



Town of Cedar Lake Board of Safety Public Meeting Minutes Wednesday, August 28, 2022 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	William Fisher, Police Chief
Present	James Olthoff, Member	Present	Todd Wilkening, Fire Chief
Present	David Villalobos, Member	Absent	Carl Brittingham, Deputy Chief Police
Present	Norman Stick, Vice Chairman	Present	Nick Mager, Deputy Chief Fire
Present	Lester Kaper, Chairman	Absent*	Ralph Miller, Town Council Liaison
		Present	David Austgen, Town Attorney

*Council Member Robert Carnahan was present on behalf of Ralph Miller. Ralph Miller arrived at 6:46 pm.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES for Wednesday, July 27, 2022 Public Meeting: A motion was made by Norm Stick, seconded by David Villalobos, to approve the meeting minutes. Roll call vote: Govert – Yes, Olthoff – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Stick – Yes, Kaper – Yes. Vote: 5-0.

VIPS REPORT: Lt. Layer reported hours for July indicating Mr. Vandiver was given a verbal warning, noting the member had been in and out of town but notified Layer of the absence. Layer reported he had no new recruits at this time. Board members thanked Layer for his work.

POLICE DEPARTMENT: OLD & NEW BUSINESS

Communications: Chief Fisher reported receiving thank you cards from the Kouder family and Sergeant Kilgore funeral flowers. Fisher noted the Facebook post received where Patrolman Lewis stopped by with his new squad car for a photo opportunity with a child in the community. Fisher read the email correspondence from the Despia family regarding their appreciation for Corporal Miller helping her child during an adjustment period at Jane Ball School.

Finances – Purchase Orders, Expenditure Reports & Grants: Chief Fisher reviewed the purchase order and expenditure reports with the Board. He explained LEEDS online went up to \$2200 a year and is an investigations program. He reviewed training and vehicle maintenance items included. Villalobos asked for information regarding the sniper training. Fisher explained Officer McDowell is part of the SWAT team and was selected for sniper training. Fisher stated speed signs were approved and would take a couple of weeks to come in which were purchased with CCD funding.

Staffing: Chief Fisher noted Probationary Patrolman King was approved to move to Patrolman status. Fisher stated he would be bringing a policy for review that pertains to the situation where a lateral transfer probationary patrolman's time is historically 6 months not 1-year, and the policy change will be clarifying this with better definition. Patrolman Powell has been doing well with FTO process with Officer Sulski.

Fisher stated meeting with Records Clerk Nemeth and his intentions of retiring the end of October. Fisher stated applications have been reviewed, testing completed and background checks in progress. Six applications were received, upon completion of testing, four will move on to interviews.

Training Report: Chief Fisher reported internal interviews were conducted and selection was made of Officer Shaun Meyer as the new training coordinator. Officer Meyer reported Officers Machalk and Sulski attended leadership training. He reported SWAT training for Officer McDowell and Corporal Miller at the MAAC Center. Villalobos asked Meyer what he would like to see moving forward. Meyer stated he would like to have more hands-on training, would like to see more range and more emergency vehicle operation days. Meyer plans to send the entire department through CPR/AED through the Fire Department. Meyer would like to coordinate with Corporal Miller to provide more defensive tactics training. Meyer will be coordinating with Reserve Corporal Preste for additional training. He stated the trainings would need to be planned and would of course cost time and money. Fisher clarified to Villalobos that trainings would occur on-duty but while not on the schedule, noting that moving to 12-hour shifts would hopefully open up some time to allow for training. Fisher confirmed to Villalobos that funding was put in for during the budget process for training. He explained that historically, the training fund was heavily provided by funding received from accident reports and gun permits. Unfortunately, they are only able to charge 10 cents a page for case reports and there are no funds received for firearm permits and the LEEF line item that supported that will soon be depleted. Meyer confirmed to Villalobos that many of the training items he mentioned would not be effective if only available online. He stated there are some trainings that would be appropriate online. Meyer and Fisher stated many of the classes run from \$300 to thousands. Meyer indicated he had an officer attending Field Training class at the cost of \$450. Fisher stated much of their training had been halted due to COVID for the last two years. Fisher confirmed to Villalobos that it is way overdue. Stick stated Meyer hit the ground running and was a good choice.

Equipment – Update, New Vehicle Purchase Update, Vehicle Repair Report: Chief Fisher noted his previous report of new speed signs.

Monthly Activity Report – CLPD Monthly Report & Code Enforcement: Chief Fisher reviewed the monthly activity and code enforcement reports, noting 34 calls a day, 7194 calls for the year, 107 state citations, 311 state warnings, 29 arrests, 60 charges filed, for a total of 205 arrests for the year and 373 charges total for the year. 37 ordinance warnings were issued for July and 389 total for year; 106 ordinance citations and 350 total for year.

