



VILLAGE OF
PINCKNEY

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Date: February 11, 2026

Good morning All.

Hope your week is going well.

I need to address something important that developed immediately following Monday night's meeting.

Since that meeting, both the DPW and our office staff have formally approached me requesting wage adjustments. During our discussion Monday, it was stated that historically when the Police Union receives an increase, the rest of the departments receive comparable consideration. Based on that understanding, all departments are now asking to be treated the same way.

This is no longer an isolated request — it is now a village-wide compensation issue that requires clear direction from Council.

Current Requests

DPW

- DPW Director is requesting a 9% increase, consistent with what the Police Chief and Sergeant received.
- DPW staff already received a 3% raise this year and are asking for an additional 6% to align with that 9% total.

Office Staff

- Treasurer
- Clerk
- Deputy Clerk
- Office Manager
- Zoning Administrator
- Village Manager

They are requesting a 6% increase, citing the same reasoning presented by the Police Chief. This matter will be on the February 23rd agenda. I strongly encourage everyone to come prepared for a serious policy discussion, as whatever direction we take will set precedent moving forward.

Why This Matters – Legal Authority & Process

It was stated during the meeting that this was the first time the Police Chief had to come before Council to request a raise that was already included in his budget. I want to be very clear: this is not about personalities — it is about governance and legal responsibility.

Just because something was done a certain way in the past does not obligate us to continue it — especially if it lacks clear policy or legal foundation.

Under the **General Law Village Act**, the Village Council is the legislative authority of the Village. That includes setting employee compensation.

Jeff Buerman

Village President

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While Council can delegate certain administrative authority through ordinance or adopted personnel policies, that delegation must be formal and clear. Department heads do not automatically have independent authority to grant raises.

Budget Does Not Equal Authorization

Having money in a department budget does **not** automatically authorize a wage increase. For raises to occur legally and properly, one of the following must exist:

- A council-adopted pay scale or step schedule
- A formal personnel policy granting delegated authority.
- A budget amendment or specific council action approving the change.

Absent that delegation, compensation decisions come back to Council.

This is consistent with standard municipal practice and guidance from organizations like the Michigan Municipal League.

What We Need to Consider

Before February 23rd, we should be prepared to answer:

- Have we formally delegated raise authority through ordinance or personnel policy?
- Do we have adopted wage schedules that allow within-range adjustments?
- Are we prepared to apply increases uniformly across departments if we follow historical precedent?
- What is the long-term financial impact if we adjust all departments at this level?

Bottom Line

We now have multiple departments requesting raises based on precedent established Monday night. The direction we take will impact morale, budgeting, precedent, and our legal footing.

I want to ensure we handle this correctly, transparently, and consistently.

Please reach out to me directly if you would like to discuss this prior to the meeting. I believe it is important that we are aligned before February 23rd.

Jeff Buerman
Village President
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Any deliberations or other substantive discussion or contact with the majority (or more) of the members of the Pinckney Village Council should be done only at an open meeting that fully complies with the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

Jeff Buerman

Village President

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