



TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE BOARD OF SAFETY PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

October 22, 2025 at 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: 6:01 pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL:

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

PUBLIC COMMENT: Kaper called for Public Comment. None was had.

APPROVAL OF PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES: August 27, 2025 Public Meeting; August 27, 2025 Work Session

A motion was made by Barbara Littles, seconded by Larry Nagy, to approve the August 27, 2025 Public Meeting minutes; August 27, 2025 Work Session Meeting minutes.

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

VIPS AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2025 REPORT: Lieutenant Jack Yauger reported there were 26 hours in call out, 41 in details, 13 in training, miscellaneous was 23, for a total of 103 hours. We had three accidents and five details. The accidents were all motorcycle accidents, all within one week.

Lieutenant Yauger commented for September we had zero call outs activity, 47 hours in details, 16 hours in training, 18 hours in miscellaneous with 81 hours in total. We had 6 details managed, notably for a football game.

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Communications: Police Chief Gruszka commented we do not have anything, but Mr. Kaper commented I want the record to be stated that we have received a letter from Mr. Schultz in Summer Woods in reference to motorcycles and E-bikes running down the sidewalks. Since King Street isn't open, and they're going around the barricades, so we will look into that.



Deputy Chief Brittingham commented In regards to the E-bikes and electric bikes, there's an ordinance that was provided to the attorney for review to specifically address that in ordinance. As far as I know, that still hasn't been passed. It regulates these E-bikes a little bit more than just the state law does. State law classifies into three different categories. There's a difference between electric bikes and electric off-road bike. Any of these electric bikes that don't have pedals, they're illegal to be on the road area, they're off-road vehicles and none of them should be ridden on the sidewalks, including regular bicycles. They're supposed to obey every traffic law; including stopping a stop signs.

Finances: Police Chief Gruszka commented the department received a \$7,500 grant for drug and alcohol overtime, easing budget pressure. We are also looking into an electric vehicle grant to get two vehicles, one for Code Enforcement and the other one we've undecided yet. It's still in the early stages yet. We probably won't know anything until first of the year or even past that.

Police Chief Gruszka commented they completed our currency in custody, where we counted all our cash that we had taken possession of from various types of cases. We had a total of \$15,147.69. It's all in a fund now. And in the near future here, we're going to start going through that and start trying to locate owners of the cache and contact them and work on getting that back to them. We are working on a Homeland Security grant for new radios. They're getting a little outdated and be nice to have some. Deputy Chief Brittingham has been working on that to.

Deputy Chief Brittingham commented the radios we have now are obsolete, but doesn't mean they don't function. They function just fine. But we need. We don't. We need extra radios and they're expensive. We are just trying to get ahead of the game and get any funding out there that's available. Discussion ensued regarding the radios.

Deputy Chief Brittingham commented we had unordinary bigger repairs for vehicles. Unfortunately, we have had some issues with vehicles that weren't under warranty related to air-conditioning.

Mr. Villalobos asked about the 2026 budget. Police Chief Gruszka commented next year's budget looks almost the same as this year's with an increase in payroll and NIPSCO is raising their rates and we are now in the new building. Discussion ensued regarding how much can be lost in the budget for 2026.

Staffing: Police Chief Gruszka commented Officer Randy Lukasik is progressing well at the academy, serving as squad leader, with a scheduled graduation on November 14th, targeting deployment by Thanksgiving. Our Code Enforcement Officer, is out on medical leave. Her tentative return date is early November 2025.

Training: Police Chief Gruszka commented September training included successful firearms qualification led by Sergeant Kilgore and Corporal Huppenthal, praised for high-quality instruction. Defensive tactics training was completed in October under Sergeant Miller, with only a minor makeup session pending.



Equipment: Deputy Chief Brittingham commented vehicle fleet remains in good condition, but future capital expenses for new vehicles are uncertain pending budget discussions with the Clerk Treasurer; normally, 4 to 5 vehicles are requested annually.

Monthly Activity Report: Police Chief Gruszka reported for August, our calls to service were 787. We had 235 traffic stops, of those traffic stops, 171 citations were written. We had 171 warnings issued and law incidents were 518. We had 22 arrests and of those arrests and there were 24 charges. Our warnings for ordinances were four and our citations issued and ordinances were 24. For September we had 704 calls for service. We had 235 traffic stops. We issued 166 warnings. We issued 44 citations on those stops. For law incident reports for September, we had 450. We had 23 arrests and there were 25 individual charges charged in those or filed in those arrests and we had eight warnings and four citations were issued.

Mr. Kaper asked about the traffic stop analysis and the warning analysis and how the numbers have dropped since 2004. Police Chief Gruszka commented Commander Kidd and I talked about that and we're working on setting just a contact limit or where you just have to make two contacts a shift.

Police Chief Gruszka commented several significant cases were highlighted, including successful theft and fatal accident investigations aided by camera footage and license plate readers, showing effective use of technology in enforcement.