Lexipol Recommended Policy Update: Fisher indicated there was a review page in their packet giving an overview of the changes. He reviewed the policies for update noting all of the specific changes and updates to policies 100, 104, 208, 318, 326, 331, 423, 428, 501, 506, 700, 902, 1000, 1102 and 1110. He noted 104 and 1110 had been pending legal review. He provided further explanation that 104 would have “free of mental illness” removed from job descriptions due to ADA compliance and addition of the crossing guard being added for the schools. Several policies changed in wording, duplicate wording, or gender neutrality along with change in wording due to the open handgun bill being passed on several policies. Wording was changed regarding AEDs not being carried in the patrol cars. Wording was not changed for Crash Reports wanting to be changed to Accident. A new vehicle lockout policy was created to provide a form of liability for assisting with vehicle lockout procedures. Fisher stated that despite the change in amount for filing a crash report minimum, his department does a crash report for all crashes, noting they are not assessors. Fisher clarified the one policy refers to storage of DNA, which they send to the lab. Special Assignments was updated to reflect a payroll clarification issue including the probationary patrolman lateral transfer notation of 6 months. Fisher indicated 1110 was still awaiting legal review

referencing probationary officers' addition. Villalobos asked for clarification on the handgun permit process. Fisher stated that despite the approval of open carry, an individual may still apply for a handgun permit for reciprocity in other states. In order to obtain that, they must have a permit in the state in which they reside. Fisher indicated federal laws changed allowing officers to carry in any state with credentials. Fisher stated for Villalobos that all of the policies were ready for approval. Fisher confirmed for Kaper that training would be provided for the School Crossing Guard, noting she would be working with VIPS Sergeant Yeager. A motion was made by Norm Stick, seconded by Josh Govert, to approve the policies – Kaper read them by number 100, 104, 208, 318, 326, 331, 423, 428, 501, 506, 700, 902, 1000 and 1102. Fisher confirmed to Villalobos that 104 was updated to reflect the crossing guard and removal of wording for ADA compliance. 1110 was still pending legal review and would not be included in the approval at this time. Roll call vote: Govert - Yes, Olthoff - Yes, Villalobos - Yes, Stick - Yes, Kaper - Yes. Vote: 5-0.

Other: Fisher state he would be in training next week for counter-terrorism building analysis in Valparaiso. Councilman Carnahan asked Chief Fisher if our PD would be able to utilize the new lab in Lowell at the State Police post. Fisher indicated they are currently utilizing that lab.

FIRE DEPARTMENT: OLD & NEW BUSINESS

Communications: Chief Wilkening announced the annual Firefighters fundraiser event, noting bands and open to the public.

Finances – Purchase Orders, Expenditure Reports & Grants: Chief Wilkening reviewed the purchase order and expenditure reports with the Board noting \$23,000 worth of expenses in July.

Staffing: Chief Wilkening stated the Board had interviewed applicant Bieda tonight and requested approval to hire and send favorable recommendation to the Town Council for their approval. A motion was made by Jim Olthoff, seconded by David Villalobos Govert, for approval to hire Jason Bieda as a part time paramedic and send recommendation to the Town Council. Roll call vote: Govert – Yes, Olthoff – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Stick – Yes, Kaper – Yes. Vote: 5-0.

Wilkening stated he would be introducing Mersereau and Szorc would be brought before the Board for introduction at the next meeting. Wilkening stated promotions would be put on hold due to a technicality with the Clerk Treasurer's office, whom he has a meeting with on Friday in reference to streamlining the process for hiring.

Training Report: Chief Wilkening reviewed the training report noting there were multiple trainings during the month. Deputy Chief Mager reported 138 total sessions for 185 hours offered. Mager reported sprinkler system training was provided to some of the new staff, school walk throughs took place and vehicle extrication trainings conducted. Wilkening reported CPR classes are being hosted for the community, indicating the staff of Great Oaks participated in training at the department recently. Wilkening stated they now have a third instructor. Wilkening stated the Eagles requested CPR training, along with the Police Department needing updated. Wilkening reported Moore attended their pilot program class. He reported working with Mager and the schools to do walk throughs to inspect for fire code regulations being followed.

Equipment: Chief Wilkening reported his truck is out of service. He is currently driving the electric car, noting it has been difficult to get in and out of. Issues have been monitored with the ladder truck, which might potentially take it out of service around the beginning of the year, but it could affect the department

at any time. The new engine has been given a part number and is in process. The extrication tools the Board approved to be donated to Schneider Fire Department were received and the department appreciated the donation. Wilkening stated the donation was a great gesture and would be well used by the neighboring community.

It is to be noted that Councilman Miller joined the meeting at 6:46 pm.

Monthly Activity Report: Chief Wilkening reviewed the Monthly Activity Report noting 1119 for the year and 188 calls for the month. Villalobos asked for a COVID update. Wilkening stated he had one staff member out with COVID. He stated he is not seeing a big increase in case numbers. As far as hospital precautions are concerned, they are similar. He stated they continued to follow the CDC guidelines.

Lexipol Recommended Policy Update: Chief Wilkening stated he would have policies for the Board to review in the next month but stated he has had time issues and will be coordinating with Deputy Chief Mager to create the comparisons for review.

