

## Speech to Village Council

By Village President Jeffrey A. Buerman

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Wow. What a week it has been — damn, what a week.

First, I want to take a moment to thank our Village Council members. I was so proud of you.

I can't even put into words how much it meant to see you stand shoulder to shoulder, especially through times of uncertainty.

You stood strong, united, and in the end, we came together at the Town Hall in a way that made me truly believe in the strength of this community. It was good — really good — and it showed who we are.

I also want to thank the brave members of our DDA and Planning Commission who showed up and stood with us.

Thank you. Thank you for being willing to be part of a conversation, for showing up when it mattered most.

You see — it takes a team. A team *united*.

Now, let's address the white elephant in the room.

Yes, we did send out a survey asking about police coverage. We asked our tax-paying citizens whether they would be willing to pay more to maintain our own 24-hour police department — or whether they might be willing to consider other options, like contracting services with a neighboring department to lower costs.

Let me be clear:

**This was a fact-finding mission.**

Nothing more.

No decisions have been made. No cuts have been planned. No actions have been taken.

As your Village President, and as a council, we have a responsibility to our taxpayers — to every citizen — to explain how their money is spent.

It is our job to lay every option on the table.

We would not be doing our duty — legally, financially, or morally — if we didn't.

We could take the easy road, like past administrations did — ignore hard conversations, pretend problems don't exist, and kick the can down the road until it's too late and the choices are made for us.

**But we won't. Not on my watch.**

We are going to have honest conversations — even when they're hard.

We are going to look at every option.

Not because we're getting rid of our police.

Not because we're cutting corners.

Because when the time comes — and it *will* come — we need to be ready.

We need to be able to give our residents all the facts, all the information they need to make a smart, informed decision.

And let me speak directly for a moment:

**Chief Garrison — instead of putting fear into the community, I need you to be part of the solution.**

Start finding ways to make our police department work financially.

Start helping us figure out how we continue to provide the excellent service you and your officers are known for, while being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars.

We don't need fear — we need **solutions**.

When your department is over 50% of our total Village budget, **we need your help and support** to come up with ideas.

The answer can't always be "just raise taxes."

We need innovation, creativity, and teamwork — because that's how we survive and that's how we thrive.

**And we also need to look seriously at new ways to bring more revenue into this Village.**

**All options are on the table — even considering whether it's time for Pinckney to become a Home Rule City.**

We owe it to the people to consider every possibility that could strengthen our financial future.

**And one more thing:**

We cannot — and will not — be intimidated by "keyboard warriors" when it comes time to make the tough decisions.

Social media critics don't carry the weight of facts, hard work, or real responsibility.

We answer to the voters — the citizens who live here, pay taxes here, raise families here — not to anonymous posters hiding behind a screen.

And let me tell you this:

**The final decision will not be made by me. It will not be made by this council.**

It will be made by the good citizens of Pinckney — in a vote — in November 2026.

Until then, we will continue to work hard.

We will plan.

We will prepare.

We will put in the work to give people real choices for their future.

The goal — always — is to make the Village of Pinckney run more smoothly, to fill our empty buildings, to keep taxes as low as we can, and to always put public safety at the top of our list.

One side note — for those comparing us to Fowlerville:

That's comparing apples to oranges.

Fowlerville has a revenue of \$4.8 million. Pinckney has \$1.4 million.

Fowlerville's police budget is \$960,250; ours is \$725,000.

**We are doing more with less.**

**We are fighting every day to give our citizens the best service we can with the resources we have.**

In the end, the good people of Pinckney will decide their future — and I trust them to do it.

I believe in majority rule.

And I believe that if we stay honest, transparent, and united, **the best days for Pinckney are still ahead.**

Meanwhile, I'll be working hand-in-hand with Council, with DPW, and with all of you to find the money we need to start improving our sewer and water systems — because that too is part of securing the future of this Village we love.

Thank you.

Let's keep moving forward — together.

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