



TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE BOARD OF SAFETY PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

November 26, 2025 at 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 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, Fire Chief |
| Present | Lester Kaper, Vice-Chairman | Absent | David Austgen, Town Attorney |
| Present | Norman Stick, Chairman | Absent | 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: October 22, 2025 Public Meeting; November 12, 2025 Special Public Meeting

A motion was made by Barbara Littles, seconded by Charlie Kaper, to approve the October 22, 2025 Public Meeting; November 12, 2025 Special Public Meeting minutes

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

VIPS OCTOBER 2025 REPORT: Lieutenant Jack Yauger reported we had zero callouts. We had 84 hours in details, zero patrol, zero training, 16 hours in miscellaneous, and our total was 100 hours. We had nine details for the month.

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Communications: Police Chief Gruszka commented at the last meeting, we received a letter from Schmidt regarding some issues with E bikes and just some other electric vehicles, usually on King Street. Police Chief Gruszka commented he wrote a letter and put in there that we're working on an ordinance, but with the weather getting bad, we've got some time on it, but it was mentioned, we also partnered up with the school to do some safety training on E bikes and the scooters that you see flying around town. Hopefully that'll work a little better than just putting an ordinance and enforcement and to make the kids aware.

Police Chief Gruszka passed out a letter to the Board from Sergeant Jeff Gang from the Griffith Police Department, School Resource Officer/LE Instructor. Letter is attached to the minutes.

Finances: Police Chief Gruszka commented Chaplain dues for this coming year 2026 were paid.



Mr. Villalobos asked has the budget been approved by the State. Police Chief Gruszka commented it will probably be approved early next year. Discussion ensued regarding the budget and SB1 Bill and how Cedar Lake will not lose money in 2026.

Staffing: Police Chief Gruszka commented Randy Lucasik graduated from the Academy on November 14, 2025 and is in the final Field Training Officer phase, expected to join full duty by early 2026.

Training: Police Chief Gruszka commented we finished building searches training and we had another firearms training. Our Records Clerk and Administrative Assistant attended Crisis Intervention Training. There was also firearms training at night focused on flashlight use in dark environments; another training session is set for December.

Equipment: Deputy Chief Brittingham commented we are looking at purchasing some new vehicles and we met with the Clerk Treasurer. We have our capital expense at 170 something for next year. That would not get us into four vehicles, but maybe three with equipment. We have obtained quotes for the vehicles they're back in. Vehicles themselves are roughly around \$43,000 and \$12,000 for the equipment. We are trying to get the cars ordered by the end of December, because we have the \$20,000 from the totaled car. The team prefers Dodge Durango's over Ford Explorers due to cost efficiency and functionality, despite past issues with oil cooler failures that have since been resolved by the manufacturer.

A motion was made by Charlie Kaper, seconded by David Villalobos to send a favorable recommendation to the Town Council to proceed with purchase of three vehicles for 2026.

Roll call vote: Littles – Nay, Nagy – Yes, Kaper – Yes, Villalobos – Yes, Stick – Yes. Vote: 4-1.

Police Chief Gruszka commented we are going to apply for an EV Grant to get a Tesla for the Code Enforcement Officer who works 25 hours a week. The grant covers installation of a charging station, but local electrical infrastructure upgrades could add \$10,000 to \$15,000 or more in costs, depending on site preparation.

Mr. Kaper asked does this Grant include the installation of a charging station. Police Chief Gruszka responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Littles and Fire Chief Mager discussed what could happen if the electric car starts on fire.

Discussion ensued in length regarding purchasing an electric vehicle for the Police Department.

A motion was made by David Villalobos, seconded by Larry Nagy to defer this item to the December 18, 2025 meeting.

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



Corporal Huppenthal discussed proposing upgrading all 30 pistols to Glock 47 models with pistol-mounted optics (PMOs) for faster target acquisition and better field awareness, costing \$19,545 total including trade-ins.

A motion was made by Barbara Littles, seconded by Larry Nagy to send a favorable recommendation to the Town Council to proceed with purchase of firearms for 2026, but contingent on funding.

