



**Town of Cedar Lake**  
**Board of Safety Public Meeting Amended Minutes**  
**Wednesday, July 28, 2021 at 6:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Kaper called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**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	Absent	Carl Brittingham, Deputy Chief Police
Present	Lester Kaper, Chairman	Present	Nick Mager, Deputy Chief Fire

Kaper noted for the record to reflect that the Board may return to Executive Session after the Public Meeting since they were unable to finish everything they needed to prior to the start of this meeting.

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES for Wednesday, June 23, 2021:** A motion was made by Norman Stick, seconded by David Villalobos, to approve the meeting minutes of June 23, 2021 to include the notation reflected in the agenda "Notation: Addition to the minutes to reflect two motions made noting 2003 ambulance, which was later determined to be 2006 – "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.""

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

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

- Dowling Family:** Chief Fisher read correspondence received from Patty and Dan Dowling thanking the department for officer escort on June 23, 2021 at 5:00 am for their granddaughter to the airport on her way to the Air Force Academy.
- Hanover Baseball Team Escort:** Chief Fisher & Chief Wilkening noted Police and Fire escort of the Hanover baseball team to I65 for their state championship game and praising the team on a wonderful season and a great group of kids.

**STAFFING:**

- Police Department:** Chief Fisher stated the new recruits have completed and passed their physical agility test and will begin the Academy on Monday. He noted Kamstra is completely finished and on his own. He indicated Dills has two more shifts with the Field Training Officer and will be doing a shadow phase before being released on her own. Fisher confirmed to Kaper that Kamstra and Dills have their own vehicles, but the two new recruits do not. Fisher provided an update on the overtime hours paid out to Summerfest. He stated Saturday was probably the most

people he has seen in his 25 years on the force, noting the parking lot had to be closed by 7 pm due to the amount of people and traffic.

Fisher requested the Board's approval to begin the hiring process, since it takes approximately three months to get through interviews, noting he would like to take applications from August 1 through August 31 and start interviews in September. Fisher confirmed for Kaper that this would be an eligibility list and would include certified and non-certified individuals.

A motion was made by Josh Govert, seconded by Jim Olthoff, to approve the application process.

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

- 2. Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening stated the overtime for the department for Summerfest included time for the nights of fireworks, boat staff during fireworks, along with extra marine unit staff to cover the extra waterway traffic. Wilkening noted the department is generally overstaffed during those five days not only because of Summerfest but also due to high volume extra traffic, fireworks/celebrations and the holiday in general. Wilkening confirmed to Villalobos the overstaffing worked out well, noting an example of response time to a house fire that occurred in only 3 minutes, which they were able to save the home. He expressed how difficult it is to get volunteers and mutual aid during holidays. Wilkening stated that after the Town Council's approval of the salary increase, he had sent out hiring announcements to start an eligibility list. He has received some applications from previous staff that left due to salary and have interest in returning. He thanked everyone who was part of the process to get the salaries increased.

#### **FINANCE:**

##### **1. Purchase Orders - June 2021:**

- a. Police Department:** Chief Fisher reviewed the purchase orders to include barrel and bolt catch repairs, retirement badge for unit #17, brake repairs on unit #32, air conditioning repair for #118, shoulder patches and badges for #55 & #56 and vehicle repair to unit #48.
- b. Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening reviewed the purchase orders to include repair to arm on the drone that was attacked by a hawk, replace water level tank, mounting bracket, and air conditioning repair for #1272. Wilkening stated his 2011 truck with 58,000 miles on it is going in for rust repair at a cost of \$2200 to preserve it in order to keep it in the rotation. He indicated costs were incurred for uniform hats for part time and full-time volunteers.

##### **2. Grant Updates:**

- a. COPS grant update:** Chief Fisher stated the department has applied for the COPS grant to obtain one officer for next year. He stated it is a 3-year program commitment and they should hear back regarding approval in the next 3-4 months.
- b. Camera grant:** Chief Fisher stated they are still working on the camera grants. They are awaiting direction as they just received information from the State Police noting a different funding source from the grant process for \$10 million for body cameras.
- c. Drone grant:** Chief Fisher indicated Officer Machalk met with Paul Petrie from Lake County Homeland Security and the grant CLPD was pursuing the government has decided they are not going to fund. Fisher confirmed for Kaper that the cost of the drone was approximately \$30,000. Kaper recommended reaching out to the Community Foundation to request funding. Because of the news regarding the drone funding, the department

will shift their focus to the need for additional portable radios for the new officers and backup portables.

