



Town of Cedar Lake Board of Safety Public Meeting Minutes Wednesday, January 25, 2023 at 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: Chief of Police William Fisher called the meeting to order at 6:09 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	Present	Carl Brittingham, Deputy Chief Police
Present	Norman Stick, Vice Chairman	Present	Nick Mager, Deputy Chief Fire
Present	Lester Kaper, Chairman	Present	Ralph Miller, Town Council Liaison
		Present	Nick Recupito, Town Council Liaison
		Present	David Austgen, Town Attorney

ELECTIONS:

Chairman: A motion was made by Jim Olthoff, seconded by David Villalobos, to elect Norm Stick as Chairman. Roll call vote: Govert – Yes, Olthoff – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Stick – Yes, Kaper – Yes. Vote: 5-0.

Vice-Chairman: A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Josh Govert, to elect Charlie Kaper as Vice-Chairman. Roll call vote: Govert – Yes, Olthoff – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Stick – Yes, Kaper – Yes. Vote: 5-0.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES for Wednesday, December 14, 2022 Public Meeting: A motion was made by Charlie Kaper, seconded by Jim Olthoff, to approve the meeting minutes. Roll call vote: Govert – Yes, Olthoff – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Stick – Yes, Kaper – Yes. Vote: 5-0.

VIPS REPORT: Lieutenant Tim Layer reviewed the report for December, including 11 call outs, 2 accidents, 1 agency assists, and 8 crossing guard details. Layer confirmed to Olthoff that there were no new volunteer applications at this time.

POLICE DEPARTMENT: OLD & NEW BUSINESS

Communications: Chief Fisher reported a thank you card from the Devine and Dobst families thanking Officer Meyer for his assistance. Fisher reported a thank you card from the Graska family, who is the grandmother to Corporal Sulski, for the funeral flowers. A thank you card was also noted from the Gilani family to Officer Dills who assisted with a baby with medical issues.

Finances – Purchase Orders, Expenditure Reports & Grants: Chief Fisher reviewed the purchase order and expenditure reports with the Board, noting items were closed out in December, vehicle repairs were on the rise, golf cart decals for 2023 were ordered, annual dues and

subscriptions, and patches ordered. A donation in the amount of \$400 was received from Schilling Brothers to be used toward equipment in the non-reverting fund. Fisher reported 2023 DARE fundraising solicitation letters were sent out.

Staffing: Chief Fisher reported Sabrina Stolarz paperwork was completed and is at PERF awaiting approval, noting in 2022 the packet had changed without the knowledge of the department and corrections were made. 12-hour shifts started January 1, 2023, with things going well. Fisher reported there was a discrepancy which was corrected with a 8-hour shift with flex time. Fisher reported the Social Worker Internship started with Mona Garcia. He stated Garcia and Administrative Assistant Sarah Moore attended the St Jude Mobile Advocacy meeting and SAFE meeting with Geminis, which could provide some funding to attain a full-time social worker to have on staff for not only the police department, but also fire and town hall. Fisher stated he has had discussion with Villalobos and Stick regarding a Wellness Program that is being developed, with the assistance of Garcia, and discussions with Fire Captain Amy Early to include a peer support group to have departments working harmoniously together. Villalobos inquired about [Indiana.gov/recovery](https://www.indiana.gov/recovery) being a source. Fisher stated he was using that, along with other sources, to meld together to compile a program best suited for the entire department and Town staff.

Training Report: Chief Fisher reviewed the December and 2023 Training Report including 1356 hours of training for the year.

Equipment: Chief Fisher indicated body and car cameras have been installed. There have been some mechanical issues, but issues are being corrected. Fisher confirmed for Villalobos that none of the officers were against the use of the body camera and stated that a few of them had already purchased their own prior to body cameras being purchased for the department use.

Monthly Activity Report – CLPD Monthly Report & Code Enforcement: Chief Fisher reviewed the monthly activity and code enforcement reports, noting 12,452 calls for service for the year, averaging 34 calls a day. There were 1078 calls in December. Citations: 114 state citations issued with 4 town traffic, and 27 town ordinance citations for a total of 145 in December and 1,935 in 2022. Warnings: 414 state violations, 3 town traffic violations, 47 town ordinance violations for a total of 464 in December and 4,545 in 2022. Arrests: 27 total arrests, 56 charges filed, 34 misdemeanors, 17 felony, 1 infraction, 4 not classified/warrants for a total of 342 arrests in for the year and 631 charges for 2022. Ordinance warnings total issued for 2022 was 611. Ordinance citations total issued for 2022 was 667. Fisher stated that in accordance with the Use of Force policy, the annual Use of Force Report was included for the board's review. Fisher stated that the automated report began in April 2022, and there were no paper reports from the prior timeframe. Fisher clarified to Kaper that weeds are noticed through the Clerk Treasurer before citations made and generally do not start until after the snow is gone, noting usually after May 1 to allow for wet lawns to be mowed from spring. Fisher stated Corporal Preste held a Principles and Concepts of Personal Safety training with approximately 25-30 people, free of charge. lasting about 2 hours in duration. The Cedar Lake Public Library has reached out to request Preste present the class again at the library, as he has done in the past.

