



**TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE BOARD OF SAFETY PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
February 26, 2025 at 6:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 pm**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**ROLL CALL:**

Present	Barbara Littles, Member	Present	Carl Brittingham, Interim Chief of Police
Present	Larry Nagy, Member	Present	Todd Wilkening, Fire Chief
Present	David Villalobos, Member	Absent	Nick Mager, Deputy Chief Fire
Present	Lester Kaper, Vice-Chairman	Present	Chuck Becker, Town Council Liaison
Present	Norman Stick, Chairman	Present	Robert Carnahan, Town Council Liaison
		Absent	David Austgen, Town Attorney
		Absent	Jeff Bunge, Town Manager
		Absent	Cheryl Hajduk, Recording Secretary

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Stick called for Public Comment.

Mr. John Wilkening, Executive Vice-President with Tech Credit Union. He came in five months ago and talked about the union incentive they were doing for the people in the Town and he brought in packets for people to take. He spoke about financial wellness and they would like to have clinics for first-time homebuyers, how to buy a car and how to master credit scores.

Interim Chief Brittingham commented Officer Philip Lewis retired from the Police Department on December 31, 2024 after serving 20 years with the Police Department. Interim Chief Brittingham presented a plaque to Officer Philip Lewis.

**APPROVAL OF PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES:** January 22, 2025 Regular Meeting & January 29, 2025 Special Meeting

A motion was made by Barbara Littles, seconded by David Villalobos, to approve the January 22, 2025 Regular Meeting & January 29, 2025 Special Meeting

Roll call vote: Littles – Yes, Nagy – Yes, Kaper – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Stick – Yes. Vote: 5-0.

**VIPS JANUARY 2025 REPORT:** Lt. Tim Layer reported there were 11 hours between the four members with two emergencies call out in details, one accident and one detail. The hours are low because we are in the slow time now.

Lt. Tim Layer commented he will be resigning from VIPS. Mr. Carnahan commented on behalf of the Town Council, he appreciated everything that he had done and he efforts to keep it going.



Interim Chief Brittingham commented the Board has seen Lt. Layer's resignation letter and we are sad to see him go. It is in high demand to be a volunteer, especially when it involves government. Lt. Layer is an incredible asset and he always goes above and beyond. Interim Chief Brittingham presented a plaque to Lt. Layer for his years of service in the Cedar Lake community.

A motion was made by Barbara Littles, seconded by Lester Kaper, to approve the resignation of Lt. Tim Layer.

Roll call vote: Littles – Yes, Nagy – Yes, Kaper – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Stick – Yes. Vote: 5-0.

**Lexipol:** Interim Chief Brittingham commented he is representing the Police Department and our needs from the Fire Department are different. The police policies change more frequently than the Fire Department. Ms. Moore reached out to Lexipol and they offered us a 50% discount for this year for a three-year contract. The normal costs would be re-instated next year at \$10,605.78 and in 2027 the amount would be \$11,136.07, which is less than the normal increases. We receive a 20% discount because we are members with their Police One training.

Ms. Littles asked Chief Wilkening what he thought. Chief Wilkening commented he felt their decision needed to be reversed after looking at everything closely. The training aspect is very important. The Fire Department will also get the discount.

A motion was made by Lester Kaper, seconded by, Barbara Littles to renew the 2025 Lexipol Contract for three years for the Police and Fire Department.

Roll call vote: Littles – Yes, Nagy – Yes, Kaper – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Stick – Yes. Vote: 5-0.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**Communications:** Interim Chief of Police Brittingham commented we had a couple of press releases from January 26, 2025 regarding the UTV and other the off-road vehicle that went through the ice on the north end of the lake. This had nothing to do with Moto on Ice. This was an isolated incident. At the last Town Council meeting, we recognized the School Resource Officers by a proclamation that was read into the record. We recognized our full and part-time officers, which carries specific certification and training.

Interim Chief of Police Brittingham commented we received a thank-you card from a local resident. Her husband suffered a heart attack and three of our officers arrived on the scene. The Fire Department responded quickly, as well. Interim Chief of Police Brittingham read the card and the resident gave a donation to the K9 Program.

**Finances:** Interim Chief of Police Brittingham commented our purchase orders are going to look lengthy, as it is the beginning of the year. There was a lot of training and larger numbers for vehicle repairs, but those were vehicles that were involved in accidents and the other insurance companies will reimburse



the claims. We are utilizing the mechanic for vehicle repairs and the parts will be shown on the purchase order report.

