



Town of Cedar Lake Board of Safety Public Meeting Minutes Monday, November 22, 2021 at 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: Kaper called the meeting to order at 6:11 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

Present	Joshua Govert, Member	Present	Ralph Miller, Town Council Liaison
Present	James Olthoff, Member	Present	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	Absent	Nick Mager, Deputy Chief Fire

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES for Wednesday, October 27, 2021: A motion was made by Norm Stick, seconded by Josh Govert, to approve the meeting minutes.

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

VIPS REPORT: Chief Fisher reviewed the detailed report including more details to be included in the detail items. All members met their monthly hour requirements and a total 132 hours of service.

COMMUNICATIONS: None noted.

STAFFING:

- 1. Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening introduced three volunteer applicants: Connor Riley, Michael Richardson and Earlyne Long. Riley, an 18-year-old senior in high school from a 10-acre farm in Cedar Lake, would like to pursue a career in the fire department and expressed interest in arson investigation. Wilkening confirmed for Riley, due to his age, it was cleared through the Academy for him to begin, as long as it does not interfere with his schooling. Richardson, from Cedar Lake and a diesel mechanic for the last 10 years, stated he wanted to switch fields to find something more fulfilling with a team background. Long, from Cedar Lake and currently an EMT going through advanced EMT schooling and in college studying Fire Science and Emergency Management, wants to pursue a career where she is able to be part of a team that helps others. She has obtained her EMT license in August and has done ride time with the Cedar Lake paramedics. Wilkening introduced full-time candidate Mike Perich. Perich, who lives in St. John, stated he started his career as a lifeguard in Whiting, became an EMT after high school, went to the fire academy and became a paramedic. He is a volunteer at Lake Hills Fire Department, works at East Chicago Superior, also works in Demotte and just started part-time in Cedar Lake a few weeks ago. confirmed for Villalobos that he has already passed the class and passed tests within the class and clarified he has one year as EMT to pass the paramedic national registry test. Wilkening stated that the fire staff and medics work closely with the volunteers and new hires with training to prepare them for the job in Cedar Lake along with any testing they need to complete along the way. Wilkening confirmed for Kaper that the Town Council had approved this

position to start the first of the year and noted he would still need to go through PERF process that takes 6-8 weeks. He stated if the Board approved the hiring of Perich, they would proceed with PERF, but he could work part-time currently to fill an open slot until he is approved. Perich confirmed for Miller that he had turned in all of his paperwork for testing and was approved to schedule his testing; he was just awaiting an available test location.

A motion was made by Norm Stick, seconded by Jim Olthoff, to amend the agenda to vote on hiring Perich.

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

A motion was made by Jim Olthoff, seconded by David Villalobos, to approve the hiring of Michael Perich as full-time firefighter/paramedic contingent upon his passing paramedic testing within 1-year and PERF approval.

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

2. **Police Department:** Chief Fisher reported updates on the four officers on injured reserve: Huppenthal twisted ankle while at a fire call and will be off for approximately a week. Matson came back to light duty. Stickle should be released soon. Miller is improving but currently in a sling until he is able to do physical therapy. Interviews have been set up for 7 applicants on December 4 from 8 am to 12 pm including Olthoff from the Board being present. Govert and Villalobos indicated, if Olthoff was not available, they could be present. Fisher's goal was to set up interviews with the Board for the following week and possible approval by the December meeting that they would be available for hire in January. Fisher clarified for Villalobos there were 15 applications, 8 selected to move onto interviews, noting one was not available and therefore eliminated. Of the 7 being interviewed, 5 are certified officers. Fisher stated he would provide a list to the Board, not numbered, as requested, and set up interviews with the Board.

