

I. REGULAR MEETING

The Board of Public Safety met in the Regular Meeting at 9:15 a.m. on Wednesday, May 20, 2026 with Board President Charles King III, and Members Al Kirsits, Pamela Claeys, were present. Also, Police Chief Scott Ruskowski, Fire Chief Carl Buchanon, and Attorneys Danielle Weiss, Adam Taylor, Kylie Connell and Board Clerk Hillary Horvath were in attendance. The meeting was held in the Council Chambers 3rd Floor, South Bend City Hall Bldg., 215 S. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Blvd., South Bend, Indiana and virtually via Microsoft Teams at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/2025-2026-BPS>

Attorney Weiss asked that everyone mute their microphone when not speaking and reminded attendees that comments from the public should be saved for the Privilege of the Floor portion of the meeting.

A. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

President Charles King III welcomed the public, called roll, and confirmed the presence of the Board Members.

B. APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Upon a motion by Al Kirsits, seconded by Pamela Claeys and carried by roll call, the Board approved the Minutes of April 15, 2026, regular meeting.

C. POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. ACKNOWLEDGE YEARS OF SERVICE JOSEPH LESZCZYNSKI

Chief Ruskowski stated Chief Joseph Leszcynski has retired from SBPD. Chief noted that Chief Leszcynski served thirty-seven (37) years, two (2) months, and one (1) day with a retirement date of June 6, 2026. Chief Ruskowski asked the Board to join him, wishing him success in his endeavors, along with thanking him for his many years of service with the SBPD.

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SWORN IN OFFICERS

The Board formally acknowledged the following new sworn officers on the South Bend Police Department. President King III began reading the names as Jeremiah Annis, James Buchmann, Lance Clark, Nicholas Godbey, Karla González Muñoz, Bryce Hampton, Lindsey Hinkle, Alondra Pedraza, Anthony Phuc Quan, Gordon Wendland. The board continued with congratulating them on their appointment and commitment to serve.

Chief Ruskowski added that the officers had already been sworn in during a special merit board meeting the previous week, and this portion of the meeting was primarily for formal acknowledgment. The Chief also shared that leadership spent about two and a half hours meeting with the recruits to discuss the realities, responsibilities, and guiding principles of policing, encouraging them to remember the oath they took and uphold it during both good and difficult times.

Member Kirsits then asked if any were lateral or new recruits. Chief Ruskowski responded saying they were all new recruits. Then briefly spoke on the academy and how long the process was but will also have at least three more months of training before they're out active on the streets.

3. FILE MONTHLY STATISTICAL ANALYSIS REPORT FOR APRIL 2026

Police Chief Scott Ruskowski submitted the April 2026 Monthly Statistical Report and an overall 5% decrease in major crimes. However, reported burglaries appear to be increasing due to a change in FBI reporting rules (NIBRS), which now counts each separate incident, even at the same location as its own report. This makes the numbers look higher, even though actual crime activity may not have increased.

SUBJECT: APRIL 2026 MONTHLY STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Dear Board Members:

The analysis is based on monthly figures, Apr. 2025 as opposed to Apr. 2026. For these monthly figures the increases or decreases are listed under CHANGE. Under YEAR TO DATE, the increases or decreases are listed 2025 as opposed to 2026.

The analysis covers only PART 1 OFFENSES as those are the more serious crimes and in the area in which our citizens are more concerned about.

The APRIL 2026 analysis is as follows:

PART 1 OFFENSES	YEAR TO DATE					
	2025	2026	CHANGE	2025	2026	CHANGE
HOMICIDE	-1	0	1	0	5	5
JUSTIFIABLE HOMICIDE*	1	0	-1	1	2	1
RAPE	8	9	1	30	23	-7
ROBBERY	17	8	-9	49	34	-15
AGGRAVATED ASSLT	86	89	3	294	271	-23
BURGLARY RES	33	25	-8	97	121	24
BURGLARY NON RES	13	14	1	39	62	23
LARCENY	154	127	-27	580	545	-35
MOTOR VEH THEFT	24	14	-10	104	76	-28
ARSONS	4	3	-1	11	6	-5
GRAND TOTAL	338	289	-49	1204	1143	-61

Respectfully submitted,


 Scott Ruzzkowski
 Chief of Police

Month: APRIL 2026

PART 1 OFFENSES	2025	2026	CHANGE
HOMICIDE	0	5	500%
JUSTIFIABLE HOMICIDE*	1	2	100%
RAPE	30	23	-23%
ROBBERY	49	34	-31%
AGGRAVATED ASSLT	294	271	-8%
BURGLARY RES.	97	121	25%
BURGLARY NON RES.	39	62	59%
LARCENY	580	545	-6%
MOTOR VEH THEFT	104	76	-27%
ARSONS	11	6	-45%
GRAND TOTAL	1204	1143	-5%

-5% CHANGE IN PART 1 CRIMES THROUGH APRIL 2026

D. FIRE DEPARTMENT

ACKNOWLEDGE YEARS OF SERVICE

Allen Hardison

Timothy Pletcher

Chief Buchanon submitted an acknowledgement years of service for First-Class Firefighter Allen Hardison, and First-Class Firefighter Timothy Pletcher. Chief Stated Firefighter Hardison has retired from the Sbfd effective April 8th, 2026. He was appointed to the department on March 29th, 1995, having served the citizens and community for thirty-one years. While First class Firefighter Timothy Pletcher retired from the Sbfd effective May 15, 2026. He was appointed to the

department on October 25, 2000, having served the citizens and community faithfully for twenty-five plus years. The Board recognized Firefighter Hardison and Firefighter Pletcher from the SBF, thanking them for their years of service, professionalism, and dedication to the City of South Bend, and expressing appreciation for their work in the community.