Policy Updates: Police Chief Gruszka commented the revised policies are: Training, #203, Child abuse, #313, Adult abuse, #314, Ride a long, #404, Immigration violations, #411, Civil disputes, #426, Traffic crashes #501, Vehicle towing, #502, Asset forfeiture, #702, Eyewitness identification, #704, Brady information, #705, Records section #901, Records maintenance and release, #903, recruitment and selection, #1100. Our PTO policy is listed #1107, Overtime compensation, #1120 and our physical fitness policy, #1133.

Police Chief Gruszka commented most of the changes were Lexipol changes and wording changes within the policies. The Ride-Along Policy is a new policy where there's been a lot of limitations, mostly based on insurance and liability.

Mr. Villalobos commented under eligibility will only be allowed during on duty hours for Cedar Lake department personnel only for training purposes. The general public would be ineligible is what this policy is stating. Discussion ensued regarding who can go on a ride-along.

Police Chief Gruszka commented one new thing was the yellow dot medical information where you can have a packet inside your glove box if there's an accident and you're rendered unconscious. We're supposed to look now in the glove box to find that and it would contain your medical information.

Police Chief Gruszka commented regarding squatters, we have the right to remove them from the property immediately.



Police Chief Gruszka commented the biggest change on that was just we have to have a written contract with our tow firms or covering emergency towing services, and have a rotation. We just can't use the same tow firm all the time.

Police Chief Gruszka commented the Asset Forfeiture Policy; a single jammer was added to the list that we can seize.

Police Chief Gruszka commented the Brady policy deals with officer misconduct and anything deceptive, we have to notify prosecutors about that.

Police Chief Gruszka commented the record selection, record section. There was a presidential executive order which deactivated the national law enforcement accountability database. The maintenance just dealt with a lot of the red flag statute where mostly, where it's mostly used. We can take firearms in domestic violence cases. We have that authority and we can put in for and there's an order issued by the judge to have that removed, which we've already taken.

Police Chief Gruszka commented the physical fitness policy is a new policy. We're allowing our officers to work out on duty and off duty at our facility.

A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Larry Nagy, to adopt and approve the above-mentioned Lexipol policies.

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

Other: Police Chief Gruszka commented the Towns upcoming Trunk or Treat event is scheduled for 11 AM to 2 PM this weekend, supported by police staffing and community donations, including candy from council member Barb Littles. Trick-or-treat hours were extended by an hour on Halloween night, now running from 5 PM to 8 PM, with four officers assigned for public safety. The Toys for Tots campaign is running through December 5, 2025.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Finances: Purchase Orders, Expenditure Reports & Grants: Fire Chief Mager commented purchase orders for the month of August were \$3,642.08 and \$5,442.48 for the month of September. For the expenditure report, 83% of the fiscal year is complete as of today and 73% of the budget has been utilized and for budgeting for 2026 is equal to the Police Department.

A motion was made by Barbara Littles, seconded by Norm Stick, to approve the August and September 2025 Purchase Requisitions.

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



Staffing: Fire Chief Mager commented everyone is healthy and safe. Hiring processes run along smoothly and we are halfway through the testing right now with a total of five candidates.

Training: Fire Chief Mager commented the total training hours for the month for the month of August, 124 hours of training conducted and for the month of September, 115 total training hours.

Equipment: Fire Chief Mager commented we will have some valves and gauges that will mean be replaced on the engines. Also, a set of tires on the one of the ambulances just in preparation for the snow and cold weather transfer.

Fire Chief Mager commented the new engine will probably be here after the first of the year.

Monthly Activity: Fire Chief Mager commented for the month of August, 229 incidents were responded to and in the month of September 209 and that continues average of about a 16% increase from year-to-date last year.

Lexipol Updates: Fire Chief Mager commented currently there's no state or federal updates, nor Lexipol updates. I'm going to start spending some time going through all the policies, figuring out which ones overlap with current town policies and maybe eliminate some of those if they overlap. It was discussed with potential budget cuts coming, we believe budgetarily we'll be able to keep Lexipol next year.

Town Council Liaison(s) Report:

- The Cedar Lake Chamber of Commerce luncheon is planned for December 9th with key town leaders as speakers, enhancing community dialogue.
- The Indiana Department of Transportation will release bids in November 2025 to build a turn lane on US 41, starting spring 2026, improving traffic flow between 109th and 135th streets; local businesses will be affected by turning restrictions.
- EMS calls for lift assists have surged from 169 last year to 429 this year, prompting council to consider charging fees after three occurrences within 30 days to sustain services.
- Discussions continue regarding installing a baby drop box at the fire station, with current facility and legal restrictions around camera surveillance preventing immediate implementation.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: None was had.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None was had.

ADJOURNMENT: Kaper called the meeting adjourned at 7:12 pm.

TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE BOARD OF SAFETY

Norman Stick, Chairman

Lester Kaper, Vice-Chairman

Larry Nagy, Member

David Villalobos, Member

Barbara Littles, Member

Cheryl Hajduk, Recording Secretary