FINANCE:

1. Purchase Orders - October 2021:

- a. **Police Department:** Chief Fisher stated the Purchase Order Report format changed slightly to be more clear, consolidated and easier to read. Fisher reviewed the purchase orders for the month noting tire repairs/replacements, explaining the Vigilant license plate recognition software program, mag lights, uniforms for the two new officers, radar certification and repair, newsletter subscription to public safety personnel and highlighting vehicle repairs for the month and year to date. Fisher clarified for Kaper that the Code Enforcement position had been included in his budget for 2022 and it was recommended to him to advertise for the position.
 - b. **Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening reviewed the purchase orders including tables for sleeping quarters, batteries for Motorola portables, repair to squad seals that now has a radiator leak, 6 new pagers, change order for Henn & Sons building renovation, LED disk lights in the service area, mutual aid engine pump testing, pump test on ladder truck, water pump for squad, infant measuring device for medics and annual ladder certification testing.
2. **Grants:** Chief Fisher indicated the police department had received the COPS grant, noting his goal is to approach the Town Council to hire a 2nd officer. He has talked with the Clerk Treasurer who

believes it is feasible to hire a second but it would be up to the Town Council. Fisher asked for approval to go forth with pursuing the second officer. Kaper stated so moved.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Lexipol Policy Updates:

- a. **Fire Department – Polices Update & Resolution 2021-02:** Multiple discussions ensued and it was determined to table this item to next meeting to allow more time to review.

2. Equipment Updates:

- a. **Police Department:** Chief Fisher reported the drone is up and running. He noted a transfer of funds \$3000 and \$2500 within same line-item brackets to place into the vehicle repairs, explaining that unit #45's accident was declined by the party's insurance because she was drunk and we incurred the cost of the repair. The repair facility required that we pay for the repair first, knowing that we would receive reimbursement from our insurance company. The check has already been received for the reimbursement. It is believed that our insurance company will be suing her for the cost. Fisher stated the stripes were stripped from unit #44 which had been cracked and taken to a local company for restriping. Fisher confirmed for Kaper that the pier is out of the water and in storage, boats are at Pinecrest Marina and will be pulled out at first freeze so they would still be available for water rescue, if needed.
- b. **Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening stated they had additional funding in the safety line item available that they were purchasing bunker gear. He stated the new fire truck is slated for delivery in February, which they would need to send staff to Laverne, Minnesota to drive the unit back. He stated there could be a struggle in getting the vehicle back as there is a CDL requirement to drive a fire truck in Illinois and they are looking into an exempt status or CDL driver from the street department. Wilkening confirmed for Kaper that the Town Council met Tuesday night and approved moving forward with a new pumper tanker engine, noting the timeline is 16-24 months out. He noted they will start specking out the truck and receiving bids after the first of the year, open bids in March and awards bids by April then 16-24 months build. He stated there is a possibility of attaining a demo unit, but felt the Town would not be able to obtain the financing for an estimated \$600,000 purchase at this time. Wilkening confirmed for Kaper that the AED program is on hold due to the demand for refurbished ones being so high right now and availability being low. Wilkening noted the building renovation is about 85% complete. He indicated the back room is being finished as a POC and full-time training room with will contain history and memorabilia as well. Flooring and reception area is still being worked on. He explained the reception area will deter guests from coming into the station and living quarters. He stated that after the first of the year, his office area will be repaired due to water leak causing mold. Wilkening stated the DEA program is moving forward and they met with state officials for information. Wilkening stated Moto on Ice was approved by Town Council and the Fire Department will be assisting for mobile response. Wilkening stated the Ford engine will be stored at Henn's property and the insurance and paperwork is being reviewed by the Clerk-Treasurer's office and Town Attorney. The hope is to utilize the truck in the new facility as a display for history. Wilkening clarified for Villalobos that Henn was not going to charge for the storage of the vehicle. Wilkening announced current EMS Director Pat Scoleri is announcing his retirement and Amy Early has accepted Wilkening's request to fill the position. He noted her qualifications and many years of experience, indicated he would like to promote her soon from paramedic to Lieutenant in charge of EMS. Wilkening reported one staff

person that strained his shoulder after a fire call, sent to the hospital for evaluation, workers comp paperwork completed and reported and he was released to return to work today.

