

July 15, 2025

**Public Meeting Advertised for 7:00 PM
Conducted at the Cedar Lake Town Hall
Pledge of Allegiance & Moment of Silence
Roll Call:**

Present	Robert H. Carnahan Council Member	Ward 1	Present	Mary Joan Dickson Council Member	At Large
Present	Julie Rivera Council Member	Ward 2	Present	Richard C. Thiel Jr. Council Member	At Large
Present	Nicholas A. Recupito Council Member	Ward 3	Present	Jennifer N. Sandberg, IAMCA, CMC, CPFIM Clerk-Treasurer	
Present	Chuck Becker Council Member	Ward 4	Present	Ben Eldridge Town Manager	
Absent	Greg Parker Council Member	Ward 5	Present	David Austgen Town Attorney	

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Resolution No. 1378 – An Additional Appropriation

- a. Review of Legals – Ms. Sandberg reported the legals were in order. They were duly published on July 3rd.
- b. Introduction – Ms. Sandberg explained this additional appropriation is for two funds. In the Cumulative Capital Development Fund an additional \$20,075. That was originally related to a request from the Police Department for a squad that was totaled out. We had an opportunity to purchase another vehicle but that might have been missed. They have the ability to move forward if and when something else comes up. The second one is for the Community Crossing Grant Fund for \$770,092.09. This is for the Shades Phase 2 Project and monies received. They will do this again in about 45 days once they get the funds for the CCMG AA-AB projects. INDOT just approved that purchase order.
- c. Reading of Resolution No. 1378 – Mr. Thiel read Resolution No. 1378 by title only.
- d. Remonstrators – Linda Klug, 14406 Hobart St, stated she lives on the corner of 144th Avenue and Hobart Street. She stated the home was new in 2006. She voiced concerns with the condition of the roads. She voiced concerns with the potholes. She stated she wants to make absolute they are going to pave the street and every street from Riskin to Morse and west and south of 144th. Mr. Recupito stated they have a few Shades projects going on. He asked Mr. Kubiak if her street was included. Mr. Kubiak stated no. The roads north of 141st Avenue and the Shades up and behind Zip. Mrs. Klug stated they are not going to do it all. Mr. Recupito stated not yet. They are making a point to do those roads. That is why they are seeing a handful of projects coming up. He stated he did not know where her road ranks. Mr. Kubiak stated to the south is the next spot. There are a lot of Shades areas. Mr. Carnahan stated the plans with this Council are to move and do everything east of Morse. Mrs. Klug continued to voice concerns. Mr. Recupito stated each year they go and evaluate based off the funds they have, the streets they can do. As Mr. Carnahan stated, her area is a high priority for the Town to do. They will take a look and see what they can do next year.
- e. Council Discussion - None
- f. Council Decision

A motion to approve Resolution No. 1378 was made by Chuck Becker with second by Mary Joan Dickson. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

1. **Minutes:** June 3 2025
2. **Claims:** All Town Funds: \$542,768.02; Wastewater Operating: \$159,689.29; Water Utility: \$40,584.79; Storm Water: \$155,668.60; Payroll 07/03/2025: \$413,569.29, June Remittances \$219,197.77
3. **Donations:** Candy for the 4th of July Parade: Benjamin Eldridge and Jennifer Sandberg
4. **Manual Journal Entries:** June 1, 2025 – June 30, 2025

A motion to accept and waive the reading of the minutes and accept the consent agenda as listed was made by Chuck Becker with second by Julie Rivera. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0

**TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA
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ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS

1. Ordinance No. 1515 – An Ordinance Establishing the Town of Cedar Lake Police Department Safe Keeping of Currency in Custody Non-Reverting Fund

Chief Gruszka explained this deals with property and evidence where they may confiscate cash either from a victim of an accident or evidence of a crime. They do not have anywhere to store it. They need to have procedures in place to track it and keep it out of the building. He stated he has been working with Ms. Sandberg on this. They sent it to the attorney for review. The purpose is to keep it secure. Ms. Sandberg stated they will track it through the receipting system and there is a form for those who would request the return of funds. Mr. Thiel read Ordinance No. 1515 by title only.

A motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 1515 was made by Mary Joan Dickson with second by Richard Thiel. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

A motion to suspend the rules and allow for a second reading was made by Robert Carnahan with second by Julie Rivera. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

Mr. Thiel read Ordinance No. 1515 by title only.

A motion to adopt Ordinance No. 1515 was made by Chuck Becker with second by Julie Rivera. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

2. