews.

- 20 firefighter/paramedics
- 9 fire lieutenants
- 2 fire captains
- 2 battalion chiefs
- 22 police officers entry-level
- 5 police officers certified eligible

Prior to being offered employment, candidates must successfully complete a rigorous background investigation, which includes a polygraph for police applicants. Those background investigations are presented to the board for review and approval or denial of a conditional offer of employment. The pre-employment process also includes successful completion of a psychological assessment, physical examination and drug screen.

### New Hires

- Certified Police Officer Michael Thorpe 5/19/25
- Certified Police Officer Adem Nazifi 6/30/25
- Certified Police Officer Ryan Nickel 8/25/25
- Certified Police Officer Matthew Wells 8/25/25
- Firefighter/Paramedic Noah Laurich 8/4/25
- Firefighter/Paramedic Michael Thurman 4/13/26
- Firefighter/Paramedic Cole Davey 4/13/26

### Promotions

- Fire Lieutenant Ben Gore 5/12/25
- Fire Captain Steve Rehak 9/29/25

### Disciplinary Hearings

The Board did not host any disciplinary hearings within FY25/26.