Lexipol Recommended Policy Update: Stick reported Attorney Austgen recommended creating a subcommittee a few months ago to review policies. Stick stated that he and Villalobos spent

three hours at the police department and were able to not only review the policies but better understand the process on updating those policies, what it entailed and were able to spend more time asking questions regarding specifics within the policy. Stick recommended Olthoff and Govert review the Fire Department policies. Stick thanked Fisher and Moore for the spreadsheet and the time they spent. Fisher reviewed all of the policies by title name, provided a synopsis of the change and update and explained if the policy were new or an update. The policies reviewed by name were as follows: Policy Manual, Code of Ethics, Training, Use of Force, Control Devices, Conducted Energy Device, Firearms, Domestic or Family Violence, Search & Seizure, Bias-Based Policing, Medical Aid & Response, Traffic, Traffic Crashes, Traffic Procedures, Investigations & Prosecution, Informants, Collection & Preservation of Evidence Procedure, Department Vehicle Usage, Evidence Room, Records Maintenance & Release, Cybersecurity, Temporary Custody of Adults, Temporary Custody of Juveniles, Recruitment & Selection, Personnel Complaints and Body Armor. Fisher confirmed that Villalobos that the clearing barrel has been obtained and will be installed. Fisher stated corrections provided for the Personnel Complaints policy received by the Town Attorney were updated and many policies were changed from he/she to the officer or they/them. A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Jim Olthoff, to approve all of the policies noted by title as presented and reviewed by Chief Fisher. Roll call vote: Govert - Yes, Olthoff - Yes, Villalobos - Yes, Stick - Yes, Kaper - Yes. Vote: 5-0.

Stick stated that the Police and Fire Department needed to add an amendment to their Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace policies to address any staff who self-reports voluntarily a drug or alcohol related issue. Fisher explained that this policy would also work in conjunction with the Wellness Program, Employee Assistance Program and the Peer Support Program that are being worked on. Moore explained that at the policy review meeting, it was discussed to re-release this policy as a refresher for staff, make the amendments and then come back to reapprove the amendments when completed. Fisher explained that the entire Employee Assistance Program would include the Wellness Policy along with peer support, self-reporting, fitness standards and other matters. A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Jim Olthoff, to approve the Drug & Alcohol-Free Workplace Policy. Roll call vote: Govert - Yes, Olthoff - Yes, Villalobos - Yes, Stick - Yes, Kaper - Yes. Vote: 5-0.

Other: Chief Fisher stated the interviews were conducted internally for a K9 handler. Fisher stated he brought in outside individuals to conduct the interview including K9 officer from St John, K9 officer from Lake County, Patrol Commander and Master K9 instructor from Hobart and the founder of Protecting K9 Heroes. The candidates were given point values, ranked one-five and will be met with next week. Fisher stated that Staci Goveia, from Protecting K9 Heroes, has a donor that would fully fund the purchase of the dog along with the cage, training and equipment. Fisher explained that Moore and CLPD Patrol Commander Kidd were present at the interviews for observation, but that the others asked the questions and conducted the interviews. Fisher confirmed for Villalobos that the canine donation would take place once the final selection is made and Goveia is notified. He stated there were a couple stipulations, one being the training was to occur at a training center she has partner with in Michigan and second being the name of the dog must be Johnny, in memory of a family member who passed.

Chief Fisher reported attendance at the State House with other Police Chiefs regarding a grant to help obtain license plate readers and equipment. The following day he returned to the State House

with Town Manager Salatas to get Senators to support the bill for stipend for NILEA Academy, noting they were able to speak to the representatives and testify before them.

FIRE DEPARTMENT: OLD & NEW BUSINESS

Communications: Chief Wilkening announced a formal invitation for anyone wishing to attend the Tim White Celebration on February 25. Wilkening explained White died in the line of duty in 2011, was part of a tactile team, working for their department, who fell ill on a hot day and passed away. He noted it was the only line-of-duty death ever received in Cedar Lake. Wilkening stated the Patriot Guard reached out to him to honor White, along with providing the department with a memorial flag. Chief Wilkening announced the formal invitation for anyone wishing to attend the retirement of EMS Division Chief Pat Scoleri to be held on March 4 at the Cedar Lake Eagles, noting Scoleri will be the first career, union firefighter to retire from the department. Wilkening thanked David Villalobos and the Eagles for their assistance. Chief Wilkening stated that CPR classes are continuing. Anyone who would like to attend should contact Sandy. Wilkening confirmed to Villalobos that the fire department will be working with the Parks Department to provide these classes as well and there is a fee that would cover the cost of the card.

