



Town of Cedar Lake
Board of Safety Public Meeting Amended Minutes
Wednesday, June 23, 2021 at 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: Kaper called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE: A moment of silence was held in recognition for Hammond Sergeant Tom Sawyer who lost died due to COVID-related complications.

ROLL CALL:

Present	Joshua Govert, Member	Present	Ralph Miller, Town Council Liaison
Present	James Olthoff, Member	Absent	William Fisher, Police Chief
Present	David Villalobos, Member	Present	Todd Wilkening, Fire Chief
Present	Norman Stick, Vice Chairman	Present	Carl Brittingham, Deputy Chief Police
Present	Lester Kaper, Chairman	Absent*	Nick Mager, Deputy Chief Fire

It was also noted for the record that Town Attorney David Austgen was present for legal counsel. Chief Wilkening noted Deputy Chief Mager was out on a fire-related call. *Noted late arrival at 6:38 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Kaper called for Public Comment three times; none received.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES for Wednesday, May 26, 2021: A motion was made by Norman Stick, seconded by David Villalobos, to approve the meeting minutes of May 26, 2021.

Govert	Olthoff	Villalobos	Stick	Kaper	Vote
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5-0

COMMUNICATIONS:

- 1. Rago Family Matter:** Recording Secretary Moore, in Chief Fisher's absence, read the letter dated May 27, 2021, in its entirety, noting a sexual assault incident involving their adult daughter on April 6, 2021. Rago noted the professionalism, compassion, respect and reassurance the department showed her, specifically Deputy Chief Carl Brittingham and Officer Shaun Meyer. Moore confirmed for Kaper that letters of appreciation would be drafted and placed in their files. Olthoff indicated the Ragoes were personal friends of his and they indicated to him how much they appreciated Brittingham and Meyer's prompt work and professionalism in the case.

Brittingham confirmed for Villalobos that a letter would also be drafted and placed in Chief Fisher and Sergeant Kidd's file for their work related to the recent fire on Parrish Ave. Kidd observed the fire and called it in; Fisher entered the residence and was able to assist in getting residents out of the home with no fatalities. Chief Wilkening noted that if it were not for the quick thinking and actions on their part, fatalities of the resident(s) may have been involved.

- 2. City of Gary & City of Hammond:** Chief Wilkening requested Moore read the two letters. Moore read the first letter, dated April 6, 2021, received from Jerome Prince, the Mayor of the City of Gary, thanking the Cedar Lake Fire Department for their mutual aid related to multiple fires in Gary on Sunday, May 2, 2021, requiring backup from neighboring fire departments, 10 in total, noting no fatalities. Moore read the second letter, dated June 1, 2021, received from David Weisz,

Drillmaster for the Hammond Fire Department, regarding incidents spanning from May 15-24, 2021, requiring mutual assistance, specifically noting assistance from the Dive Team.

STAFFING:

1. **Police Department:** Deputy Chief Brittingham provided an update on the new recruits noting Kamstra is doing well and did a fabulous job during his first inspection and Dills, who is still in Field Training, is doing a great job as well. Brittingham noted Kamstra and Dills being extremely young but gave them a great deal of credit for their age. He indicated the new hires had completed their paperwork for PERF for approval and had been mailed. Brittingham confirmed to Kaper that both recruits had not been through the academy yet.

Kaper noted for the record that Deputy Chief Mager arrived at 6:38 pm.

2. **Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening noted Geo Sweet was graduating from the academy as a volunteer and would be going to EMT school. Wilkening confirmed for Villalobos that Sarah Stewarts, whom he met while viewing the new ambulance, was finishing training and a part-time employee. Wilkening stated he is working on an Overtime Plan for the department to continue through the rest of the year and a plan for next year, including dialogue with the Council for review of overtime, along with raise policy being vetted.

FINANCE:

1. **Purchase Orders - May 2020:**

- a. **Police Department:** Deputy Chief Brittingham reviewed the purchase orders noting batteries, vest carrier and vehicle repairs. He indicated the vehicles for repairs were some of the older vehicles in the department. Brittingham explained to Kaper there had been an issue with some spotlights. They had been returned to the company to be repaired but were delayed due to COVID.
- b. **Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening reviewed the purchase orders noting vacuum replacement, tablet for the ambulance, fabrication of new gear racks for the station due to the remodeling, thermal imaging camera replacement, rescue saw mounting kit for the engine, chain saw blades, tires for 1261 ambulance and tires for the truck. He noted work being done on the Township Engine, noting the Township pays for the repair cost. He stated work had been completed to the older engine last month. He did not expect any large expenditures through the remainder of the year. He provided an update on the new ambulance indicating a couple of pieces were remaining, but noted they were on backorder. He stated uniforms would be coming up, noting costs for volunteers' t-shirts and hats for every three years purchase they do for the volunteers. Wilkening confirmed to Kaper that the Town pays for that expense.

