



TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE BOARD OF SAFETY PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, September 27, 2023 at 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: 6:07 pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL:

	VACANT, 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	Lester Kaper, Vice-Chairman	Present	Nick Mager, Deputy Chief Fire
On Zoom	Norman Stick, Chairman	Present	Ralph Miller, Town Council Liaison
		Absent	Nick Recupito, Town Council Liaison
		Present	David Austgen, Town Attorney

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

APPROVAL OF WORK SESSION MINUTES: for Wednesday, August 23, 2023 Work Session: A motion was made by James Olthoff, seconded by David Villalobos, to approve the work session meeting minutes.

Mr. Austgen stated the public minutes need corrections based upon events of the department related to personnel proceedings.

Roll call vote: Olthoff – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Kaper – Yes, Stick – Yes. Vote: 4-0.

VIPS AUGUST 2023 REPORT: Sergeant Tim Layer reported there were 92 hours for the month of August. We had 10 detail and call out accounts. Chief Fisher commented Sergeant Yager helped out the crossing guards.

Chief Fisher commented they received a card from Bill Horn, one of the VIPS units and he said thank you to the Cedar Lake Police Department employees for your kindness during his recent cancer treatments and thank you to Ms. Moore for keeping him in the prayer vigils and thank you to the VIPS co-workers for their kindness and support.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Communications: Chief Fisher reported there was a post from Paul Goddard from Region Source News with a photo of Officer Dills and her husband and assisted on a bad bus accident. A copy of the posting will go in her file.

Finances: Purchase Orders, Expenditure Reports & Grants: Chief Fisher reported a total of \$5,000 was spent for the month. Kaper asked where do the vehicles go for repairs. Fisher commented Verduin Automotive, James Auto, Town Garage, TJ&T. We were awarded a \$5,000 grant from

Nipsco for Firearms and Range Training. Fisher reported that Jason Jansman's family purchased a new bite suit for K9 Johnny for training.

Staffing: Chief Fisher reported Officer Stolarz is in the academy and will graduate on November 15, 2023. We conducted interviews and narrowed it down to three candidates for a list and we can set up an executive session next month for interviews. Sergeant Kilgore is on light duty and is at the station. Chief Fisher read a letter from Sergeant Miller that he is stepping away for family obligations. In April 2024 there will be testing for SWAT members.

SRO Changes: Chief Fisher reported Sergeant Moake had been injured and he's back. Officer Lewis covered as a temporary assignment and he is back on the road.

Crossing Guard Updates: Chief Fisher stated the two other crossing guards started and they are doing well. We pay for the one at Macarthur and there are two guards at the Hanover side and they are paying for them. We are asking to budget to pay for the three crossing guards next year. Villalobos asked what does it cost for one crossing guard. Chief Fisher responded \$5,400 a year.

Training Report: Chief Fisher reported they had street cop training, SWAT training CNT for hostage negotiation, Instructor Development, but the office got sick and will have to go back for the training. We also had mandated in-service with Police One and Defensive Tactics training. Kaper asked is the training mandatory. Chief Fisher responded in the affirmative. Villalobos asked what is street cop training. Chief Fisher commented a company brings in resident experts in different fields and they teach officers how to be a street cop for investigating narcotics, for example.

Equipment: Chief Fisher reported we got two of the four squad cars on the road and the third one was just picked up and they need the outfitting finished with computer and radio. Kaper asked what is the update on the lights for the old cars. Chief Fisher commented there isn't any funding right now and needs to get the new cars done first. It is \$1,450 per car for the lights and there are seven cars that still need the lights. Kaper responded the Chamber may have some money to put toward the lights.

Monthly Activity Report: Chief Fisher reported 1,100 calls for the month and the average was 41 calls a day with a total of under 10,000 calls for the year. There were 121 State citations with a total of 1,500 for the year. There were 450 warnings and a total of 4,815 for the year, 23 total arrests, 41 charges were filed, 28 misdemeanors, 12 felonies for a total of 230 arrests for the year and 371 charges. Traffic stops are maintaining 450 to 500 area per month. There are a total of 631 law incidents for the month. There we quite a few K9 calls for narcotics searches and 436 Town Ordinance warnings for the year, but 42 for the month of August. There were 50 citations issued in August for a total of 396 for the year.

Lexipol Policy Updates: Child Abuse, Involuntary Detentions, SROs, Sexual Assault Investigations, Asset Forfeiture, Records Maintenance & Release, Temporary Custody of Juveniles: Chief Fisher stated there are no updates, but next month there will be a few updates.

Other: Chief Fisher stated next month we will be awarding Life Saving Awards to a few officers that have done heroic actions.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Communications: Chief Wilkening commented he had a meeting with the Township Trustee regarding next year's budget and was referred to the Town Manager and Town Attorney for negotiations. We did request ten portable radios at the cost of \$4,600 for one Kenwood Radio. The Township Trustee helped with cost to repairs to the Township truck.

Finances: Purchase Orders, Expenditure Reports & Grants: Chief Wilkening reviewed the purchase orders and expenditure reports noting a new investigation camera to replace the old one. There was also an air pack repair. The Expenditure Report is a total of \$17,715 for the month of August and a lot was for vehicle repairs.

