



**Town of Cedar Lake
Board of Safety Public Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 22, 2021 at 6:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER: Kaper called the meeting to order at 6:22 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
Absent*	Norman Stick, Vice Chairman	Present	Carl Brittingham, Deputy Chief Police
Present	Lester Kaper, Chairman	Absent	Nick Mager, Deputy Chief Fire

*It is to be noted for the record that Board Member Stick was attempting to connect via remote connection and due to connectivity issues was unsuccessful in joining after multiple failed attempts.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES for Wednesday, August 25 28, 2021: A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Josh Govert, to approve the meeting minutes.

Govert	Olthoff	Villalobos	Stick	Kaper	Vote
Yes	Yes	Yes	Absent	Yes	4-0

COMMUNICATIONS: Deputy Chief of Police Carl Brittingham reported written correspondence received for the Police and Fire Departments from St. John Chief of Police Steven Flores thanking the agencies for their response regarding the active shooter incident at Lake Central High School on September 8, 2021. Brittingham confirms for Villalobos that the response was overwhelming in number and went well. He explained a follow up meeting was held to critique the incident. Chief Todd Wilkening indicated for Kaper they received the same letter and clarified Incident Command Center is used more for the Fire Department than that of the Police Department, there were a lot of police and fire response, a good learning event, grateful no one was hurt and expressed there was always room for improvement.

STAFFING:

- 1. Police Department:** Deputy Chief Brittingham reported nothing new. He stated the two new recruits are in the academy, doing well and are in firearms training this week.
- 2. Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening reported on in paramedic school that will be completed in January, two EMTs that will be going to school next year and reported they also have a training reimbursement agreement they sign and agree to. He expressed his concerns for staffing shortage during schooling. He stated the ultimate goal with staffing is to hire two more next year, have a shift of 4 with one part-time on each shift, thus running each shift with a total of 5 people, noting when someone goes off, they would have a minimum of 4 staffing on each shift and a large amount of overtime would go away. Wilkening clarified for Villalobos regarding hospital bypass status, indicating that the local hospitals were at capacity and therefore having to transport patients further distances to hospitals with available beds. Hospitals being at bypass were

explained to have this status not only for reasons of COVID and increase in patient volume but also due to staffing issues and the hospital closure of St Margaret Mercy North in Hammond, indicating the ER is only open currently but anticipated complete closure soon. He stated he was informed St. Anthony's is planning to do "pod" hospitals, stating hospitals would be smaller but specialized, noting if a patient had a stroke they would go to or be transferred to that specialized hospital pod. He also stated there is a new hospital being constructed off of I-65. He told Board members that the average call time from pickup to delivery at local hospitals and back is approximately an hour and is concerned about longer times the further away hospitals are located and bypass.

FINANCE:

1. Purchase Orders - August 2021:

- a. **Police Department:** Deputy Chief Brittingham reviewed the purchase orders to include sirens, uniforms, repairs to radiator and side door, business cards for new officers, VIPS vehicle repair, chaplain uniforms, brakes for #48, range targets & pads for training, repairs to #47 & #44 weapons, weapons, tourniquets, lockout kits, duty uniforms for new recruits, DARE banner, and repair to #53. Wilkening confirmed for Kaper that chaplain uniforms included their class A uniform. Brittingham noted that uniforms included chaplains and new hire uniforms and clarified for Kaper that the tourniquets were underwritten by a local donor.
- b. **Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening reviewed the purchase orders to include TVs, mounts, computers, monitors and cables in the amount of \$2600. He stated the TVs were for Spillman and the bunk rooms. He indicated uniform purchase orders would be on next month's report, noting this is the time of year they purchase sweatshirts and warmer wear. He stated their clothing allowance is only \$300 and the FD pays for their class As, bunker gear and boots. Wilkening clarified for Kaper that the \$300 is for whatever they want to use for daily wear.

2. Grants: nothing noted

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Lexipol Policy Updates:

- a. **Fire Department – Policies Update & Resolution 2021-02:** Chief Wilkening reported he would be sending these out to Board members soon and if there were any questions to please contact him.

2. Equipment Updates:

a. Police Department

- i. **Purchase Updates:** Deputy Chief Brittingham reported one Durango was picked up and delivered to PDS for striping, but not ETA as they have minimal staff working and a waiting period. Two other vehicles are expected to arrive the end of the month. The truck has a build date of June 2022. Brittingham clarified to Kaper that the vehicles being replaced will go to other individuals. Brittingham confirmed to Olthoff that when SRO Moake is not at the school, he is on the street providing patrol.
- ii. **Repair Updates:** Brittingham reported nothing substantial that was not previously covered under the purchase order section previously noted.
- iii. **Other:** Nothing else noted.