2. **Grant Updates:** Deputy Chief Brittingham explained to the Board this is a grant the department has applied for in the past and was looking to apply for this year to hire an additional officer for 2022. The grant would cover the expense of the payroll of the officer, not equipment. Brittingham confirmed for Kaper the motion would be in order to apply for the grant.

A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Josh Govert, to approve the police department applying for the COPS grant.

Govert	Olthoff	Villalobos	Stick	Kaper	Vote
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5-0

- 3. Law Enforcement Partners:** Deputy Chief Brittingham stated there had been a large amount of money received in fund raising for DARE, that they would request this money be moved to the VIPS fund to help them out.

A motion was made by Norman Stick, seconded by Josh Govert, to approve moving the \$450 in funds from the DARE to VIPS.

Govert	Olthoff	Villalobos	Stick	Kaper	Vote
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5-0

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1. Lexipol Policies Update:** Kaper stated this item would be tabled.

A motion was made by Norman Stick to table the item. David Villalobos seconded the item asking that the motion include pending the attorney review. An amended motion was made by Norman Stick, seconded by David Villalobos, to table this item pending town attorney review.

Govert	Olthoff	Villalobos	Stick	Kaper	Vote
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5-0

Austgen confirmed for Chief Wilkening that policies be addressed in his office to Jacob O'Donnell.

- 2. Resolution 2021-01 Establishing and Approving a Policy for the Cedar Lake Police Department Policy & Procedure Manual:** A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Norm Stick, to table Resolution 2021-01.

Govert	Olthoff	Villalobos	Stick	Kaper	Vote
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5-0

3. Equipment Updates:

- a. Police Department – Purchase & Repairs:** Deputy Chief Brittingham stated there were no cars available and no update on when they will be available.
- b. Fire Department – Purchase, Repairs & Renovation:** Chief Wilkening noted the new ambulance and paramedic were here. Wilkening introduced Sarah Stewarts to the Board. Stewarts stated went through Crown Point's academy, precepted with CLFD's Chris Craft and Crown Point's Dale Holsti, who is also a Cedar Lake resident. She felt the department contained a lot of great men and women and was proud to be working here. The Board welcomed her. Wilkening indicated the process was a 2-year program and she has done a great job. Wilkening stated the ambulance was out back for them to view after the meeting and thanked the medics for assisting in designing it, noting Pat Scoleri, who was present in the audience, taking the lead on the project. Wilkening stated they currently have 4 ambulances and looked to do a remount on the oldest one, however, it would cost as much to rebuild a new one. The company he spoke to felt the Chevy they were going to replace would be a better option for that with a cost of \$150,000-200,000 to remount.

He felt the red ambulance is in better shape and would be able to get a decent dollar for it if they were to sell it, anticipating \$10,000-20,000. Wilkening stated it could be kept as a backup, but felt the other 3 would service the department. He confirmed for Kaper and Govert that there is no place to store it. Wilkening noted there have been times in the past where equipment such as ambulances have been loaned out as a part of a mutual aid agreement. Wilkening also noted to keep the ambulance in service, it would need a monitor for advanced life support, which the cost is \$30,000. Wilkening confirmed for Villalobos that the life expectancy of an ambulance is 7 years.

A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Jim Olthoff, to amend the agenda to include discussion on the sale of the 2003 Ford Ambulance.

Govert	Olthoff	Villalobos	Stick	Kaper	Vote
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5-0

A motion was made by Jim Olthoff, seconded by Norm Stick, to send a letter of Favorable Recommendation to the Town Council to approve the selling of the 2003 Ford ambulance with proceeds to go to the fire department new equipment fund.

Govert	Olthoff	Villalobos	Stick	Kaper	Vote
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5-0

Kaper asked Wilkening who would be typing the letter for the Council. Moore confirmed for Wilkening and Kaper that she would type the letter for the fire department.

It is to be noted that after completion of this meeting, when the letter was being drafted, that the ambulance is actually a 2006 not 2003. Let this be reflected in the minutes as corrected and noted for the two previous motions noted above.

Wilkening stated that the Tahoe they are going to replace once their new vehicle comes in, some body work can be completed to that unit since it is 4-wheel drive, have it painted and give it to VIPs so they can utilize another 4-wheel drive unit during the winter. He indicated it was a good vehicle despite having 160,000 miles on it. Kaper indicated the Council owns the vehicles and ultimately it would be up to them to decide what to do with the vehicles.

Kaper asked for an update on the renovation of the fire department. Wilkening stated Henn can start the work in one month.