Interim Chief of Police Brittingham commented Ms. Moore had applied for a grant through the MAAC Foundation, which is the large training facility in Valparaiso. This was grant for the K9 programs and the grant was for \$5,000. We were awarded \$2,000 for K9 Johnny and his handler, which will go towards training. Officer Tomko, K9 Johnny, Ms. Moore and myself were out at the facility for the recognition.

**Staffing:** Interim Chief of Police Brittingham commented Officer Milan has been released from the FTO Program and he is doing a great job.

Interim Chief of Police Brittingham commented the new hire, Randall Lukasik's PERF application is complete and we will await approval from downstate.

**Training:** Interim Chief of Police Brittingham commented for the month of January we had a couple officers at Purdue Northwest for an active shooter. There was training in Valparaiso at the MAAC center for SWAT.

**Equipment:** Interim Chief Brittingham commented Officer Lewis with his retirement, the State recognizes in State Statute and is recognized in our Ordinance and in our Departmental Policy, that when an officer retires in good standing with years of service should receive his duty weapon and it is a practice that we have done. The State requires us to provide Officer Lewis with a retirement identification and that gives him the right to carry his weapon anywhere he wants.

A motion was made by Larry Nagy, seconded by, Barbara Littles to approve of turning over Officer Lewis duty weapon to him for his retirement.

Roll call vote: Littles – Yes, Nagy – Yes, Kaper – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Stick – Yes. Vote: 5-0.

**Other Equipment Updates:** Interim Chief Brittingham commented the other new vehicles have already been built and are being shipped. We should see them in March and they will deliver directly to the outfitter and the outfitter has already ordered parts. The costs are affordable and the vehicles will have the equipment that is needed.

Interim Chief Brittingham commented the mechanic is doing a great job on working on the vehicles when they need work. Discussion ensued regarding fixing of the Durango's regarding the oil cooler issue.

**Monthly Activity Report:** Interim Chief Brittingham commented reported calls for service were 655, traffic stop analysis: 164 for January, 226 warning analysis, 95 citation analysis, 403 law incidents, 11 arrests, 13 arrest offense, 7 warnings, 13 Ordinance warnings and 35 citations.



**Other:** Interim Chief Brittingham commented we have another SAFE project where we get money for grants through Ms. Moore's efforts. This is would be for a vape disposal box and concentrates on high school kids to allow the dispose of vapes and some that may can contain illegal cartridges.

#### **FIRE DEPARTMENT:**

**Communications:** Chief Wilkening commented we received the same card from the resident that lost her husband.

**Finances: Purchase Orders, Expenditure Reports & Grants:** Chief Wilkening commented the reports are in the packet.

**Staffing:** Chief Wilkening commented we have two volunteers currently in the academy and one person in EMT school. We lost one person due to an injury suffered from his job. We are awaiting on the State on the full-time hire. We did have two applicants, but since then, they had conflicts and had to pull their applications.

**Training:** Chief Wilkening commented there has been a lot of training done, because it is the beginning of the year and a lot of it is re-certification training. We have a couple people in-training finishing a class.

**Equipment:** Chief Wilkening commented the ladder truck is having a few things done on a punch list that needed to be repaired and will be out of service for a little while. The red ambulance #1262 recently blew a wheel cylinder, but is now back in service.

Mr. Villalobos asked what is the total on the repairs for the ladder truck. Chief Wilkening commented maybe \$3,000.

Mr. Stick commented ambulance #1262 was at the Walgreens and hit the utility pole and struck the top of the ambulance and made holes and other damage to the ambulance. It will be sent out to Fire Services and they specialize in repair of emergency vehicles. The bid was sent to the trucking companies insurance company and they approved the bid.

Ms. Littles commented there were supposed to be three estimates for this. Mr. Stick commented there did not need to be three estimates. Ms. Littles commented she did not hear anything about the repairs going to Fire Services and as of February 12, 2025, it is in an email stating the bid was going to Fire Services. Ms. Littles commented is she a part of this discussion. Mr. Stick commented Fire Services specializes in fire vehicles and ambulances.

Ms. Littles commented for her to vote on this, she needs to know what is going on. Mr. Stick commented she received an email regarding this yesterday. There was damage done to the body structure of the ambulance.



A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Lester Kaper, to send ambulance #1262 to Fire Services for repairs.

Roll call vote: Littles – abstain, Nagy – abstain, Kaper – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Stick – Yes. Vote: 3-0.