- d. **Community Outreach Program – AED program:** Chief Wilkening reported speaking with a vendor that refurbishes AED machines. He proposed attaining a grant to purchase approximately 12 of them, noting the cost of the refurbished ones at \$600-750 each and new ones \$1500-1800, where they could be rotated out into the community. Three of them would be utilized in the Department &/or as backup, the others would be provided to clubs, churches and organizations such as the Legion or Eagles in the community. The Fire Department would check them, test them, check the batteries and replace the battery or units, if needed. He stated if the defibrillator is not maintained properly or regularly checked, then they are not effective. He recommended reaching out to the groups through their Firefighters Association yearly fundraiser letter that reaches 8000 residents, at the Firefighters Ball and possibly other avenues to see about interest in the program and if they are able to provide funding assistance and/or be the recipient of the machine. AED recipients would then be set up with a monthly maintenance plan. Wilkening confirmed for Fisher that the units would not only be interchangeable with the medics, but it would also provide an opportunity to interact with the patrons in their facilities to make the more accustomed to the facility. He felt that this program would not start this year, but in order for them to set everything up properly, attain the equipment and providing the training to the individuals on how to use them, they would anticipate this to take place next year. Wilkening clarified for Stick that training was not difficult on how to use the device and further explained to the Board about the operation of the machine and it being full proof. Wilkening confirmed for Villalobos that the estimate life expectancy for a unit is 8 years. Fisher explained that they have two units, one of which is in Town Hall, and he was able to schedule all of the staff to receive CPR and AED training. Wilkening stated if one were damaged, they could have a couple backups available to be loaned out while repaired. Kaper recommended reaching out to businesses so they are aware of the program. Fisher and Wilkening stated it will be a joint community outreach initiative.
- e. **SAFER grant to request approval from Town Council for application and financial support:** Wilkening requested the Board's approval to send the request for Town Council to apply for two additional full-time staff and provide financial support.

A motion was made by Josh Govert, seconded by Jim Olthoff, to approve requesting approval from Town Council for the application and financial support.

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

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **Lexipol Policies Update & Resolution 2021-01:** Kaper stated these items be tabled pending legal review.
2. **Equipment Updates:**
  - a. **Police Department – Purchase, Repairs & Pier Updates:** Chief Fisher stated he had communication with Dodge and the 3 vehicles are going into production this week with anticipated completion the end of August. He did not have an update on the truck. They have sought other sources but have not found one, other than newer styles that would cost more money. He reported the hybrid vehicles are in motion.

Fisher indicated Kaper had requested a report of vehicle repairs. Fisher provided the following report: 2017 at \$877 repair for wheel bearings and brakes; 2011 with 113,000 miles at \$2300 for belt sensors, power steering pump and air conditioning; 2013 at \$1500 with 91,000 miles; 2015 with 102,000 at \$2200 for water pump and brakes; 2016 at \$1700 with 77,000 miles for water pump issue; 2014 with 73,000 for coil and plugs at \$425; 2016 with 104,000 miles at \$497. The grand total was \$9497 in the last six months for vehicle repairs. He stated things are breaking down. They were unable to order new vehicles in 2018, only a couple in 2019 and two last year. He noted the staff is increasing but the fleet is not. Fisher confirmed for Kaper that they will be applying for cars but the Clerk Treasurer stated it was not possible for this year. Kaper asked Councilman Miller if he would look into it with the Council; Miller agreed.

Fisher stated the pier is 90% complete and a dedication was held on Monday. He stated they are waiting on dock boxes, security gate and a few signs. He stated Public Works has installed the large rules signage.

- b. **Fire Department – Purchase, Repairs, Boat & Building Renovation Updates:** Chief Wilkening stated they received 2 thermal imaging cameras, noting the Association paid for one and the Department paid for the other. Town Council approved the sale of the 2006 ambulance and it sold for \$25,000 to Lake Hills. The money from the sale of the ambulance has been ear-marked for new rescue tools to replace the set over 25 years old. Some money has become available from lease plans for defibrillators and other equipment paid off. Wilkening said they did not get the amount of money anticipated for the boat and trailer that were destroyed in an accident. He stated building renovations will start Monday with no public access to the building for approximately 60 days. If the public has business needed with the station, it is recommended that they call ahead first.

### 3. Training Updates:

- a. **Police Department:** Chief Fisher reviewed the training report, noting training including an officer completing Accident Reconstruction Certification course making him a Certified Reconstructionist. Fisher stated an officer completed Mobile Data Operator Certification.
- b. **Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening reviewed the training report, noting training including a staff person attaining their CPR Instructor Certification and Car Seat Installation Certification, in addition to daily training reports, as noted in the report.

### NEW BUSINESS:

#### 1. Police Department

- a. **Monthly Activity Report:** Chief Fisher reviewed the monthly call report noting 1266 calls for the month bringing the yearly total to 6181. For citations: 118 state citations, 11 Town Traffic Violations and 25 Town Ordinance Violations for a total of 154 for the month, bringing the yearly total to 960. For warnings: 240 State Violations, 11 Town Traffic Violations and 22 Town Ordinance Violations for a total of 273 for the month, bringing the yearly total to 1,780. For arrests: 34 total arrests, 81 charges filed, 47 misdemeanor, 10 felony and 24 warrants, for a total number of arrests of 164 and 286 charges filed for the year.
- b. **Towing Company:** Chief Fisher requested the Board's approval in looking into changing the towing firm. Currently, average call time is over 30 minutes and some that have been

extended longer. Fisher explained he recently received a complaint from a resident who had their car towed from a crash and the tow firm would not let them go into their car to get their items, noting they would have to pay a \$150 fee prior. The department called the firm to find out what was going on and the firm told them they were going to be charging a \$150 lot fee for people to come in to get property out of the car. After some research, it was determined in Indiana to be statutorily illegal under Indiana Code 24-14-2 and 24-14-9-2, specifically stating that towing companies are prohibited from charging people to come onto the tow lot during normal business hours to remove items or take photos. Fisher indicated he has had other firms reach out to him for business. He feels it is time to seek other options and rewrite the application process to include stipulations of what they need to have and what we require, which was done with the current firm. Kaper asked for clarification on what was needed. Fisher stated it is required they have a flatbed minimum duty and access to heavy duty, must have a secured lot and building should there be storage for evidence purposes, must be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and insurance. Villalobos asked what the response was from the current company regarding charging lot fees. Fisher replied that they indicated the directive came from their corporate office, noting the firm had recently been bought by someone larger from Illinois. Wilkening agreed that response times have been lengthy lately; Fisher added a couple calls were over an hour in response time, one in which they had to call back because the guy fell asleep.

- c. **Town Newsletter: Monthly Chiefs Corner including Police & Fire:** Chief Fisher reported the Town is doing a "Chiefs Corner" in the quarterly newsletter that will feature a segment of information from each of the Chiefs for the community.
- d. **Other:** Nothing more to report.

## 2. Fire Department

- a. **Monthly Activity Report:** Chief Wilkening reviewed the monthly call report noting 177 total calls for the month, 860 total calls for the year, noting increase in calls but decrease in overdose calls for this reporting timeframe compared to last month. Wilkening clarified for Kaper that PD referred to Property Damage on their report.
- b. **Community Outreach Program:** Noted above.
- c. **New Building:** Noted above.
- d. **Other:** Chief Wilkening is looking at increasing the rates on EMS Billing. He noted they completed a study and they found they were low as far as billing fee structure. He stated Medicaid and Medicare only pay 80%. He noted that EMS and Fire Billing are separate. EMS billing is such that you can receive a bill from the Fire Department and if not paid, can go to collections. Fire billing is only what the insurance pays and not charged beyond. They are able to bill for clean up from car crashes but only for out-of-town residents, not including township residents as they are considered within the fire district. Villalobos asked what charges were for an average ambulance run. Wilkening stated a basic ambulance run is \$760 with \$15.54/mile for resident (\$18.50/mile for non-resident) and advance life support is ALS I = \$725 and ALS II = \$950. He stated fee structure vary depending on whether the individual is a resident or non-resident, their level of care and equipment used. He stated they used to charge for lift assists, however they found there were elderly people falling quite often that could not get up and would receive bills from the Town they could not pay, so they would not call and lay for extended periods of time. He gave an example of a woman who laid for 2 or 3 days because she was afraid to receive another bill. Wilkening clarified for Villalobos that they are looking at a small increase in

fees to keep up inflation, as many of the fees are not covering the cost of the call supplies. He gave an example of Tri-Creek Ambulance charging \$773 for a basic resident compared to our \$650; their non-resident is \$839 and ours \$800. He is still awaiting data from the private ambulance service fees, which he noted are drastically higher. Wilkening clarified for Kaper that he will compile the figures from the reports and put together the proposal to present to the Board of Safety for approval then to the Town Council for approval.

Chief Wilkening reported the fundraiser from the mailout was a success and brought in \$37,340, minus \$9,180 in expenses, giving them a cleared total of \$28,160. Wilkening read the names of the three winners, all of whom were from Cedar Lake.

Wilkening reported the Association's Firefighters Ball is being held August, 28, 2021 rain or shine at 5 pm. Tickets are \$25 at the door and there will be food, drinks, beer garden, entertainment and an auction.

Wilkening stated the Fire Department is planning a local September 11 Ceremony to commemorate the anniversary. Deputy Chief Mager will be unavailable to attend and Wilkening will be attending a larger Fire Service event in Indianapolis.

**VIPS REPORT:** Lieutenant Layer reported of the 4 volunteers, 3 made the required hours for the month. The fourth person will be receiving a warning for hours not met. He reported total hours at 63 with call breakdown of 1- NIPSCO, 1 – Traffic Hazard and 1 – Agency Assist. Layer confirmed to Kaper they are needing more volunteers. Fisher stated they will be doing a push coming up soon.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Kaper called for Public Comment.

Douglas Ferguson (13330 Edison St, Cedar Lake, IN) stated he addressed a letter to the Board four months ago, had not received a response and asked for an update to be provided to him. Kaper stated it is under review. Ferguson asked who it was under review by. There was no reply. Ferguson thanked the Board and left the podium.

Kaper called for Public Comment three times; none more received.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Norm Stick, seconded by David Villalobos, to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 pm.

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

**NEXT MEETING:** Kaper stated the next meeting would be Wednesday, August 25, 2021 at 6:00 pm.

Kaper stated, once the public vacated, they would reconvene the Executive Session.

TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE BOARD OF SAFETY

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Lester Kaper, Chairman

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Norman Stick, Vice-Chairman

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Joshua Govert, Member

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James Olthoff, Member

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David Villalobos, Member

ATTEST:

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Sarah Moore, Recording Secretary