4. Training Updates:

- a. Police Department:** Deputy Chief Brittingham reviewed the training report, noting training including two officers attending rifle instructor certification, one officer obtaining mobile data operator certification and one officer attending advanced traffic crash investigation. He explained the crash reconstruction course is an extensive training and this 80 hour was just a portion of the training.
- b. Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening reviewed the training report, noting a total of 421 instructed hours, including two attending emergency rescue dive program among other various and daily trainings. Wilkening confirmed for Villalobos that for open water

operations, the police boat works better for diving and the fire boat works better for patrol, so they felt is best to cross train on each other on boats. Wilkening confirmed for Villalobos that it has been an active year on the water with multiple incidents on the lake where the DNR some times cannot keep up. He noted several incidents involving near drowning and broken/dislocated bones indicating the cause of many of them is due to inexperience or not attending a boat course. Wilkening confirmed for Kaper that a replacement for the little boat has not taken place yet.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Police Department

- a. Monthly Activity Report:** Deputy Chief Brittingham reviewed the monthly call report noting 118 incidents assisting other agency, 514 incidents related to citizens, 11 incidents related to juveniles, 70 incidents for persons, 18 property, 431 traffic and 4 that did not classify, totaling 1252 for the month with near 5000 for the year. Villalobos asked where Brittingham felt this fell in comparison to years past. Brittingham said that he felt it was a few hundred additional. Brittingham reported for Citations Report, 125 state violations, 7 town traffic, 8 town ordinances, for a total of 140 for the month and 806 year to date. Brittingham reported for Warning Report, 234 state violations, 12 town traffic, 15 town ordinances, for a total of 263 for the month and 1506 year to date. He also reported 30 total arrests, 66 total charges filed of which 27 were misdemeanors, 16 felonies, and 21 not classified/warrant for a total of 131 for the month and 225 year to date.
- b. Reimbursement – Buy Crash:** Deputy Chief Brittingham explained to the Board that currently, the department does continue to sell crash reports. He explained individuals can obtain the report from Buy Crash online and currently we do not see any of the money back from those reports. This contract would give us \$8 of those online reports, which would include insurance companies or residents obtaining one online. The contract is required in order for us to attain the reimbursement. Attorney Austgen stated that since it is a contractual agreement, he suggested sending recommendation to the Town Council. Brittingham indicated he did not agree with Austgen and felt it could be handled by the Board as an agreement.

A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Jim Olthoff, to send letter of Favorable Recommendation for the Memorandum of Understanding to the Town Council.

Govert	Olthoff	Villalobos	Stick	Kaper	Vote
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5-0

- c. Other:** Kaper asked for the Board to determine a date next week for an exit interview with retiring Lieutenant Forsell, noting his last day was Wednesday. Multiple discussion ensued and it was requested that an Executive Session be advertised for on Tuesday, June 29, 2021 at 6 pm. Moore will schedule, advertise and send Notice to the Board and Lt. Forsell.

2. Fire Department

- a. Monthly Activity Report:** Chief Wilkening reviewed the monthly call report noting 132 calls for the month and a total for the year of 683, noting overdoses has gone down this month, structure fires are higher than normal, sick persons/COVID calls have gone down, and felt this will be a record year for them.

- b. **Other:** Chief Wilkening indicated an ambulance dedication will be scheduled with a public blessing from Father John. Wilkening indicated he will have three volunteer staff going on 6 months leave of absences for personal reasons simultaneously.

VIPS REPORT: Deputy Chief Brittingham reported that Lieutenant Layer could not be here tonight. He reported no call outs this month, 68 hours of patrol, for a total of 97 hours. Brittingham clarified for Kaper that VIPS helped out with the parade and directing traffic the two nights of fireworks during Summerfest along with anything else the department might need assistance with during Summerfest. Wilkening stated he would have extra staff as they would need to put an ambulance on the other side of the lake due to gridlock, noting they would have volunteers working along with staff on the lake to take care of the barge. Wilkening gave Brittingham praise for all of his behind the scenes work he does during Summerfest, specifically indicating manning the barge. Kaper thanked all of the staff for all of the work they do.

Wilkening acknowledged the hard work that went into the pier and thanked Councilman Miller for his work in attaining it. Kaper indicated Representative Mike Aylesworth donated the Indiana flag.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Kaper called for Public Comment three times; none received.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Josh Govert, to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 pm.

Govert	Olthoff	Villalobos	Stick	Kaper	Vote
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5-0

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 at 6:00 pm

TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE BOARD OF SAFETY

Lester Kaper, Chairman

Norman Stick, Vice-Chairman

Joshua Govert, Member

James Olthoff, Member

David Villalobos, Member

ATTEST:

Sarah Moore, Recording Secretary