b. Fire Department

- i. **Purchase Updates:** Chief Wilkening indicated the new Explorer build date is in October, but will go to the same outfitter. He clarified for Kaper the chase care would be outfitted and replace the Tahoe with 189,000 miles and given to VIPs after the town mechanic repaints it and does some work to it.
- ii. **Repair Updates:** Chief Wilkening repaired significant repair to the rescue truck that had a battery that boiled over caused by back-feeding into the system from the generator. The older engine received \$1200 of work, noting it would be included in next month's purchase orders. He reported damage to the new ambulance from a minor accident and repair to the garage door from backing into it. Wilkening noted he would be requesting guidance from the Town Council on the sirens, as the Fire Department budget does not cover the costs for the three and the one in the township. He indicated they handle the maintenance for the one in the township, but the invoices are sent to Hanover Township. He reported there is a number and chassis for the new tanker with anticipated delivery in March.
- iii. **Building Renovation Updates:** Chief Wilkening stated the upstairs is anticipated to be completed Saturday. The crew working Saturday will do installation of beds, computers, etc. He indicated IT Director Wroe has prewired everything and expressed his appreciation for all Wroe does. He has had dialogue with the school that was going to dispose of lockers that are to be donated to the department. The downstairs repairs begin on Monday, noting there would not be a kitchen. The appliances are at the department but in the truck bays. They anticipate project the end of October or beginning of November. He stated that due to renovations, they would be postponing their open house and pancake breakfast. He noted volunteers have raised \$17,000 to use towards the training room that also houses many photos and museum/memorabilia items. He explained that those visiting the fire department in the future will be greeted by the admin, who will have a desk at the front office, and visitors will not pass through that area for COVID precautions and to limit traffic, unless they have a meeting with the chief or other staff. Wilkening confirmed for Kaper that a total, including Redevelopment Commission contributions, was \$166,000 in renovations.

Chief Wilkening reported for Kaper that the Firefighters Association's Fireman's Ball was a success and raised \$14,000 that would be used by the association for items like equipment. He provided an example of the association purchasing a replacement ice machine. He noted the association was separate from the Town, clarifying they had their own Board.

- iv. **Other:** Nothing else noted.

3. Training Updates:

- a. **Police Department:** Deputy Chief Brittingham reviewed the training report, noting training including drug cartel training and mobile data operator training for a total of 40 hours.

- b. **Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening reviewed the training report, noting training including daily training, PALS training for kids and delivered another baby.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Police Department Monthly Activity Report:** Deputy Chief Brittingham reviewed the monthly call report noting 1298 calls for the month. For incidents: 138 agency assist, 525 citizens, 13 juveniles, 78 for ordinances, 71 persons, 29 property and 444 traffic. For citations: 97 state citations, 13 Town Traffic Violations and 10 Town Ordinance Violations for a total of 120 for the month. For warnings: 244 State Violations, 8 Town Traffic Violations and 17 Town Ordinance Violations for a total of 269 for the month. For arrests: 17 total arrests, 29 charges filed, 17 misdemeanor, 9 felony and 3 warrants, for a total number of arrests of 208 and 364 charges filed for the year. Brittingham confirmed for Kaper that there is currently not a code enforcement officer on staff, the police department covers those calls and that one part-time individual has been budgeted for next year to be approved by Council. Kaper inquired if the individual hired as the full-time building inspector was to be a part time code enforcement inspector. Councilman Miller indicated he is just doing building inspections. Chief Wilkening indicated the inspector is also working with him on the Unsafe Building Committee.
2. **Fire Department Monthly Activity Report:** Chief Wilkening reviewed the monthly call report noting 171 total calls for the month, 1182 total calls for the year, stating they are on record pace. He focused on PI accidents that were up along with “sick person” calls, clarifying those calls were generally related to breathing issues and COVID. He clarified that there are a lot of fall calls, of which they do not charge for. Wilkening clarified for Villalobos that psych calls range anywhere from attempted suicide to evaluations due to behavior. Wilkening reported IT Director Wroe is working on setting up a report that shows trends including busy areas, busy times and types of calls. Wilkening reported he spent Wednesday in court to report on an unsafe building residence in the community, help relocate the occupants due to the judge evicting them from the home and noted he provides the reports to the Unsafe Building Committee for unsafe structures. Wilkening confirmed for Olthoff the home was owned, not a rental. Wilkening confirmed for Villalobos that the Town pays for the demolition of the property, liens the property then it would possibly own it.

VIPS REPORT: Deputy Chief Brittingham reported that Lieutenant Layer could not be present tonight. He reviewed the detailed report provided including call and training hours. All members met their monthly hour requirement. Chief Wilkening stated that with the expansion of the police and fire department, there is a plan to include VIPS to house their equipment and under roof. Brittingham noted recruitment efforts underway and a tent at the next farmers’ market.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Moore indicated an individual had their hand raised online attending electronically, however after several attempts, no dialogue from the other party was received. 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 7:09 pm. Kaper added they would return to Executive Session.

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

NEXT MEETING: Kaper stated the next meeting would be Wednesday, October 27, 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