1. APPROVE LEXIPOL POLICES

- 102 - Policy Manual
- 203 - Training Policy
- 500 - Electronic Health Care Record
- 600 - Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Training
- 605 - Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Training
- 611 - Respiratory Protection Training
- 702 - Vehicle Inspections, Testing, Maintenance, and Security
- 900 - Illness and Injury Prevention Program
- 903 - Communicable Diseases
- 909 - Personal Alarm Devices
- 1006 - Fire Officer Development

The Lexipol policies were presented for approval, focusing on enhancing safety, health, and operational procedures within the department. The policies included updated guidance on decontamination practices and exposure risk management, as well as clarification of key roles such as the Exposure Control Officer (ECO), who is responsible for developing and overseeing exposure prevention procedures. Additional emphasis was placed on the regular cleaning and maintenance of equipment, including commonly used items such as radios. The policies also reinforced firefighter safety protocols, including the use of PASS alarms in emergency situations and adherence to the buddy system to ensure accountability during operations.

During discussion, Board members expressed general support for the policies, noting Lexipol's flexibility to be updated as needed. Minor clarification was requested regarding policy formatting and practical application, including decontamination methods and firefighter safety equipment. Questions were also raised about the use of PASS alarms, and it was clarified that alarms are activated by the firefighter or nearby crew members, with crews relying on the buddy system and communication to identify emergencies.

2. FILE MONTHLY STATISTICAL ANALYSIS REPORT FOR APRIL 2026

Chief Buchanon presented the April 2026 statistical analysis report, noting that individual station run reports were not included this month but will be provided separately to board members. The report showed an increase in inspections, with 247 inspections and 104 re-inspections completed, attributed to improved weather conditions and inspector availability. The Chief commended inspection staff for their diligence despite limited resources.

For April, the department responded to 42 fires, 1,472 EMS calls, and 594 other incidents. Efforts to install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are ongoing, with increased activity expected in May. Community risk reduction and public education efforts also remain strong, with outreach provided to both children and adults through schools, churches, and other community locations.

Board members acknowledged the strong inspection and safety outreach efforts, particularly the increase in smoke and CO alarm installations, and expressed appreciation for the department's proactive approach to public safety.

To: Board of Public Safety **FIRE CHIEF**
 From: Carl R Buchanon, Chief
 Re: April 2026 – Monthly Statistical Analysis
 Date: May 2026

April	2026
Incidents Monthly Count: 2,108 Year to Date: 8,136	
False Alarms: 96 0.05%	Fire: 42 : 1.99% EMS: 1,472 : 69.83% Other: 594 : 28.18%
Smoke Alarms & C/O Installations	
Smoke Alarms: 99 C/O: 35 Combinations: 0	Batteries: 0 Impaired: 0

To: Board of Public Safety **FIRE CHIEF**
 From: Carl R Buchanon, Chief
 Re: April 2026 – Monthly Statistical Analysis
 Date: May 2026

April 2025	April 2026
\$176,450	N/A
INVESTIGATION DIVISION	
15 Investigations	11 Investigations
INSPECTION DIVISION	
191 Inspections 78 Reinspections	247 Inspections 104 Reinspections

Re: April 2026 – Monthly Statistical Analysis
 Date: May 2026

April	2026
Community Risk Reduction	
Events: 14 Pub Ed Hours: 18 Supplies: N/A	Children: 421 Adults: 334
Access To Public Records (APRA)	
Completed: 32	Fees Collected: \$0.00

E. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Attorney Weiss reminded the public to use the hand-raising function of Microsoft Teams to indicate their desire to speak during Privilege of the Floor. She reminded attendees that they would be allotted three (3) minutes to speak.

Chief Buchanon and Board members took the opportunity to recognize Attorney Adam Taylor on his final Board of Public Safety meeting, thanking him for his service, legal support, and contributions to both the Fire and Police Departments. Attorney Taylor expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work with the departments and shared that he will remain in the South Bend area.

Board members also offered additional remarks of appreciation, including recognition of retiring firefighters and acknowledgment of Chief Leszczynski’s service and career.

F. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, upon a motion by Pam Claeys, seconded by Al Kirsits, and carried by roll call, the meeting was adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY



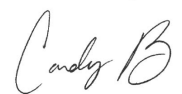
 Charles King III, President



 Alfred Kirsits, Member



 Pamela Claeys, Member

ATTEST:


 Candy Bermudez, Acting Clerk