Finances – Purchase Orders, Expenditure Reports & Grants: Chief Wilkening reviewed the purchase orders and expenditure reports noting items encumbered, outrigger repair \$5000, \$5000 air bag module for the ambulance, dive gear and other miscellaneous.

Chief Wilkening stated he met with Town Manager Salatas, Chief Mager and Sandy to discuss this year's review of expectations, capital improvements, including the purchase of another ambulance and fire truck. He indicated the production time is anticipated to be 2 years. Salatas spoke with Wilkening about financing, updates for payroll, new building, and renovations to the existing building. Salatas requested copies of the policies for the police and fire departments.

Wilkening confirmed to Stick that he was okay with putting a new body on an old chassis. Multiple discussions ensued regarding ambulance models, sizes and custom models lasting longer than demos. Wilkening noted size concerns related to the size of some of the roads in town.

Staffing: Chief Wilkening stated he has a few individuals interested in part time work. Wilkening reported Pat Scoleri's replacement, Fred Sinew, is on the Town Council agenda for approval to go through the PERF process. Wilkening stated he has one person in the Volunteer Academy starting in January that the Board met a year ago, but they were waiting for the academy to open a class. He stated Ashton Kouder would be brought before the board for consideration, as he has interest in becoming a career firefighter.

Training Report: Chief Wilkening reviewed the report, noting Chief Mager created the report, noting different types of call for both the fire department and EMS. Wilkening stated that during 30% of the calls, multiple incidents at the same time in which POC response, call back and/or mutual aid was utilized. Villalobos asked if the trend continued, what was the suggestion for resolve. Wilkening felt more staff needed to be hired. He confirmed to Olthoff that he felt 9 would need to be hired to fill the void. Wilkening stated a proposal has been submitted to the Town Manager to hire 9 more to fill the schedule to provide shift coverage once the new second station opens, which is expected in 24 months, noting an expected \$800,000 increase in budget. He stated

that nearly 40% of the calls in the past year were east of Cline Avenue with more property being annexed in and 20% were unincorporated area within Hanover Township.

Equipment: Chief Wilkening reported a period where three ambulances were being repaired and an ambulance was borrowed from St John and Lake Hills. All ambulances are now back in service.

Monthly Activity Report: Chief Wilkening reported 5.2 calls a day, 176 calls for the month and 1906 for the year, noting overdoses have dropped. Wilkening replied to Olthoff that the promotions from the previous month are all doing well, indicating he reviewed expectations and will provide a probationary review. He noted Early is networking with other towns, DeAdam is getting underway and he is very ambitious, and noted Craft is doing well in the role of Battalion Chief. Wilkening confirmed to Olthoff that he, Mager and two battalion chiefs will be going to Ohio in March to review information for the new truck.

Lexipol Recommended Policy Update: Chief Wilkening stated he sent several to Stick and Villalobos.

Other: Chief Wilkening stated he and Chief Fisher met with the new building contractors to review items and they are getting closer to breaking ground. Wilkening stated that in conjunction with the Clerk Treasurer's office, he and Sandy would be working on the Medicaid audit, along with the IT Director. He indicated the audit must be completed or their funding would be cut by 30%.

OTHER

Legal Report from Town Attorney: Attorney Austgen reported the MOU was subject to review with the Town Manager and there would be more information available next month. He stated the Training Reimbursement Agreement was in progress and would be reviewed with the Town Manager as well as the Fee Schedule Ordinance.

New Building Update: See mentioned above.

Emergency Operations Plan: Chief Fisher reported the plan is being finalized and will go to the Town Attorney for legal review upon completion of the draft and one final review from the group.

Other: Stick reported that he was unable to attend next month's meeting. Kaper indicated that he would be out of town. Fisher stated proposed dates would be discussed with the members to come up with a new date.

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

ADJOURNMENT: Stick called the meeting adjourned at 7:24 pm, after a motion from Kaper, seconded by Govert and a all in favor voice vote.

TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE BOARD OF SAFETY

Norman Stick, Chairman

Lester Kaper, Vice-Chairman

Joshua Govert, Member

James Olthoff, Member

David Villalobos, Member

ATTEST:

Sarah Moore, Recording Secretary