Pension Update: Chief Wilkening reported the package has been given to the Town Attorney for legal review. Austgen confirmed he has been in contact with Town Manager Salatas regarding the review and will be meeting with him soon.

Other: Chief Wilkening stated he had four applicants he has not interviewed yet. Two are paramedics from other communities and two are EMTs. Interviews will take place in-house, then will be brought before the Board. He indicated the positions would be for both full-time and part-time positions. He stated they are not taking anyone new on board yet, but wanted them to be ready when position is open. Wilkening confirmed to Kaper that the Fire Department does have an interview board, noting a Board member has sat in on interviews for the Police Department's interview board. Olthoff stated that their job was not to ask questions but provide feedback to the Board of Safety. Kaper told Wilkening when the interviews are scheduled to let him know and one of them would be available to sit in. Wilkening stated Scoleri would be retiring next year. Wilkening will be meeting with the Clerk Treasurer and Financial Advisor in regards to bringing on a replacement for the person he has out on medical leave to avoid overtime issues. Wilkening confirmed to Olthoff that they should be receiving an update in mid-September on the Safer Grant. Wilkening reported providing a Fire Watch at Jane Ball School. He stated that if there are students in the school and there is a problem with the system, Fire Watch is to be provided or they have to send everyone home if the fire alarm system goes down. Fire Watch requires a fire department officer there, in uniform, in a marked unit with communication. They become an employee of the school, similar to that of the SRO program, for the duration of the school day or through extra-curricular activities. One of the volunteers was called into the school to provide the service for that day.

Chief Fisher reported the PD would be bringing promotions, stating they are short a supervisor and needing a replacement of at least one corporal to be promoted to supervisory role. He stated the department will be moving to 12-hour shifts the beginning of the year which would require some shifts in supervisors and included in his budget. Chief Wilkening stated they have promotions to do as well and asked if the Board wanted to interview them. Wilkening confirmed to Kaper that his budget would support the miniscule increase. Wilkening confirmed to Villalobos they are all in-house people. When asked by Kaper how many promotions, Wilkening stated he wanted to promote two volunteers – one Lieutenant to Captain with \$150 stipend, one Lieutenant to Division Chief of Marine Unit with a \$500 stipend, which the Volunteer Budget has without problem. He stated he would promote two career staff – one from Captain to Battalion Chief, noting he is a shift supervisor and the other from

Paramedic/Firefighter to a Captain. He stated the total amount without benefits to make it through the end of the year would be less than \$1000. He stated the Clerk Treasurer has an issue with it and they are going to revisit it. He stated he knows his overtime budget is high but feels the promotions are important to balance out what they are doing moving forward. He noted promoting Early to a rank to make her qualified for the position when Scoleri retires and rank for her to fall back on. He explained that there was very little separation between salaries with the ranks currently and hoped with the budget increase it would change. He explained that the supervisors are doing more work and little separation in pay. Wilkening explained for Stick that Early is currently not an officer on the department. If promoted to the rank of Captain, it would be a service rank of merit so that if something occurred that she was unable to be the EMS Division Chief, she would have this to fall back on. Wilkening explained to Villalobos the importance of following the chain of command and chain of promotional process. Wilkening agreed with Olthoff that it would not only give her credibility within her own department, but amongst others. Much discussion ensued and it was determined they could coordinate the PD and FD promotion interviews on the same day to be held together. Fisher stated it would be best to schedule on a Board night to avoid another transfer of funds. Multiple discussions took place on when the interviews would take place, possibly a separate date or before the Board of Safety meeting next month.

Chief Wilkening stated policies may have been mistakenly sent to the members. They will be sent later when they are available. Olthoff requested that the changes be highlighted.

OTHER

Legal Report from Town Attorney: Kaper asked Town Attorney Austgen for an update. Austgen stated he had a meeting scheduled with Chief Fisher on September 13 to review items regarding the policies that were deferred/tabled and the MOU. Kaper inquired on an update for the Pension Packet that was being reviewed. Austgen stated he would be going over that item with Town Manager Salatas soon. Kaper asked if Reimbursement Agreement Updates were available for Sterk, Stickle and Van Auken. Austgen stated he had sent notices and was seeking advisement regarding the 3rd person regarding the staff person leaving then returning. Chief Fisher confirmed to Kaper that the Chiefs were looking at updating the reimbursement agreement with Austgen to reflect changes in costs of gear and training.

New Building Update: Chief Fisher reported Greg Marks had worked with the police and fire departments for modifications in order to be under budget. Chief Wilkening confirmed soil testing was completed.

Emergency Operations Plan: Chief Fisher reported the group was meeting tomorrow to continue updating.

Other: Nothing else reported.

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

ADJOURNMENT: Motion made by Norm Stick, seconded by Josh Govert, to adjourn the meeting. All members voted in favor to adjourn the meeting. Kaper called the meeting adjourned at 7:14 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