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

Monthly Activity Report: Police Chief Gruszka reported for October, our calls to service were 741. We had 272 traffic stops, of those traffic stops, 209 warnings, 76 citations were written. We had 435 law incidents. We had 22 arrests and of those arrests there were 33 charges. Our warnings for ordinances were three and our citations issued and ordinances were 4.

Other: Police Chief Gruszka commented the department handled community outreach by participating in the Big Teacher Night at McDonald's on October 28 and successfully managed the first significant snowfall of the season with commendations for road clearing. The Parade of Lights and tree lighting event was well attended and smoothly executed, involving police, fire, and VIPS coordination.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Finances: Purchase Orders, Expenditure Reports & Grants: Fire Chief Mager commented purchase orders for the month of October were \$7,463.26 For the expenditure report, 83% of the fiscal year is complete as of today and 77% of the budget has been utilized.

A motion was made by Barbara Littles, seconded by Charlie Kaper, to approve the October 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. The hiring process is moving along with background checks and exams. Discussion ensued regarding the new hires.

Training: Fire Chief Mager commented the total training hours for the month for the month of October, 189 hours of training conducted.

Equipment: Fire Chief Mager commented no major repairs at this time and 1262 is back in service.

Monthly Activity: Fire Chief Mager commented for the month of October, 237 incidents were responded to that continues average of about a 17% increase from year-to-date last year.

Mr. Villalobos asked about the 86 lift assists. Fire Chief Mager commented there is an increase in call volume and documenting it accordingly.



Lexipol Updates: Fire Chief Mager commented continue negotiations and assessment of Lexipol contract terms. Discussion ensued regarding State and Legislative changes from time to time with the policies.

Town Council Liaison(s) Report: Mr. Becker commented Chief Mager submitted rate changes for the EMS billing and lift assist and Town Council approved the changes. Fire Chief Mager commented there will be a charge for lift assist after three occurrences within 30-days, which would be \$100.00.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: None was had.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Council member Mary Joan Dixon, 8711 W. 132nd Place, highlighted that other municipalities have benefited from electric vehicle savings and urged exploration of those models. She discussed Grant writing, which needs a procedure for Grant writing and there is money in the Capital Fund.

Terry Broadhurst, 631 N. State Street, Lockport, IL representing 14513 Morse Street, emphasized the hidden costs of EV infrastructure, including electrical wiring and safe parking considerations, especially near public buildings and parks.

ADJOURNMENT: meeting adjourned at 7:04 pm.

Dear Chief Gruszka,

On behalf of the Northwest Regional SWAT Crisis Negotiations Team, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation for the continued efforts and exceptional contributions of Officer Dustin Corbin. Since joining our team, Officer Corbin has become a truly valued member, consistently demonstrating professionalism, composure, and a strong commitment to the principles of effective crisis negotiation and our team.

Officer Corbin's performance reflects great credit upon your department. His dedication, teamwork, and willingness to continually grow in this highly specialized discipline has strengthened not only our unit but also the vital partnership between the Northwest Regional SWAT Team and the Cedar Lake Police Department. It is clear that the values upheld by your agency are carried forward in the quality of the work Officer Corbin provides.

I would also like to express my gratitude for your ongoing support of the advanced training required in this field. The opportunities you provide for Officer Corbin and for all officers involved with Northwest Regional SWAT play a crucial role in enhancing the skills, preparedness, and overall effectiveness of our deployments. Your commitment to this training directly contributes to safer outcomes for our communities and for everyone involved in critical incidents.


As Team Leader for the Crisis Negotiators, I felt it incumbent upon myself to share Officer Corbin's excellent work with you. Thank you again for your leadership and for fostering an environment where officers are encouraged to excel. We look forward to continuing our strong working relationship with you and your department.

Respectfully,

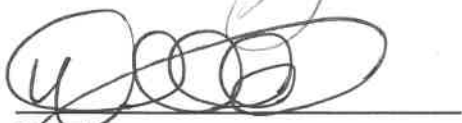
Sergeant Jeff Gang #33
Griffith Police Department
School Resource Officer/LE Instructor

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