3. Training Updates:

- a. **Police Department:** Chief Fisher stated Kaper requested a year-to-date report instead of just monthly. He reviewed the training report, noting training including mobile data operator certification, active shooter response, firearms qualifications, roadside impairment driving enforcement, Sotaxas training, no light/low light firearms, deceptive behaviors & hidden compartments, driving techniques and vehicle safety for a total of 134 hours of training hours and 40 hours of instructor hours. Fisher explained Sotaxas training works in conjunction with MDTs for roadside. Three units were provided to the department to test for narcotics. Lake County is a regional tester and the machine is used like a portable breath test where a swab is taken from the mouth and entered into the machine to analyze for what type of narcotics are on the roadside DUI. He indicated since the program is in the test-pilot phase, the units and supplies are being paid for by the government. He stated it can detect six types of narcotics including barbiturates and opiates and have been 91% effective in detecting the type of narcotic taken. Fisher clarified for Villalobos that the indicator is similar to that of a DUI, show indication of intoxication, go through the process of administering the portable breath test first. When it comes back as a negative, they could then issue the Sotaxas to see if it is a narcotic causing the driving under influence issue. Fisher explained the three tests admissible in a court of law including the HGN, walk & turn and one-leg stand.
- b. **Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening reviewed the training report, noting training including daily and monthly training being quite extensive. Wilkening stated Ryan Niemeyer donated a vehicle that was utilized for a vehicle extraction class. He stated that the training will die down during the holidays.

Fisher confirmed to Kaper that the two towing companies were doing well and no problems have been noted.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Monthly Activity Reports:

- a. **Fire Department:** Chief Wilkening stated the report included a comparison to previous years and calls are up 600 from 6 years ago. He reviewed the monthly call report noting 159 total calls for the month, 1488 total calls for the year, a variety of calls from falls, water rescue, miscarriage, car crash and fire. Wilkening confirmed for Villalobos that if the trends continue at this rate of call increase, they would need to double their staff in the next 4-5 years to 6-8 per shift. He explained that the Town Manager has included himself and Chief Fisher in Town development meetings including some annexation and as the Town expands, so does the staff and the possibility of building an additional fire station on the other side of town.
- b. **Police Department:** Chief Fisher had members review the monthly call report

2. **Policy Update – Police Department – Unmanned Aerial System:** Chief Fisher requested approving the Unmanned Aerial System policy to cover the drone and the officers who man it. He explained it was not included in the original policy manual because the department had not acquired a drone at the time. Fisher confirmed for Govert that there were two FAA certified officers on staff to operate the drone and confirmed for Villalobos that the drone pilots and

supervisors are the ones to make the decision on when to use the drone. He provided an example of the drone being used to find hot spots using the infrared for a recent fire.

A motion was made by Josh Govert, seconded by Norm Stick, to approve the unmanned aerial system policy.

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

3. **Police Department & Social Worker Collaboration Program:** Chief Fisher reported that in the past the department had a social worker that was working on their master's degree that assisted the department. Griffith has the pilot program that started this program and asked if we would be an internal location again. Morgan Blanford will be working January through April for her master's internship program. All of the paperwork is taken care of through Griffith PD, but they would need to have a location to house her. She would be working with statistics, domestic statistics and determine ways we can better assist the community. This will work in conjunction with the new MIRT (Mobile Integrated Response Team) program, which is a government program through Healthlink, looking at the opiate crisis in the country. The group contains varying individuals from police, social work, prosecutors and health care that provide input on cases they review and how they could be worked with differently. Fisher stated this group also works with the CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) that works in bettering the community when it comes to addiction-related issues. MIRT is 100% grant funded, where social workers will respond to overdose incidents, drug addiction incidents and physically help them get through the program including picking them up to take them to treatment, take them to AA meetings, etc. One issue, where the police department comes into play, is that they need security. The program currently works with Hammond and Griffith in the north part of the county, however there is no department in the south part, to have an officer present to ensure the scene is safe, person does not have any warrants and the officer would be funded through the grant. Fisher explained the calls would be received like SWAT where the officer would be called out as needed generally scheduled and not emergency, funded by the grant like they would a side job and gave authority to Dills and Matson to work with the program. The officers would not be called out while working their own shifts, would stay with the social worker through the duration of the call and would not respond north of Route 30. Wilkening confirmed for Fisher that the community has approximately one overdose of some type a week.
4. **Other:** Fisher confirmed for Kaper that bidding of cars will take place through Town Council after January 1st.

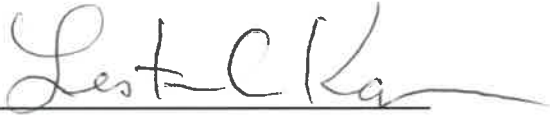
PUBLIC COMMENT: Kaper called for Public Comment three times; none received.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Norm Stick, to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 pm.

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

NEXT MEETING: Kaper stated the next meeting would be Wednesday, December 22, 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