Chief Wilkening commented the SCBA brackets for the brand-new breathing apparatus that were recently bought and getting ready for service are needing brackets to be ordered to hold the air packs. The cost was \$21,000. This is part of the donation that was given to the Fire Department for air packs and this is Phase 2 of getting packs and having the kits put in.

Mr. Stick asked was this on the original order. Chief Wilkening commented it was listed on the original order as a step-by-step process. We wanted to get the air packs first and the Council approved it. The second part is to get the brackets. The next bulk of the money would be for the request for the extrication equipment to replace the 25-year-old extrication equipment.

Mr. Nagy asked how many bottles do we have. Chief Wilkening commented we have 32 packs. Mr. Nagy asked will the other bottles be stored in compartments. Chief Wilkening responded in the affirmative. Discussion ensued regarding the storage of the air packs.

Mr. Villalobos asked this money is not an appropriation from the Council, but a donation and it is not costing the taxpayers any money. Chief Wilkening responded in the affirmative.

Chief Wilkening commented maybe a plaque from the Town to Mr. Huppenthal for the generous donation of \$750,000 to the Fire Department. Discussion ensued regarding the donation.

Mr. Villalobos asked what is the life expectancy for the Jaws of Life. Chief Wilkening they get certified every year and they can last 20 years. We will be replacing the old set.

A motion was made by Barbara Littles, seconded by, Larry Nagy to send a favorable recommendation to the Town Council for the approval of SCBA brackets for air pack mounting brackets.

Roll call vote: Littles – Yes, Nagy – Yes, Kaper – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Stick – Yes. Vote: 5-0.

**Monthly Activity:** Chief Wilkening commented 170 calls for the month of January, we are down 16 calls from last year. The most run calls for EMS, EMS lift assist, EMS unconscious, car crashes and sick people. Overlapping calls were 18 and there were three incidents at the same time. The Town is 90% of our calls. Car crashes are getting more and more, and are getting more serious.

Chief Wilkening discussed Lexipol policies and that the Fire Department usually doesn't have big changes to the policies. Interim Chief Brittingham commented if there are small changes and title changes, we are going to reject the policy change and we do not need to waste people's time on small changes.



Mr. Carnahan asked do we have to pay \$5,000 each to Police and Fire. Chief Wilkening responded in the affirmative.

**Other:** Mr. Stick commented there were questions about the fuel storage and the tank where the Fire Department draws out of is 750 gallons. We found out that the Fire Department uses about 500 gallons a month and the Street Department also draws out of that tank. The tank is getting flushed out every month. There was a test done on the fuel and the fuel was ok.

Mr. Stick commented we did research on adding fuel additives to the ambulances and it claims it helps. Chief Wilkening commented he spoke to Mr. Kubiak to see if the mechanic can work on smaller jobs with their vehicles.

**New Building Update:** Chief Wilkening commented we did a walk through with Core Construction last week and with the punch list that they had for both Police and Fire, we walked through and there is a list of things that were addressed on the inside. We will take a walk on the outside in the very near future. Ms. Dickson also has a list of things to be looked at on the inside of the building.

Mr. Carnahan commented the Indiana Department of Environmental Management issued a preliminary permit on February 7, 2025 and there is a 30-day waiting period. Once we get the final permit, the water from Lighthouse, will send water to the Police and Fire Department and parks building, Town Hall and the Lighthouse restaurant. It was suggested by our Town Engineer that the Parks Department keep the old well and keep for irrigation. Discussion ensued regarding fire suppression.

Mr. Villalobos asked when are the buildings going to be operational. Chief Wilkening commented this will be a policy call by the Town Council. Interim Chief Brittingham commented there is still speculation as to when we will be operational.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Father Senior John Givolshik, 14338 Violet Circle, commented to witness the lack of communication between five people is unbelievable to me. If the five people on this Board cannot communicate, do they expect to public understand what you are trying to do. In regards to staffing, there are some unhappy people out there and this Board knows of this and there are a lot of unhappy people throughout the Town. Father John asked for the Board to get their act together and do not take the people working here for granted.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Stick called the meeting adjourned at 7:12 pm.

# TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE BOARD OF SAFETY

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Norman Stick, Chairman

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Lester Kaper, Vice-Chairman

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Larry Nagy, Member

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David Villalobos, Member

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Barbara Littles, Member

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Cheryl Hajduk, Recording Secretary