Staffing (Volunteer/Part-Time/Full Time Updates): Chief Wilkening stated we are adding an emergency new hire for the loss of one. Volunteer part-time is the same and the volunteers are the same, but there are a couple of new people interested. There is one volunteer in the academy.

Training Report: Deputy Chief Mager reviewed the monthly report, noting 333 total training hours for August. Kaper asked how much is the training mandated by the State. Chief Mager stated all of the training is mandated. We have a paramedic going through training as well.

Emergency Hire Approval (Motion to approve part-time paramedic/firefighter Zachary Bailey): Chief Wilkening stated we did the interview process with the Committee and we narrowed it down to one person. A few EMT's have applied and we added them to the hiring list and we will be setting up interviews. Chief Wilkening commented the motion should be to make a favorable recommendation to the Town Council for full-time, but in the meantime, while we wait for PERF to hire for part-time after onboarding is complete. We would give the new hire a conditional offer and approval by the Counsel to be hired full-time. Olthoff asked has this been approved to hire part-time by the Clerk Treasurer. Chief Wilkening responded this has to be approved by this Board first before the Clerk Treasurer. Mr. Miller commented this will help with the overtime and start with part-time pay and not pay a full-time firefighter time and a half.

A motion was made by James Olthoff, seconded by David Villalobos, to hire Zachary Bailey as a part-time paramedic/firefighter. Roll call vote: Olthoff – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Kaper – Yes, Stick – Yes. Vote: 4-0

A motion was made by James Olthoff, seconded by David Villalobos, to amend the agenda with a purpose of full-time employment offered by the Town Council to Zachary Bailey per the passing PERF and onboarding. Roll call vote: Olthoff – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Kaper – Yes, Stick – Yes. Vote: 4-0

A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Charlie Kaper, to send a favorable recommendation to the Town Council to hire full-time Zachary Bailey and contingent on passing PERF. Roll call vote: Olthoff – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Kaper – Yes, Stick – Yes. Vote: 4-0

Equipment: Chief Wilkening reported the engine is going to be delayed another six months. We have to order another engine and the other three engines are 20 plus years old and we are putting a lot of money into these trucks to keep them on the road. If we can find a good, used engine and put it in service right away, when we got the new engine and instead of ordering a brand-new engine, we could refurbish the newer, used engine worth \$300,000 - \$400,000. We would then have two engines at that point in time. The Council has committed to buying new apparatus and new ambulances; the time period to get these items is putting us in a bad predicament. It is in the budget to get a new vehicle next year for myself as the vehicle I am driving is a 2011.

Ambulance Proposal: Kaper stated we need to send a favorable Letter of Recommendation to the Town Council to purchase the new ambulance.

A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by James Olthoff, to send a Letter of Recommendation to the Town Council to purchase the Osage Ambulance and to not exceed \$400,000. Roll call vote: Olthoff – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Kaper – Yes, Stick – Yes. Vote: 4-0.

Monthly Activity Report: Chief Mager reported there are 230 total incidents, 166 of those were EMS calls, 50 fire type incidents and 12 PI accidents, and by area there were a total of 169 were in the Town of Cedar Lake, 45 were unincorporated Hanover Township and 16 mutual aid calls. There were two overlapping incidents and 40% of the time all companies are assigned by incident. The total incidents for the end of August are 1,340. Discussion ensued in length of how mutual aid works.

Lexipol Policy Updates: Chief Wilkening stated nothing right now.

Other: Chief Wilkening commented the Holiday Fundraiser is coming up and if the public can buy some tickets, that would help a great deal.

Legal Report: Mr. Austgen stated the Training Reimbursement Agreement is done and the Emergency Operations Plan Update is being worked on with the Town Manager and there is a timeline.

New Building Update: Chief Fisher reported they are getting the steel in for the structure and should be enclosed before winter. There will be a drive through garage with one door.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Stick called for Public Comment.

Mr. Robert H. Carnahan, 12850 Fairbanks Ct., commented he is also with the Cedar Lake United Methodist Church Project Love food pantry and we had a client hit the floor and Police and Fire Department showed up and they did a wonderful job.

Also, he went to the dedication of the Kiwanis Dog Park and Officer Ben Tomko with his dog did an excellent demonstration.

Chief Wilkening commented Fire Prevention Week there will be an open house. There will be a pancake breakfast on October 15th and a demonstration with the dog.

Ms. Barbara Littles, 9602 W. 135th Place, commented there needs to be a stop sign at Parrish and 135th Street. There are cars that do not stop. Chief Fisher stated they are trying to get a stop sign and an Ordinance needs to be written.

Chief Wilkening stated the Hanover School Corporation is looking for part-time paramedics to work for the athletic trainer when there are openings and when they are overwhelmed. The pay would be the same as security officers, but more details to come.

Villalobos asked if the fire watch is over. Chief Wilkening responded in the affirmative.

ADJOURNMENT: Stick entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting, motion by David Villalobos and seconded by James Olthoff, calling the meeting adjourned at 7:22 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, October 25, 2023 at 6:00 pm

TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE BOARD OF SAFETY

Norman Stick, Chairman

Lester Kaper, Vice-Chairman

James Olthoff, Member

David Villalobos, Member

Vacant, Member

Cheryl Hajduk, Recording Secretary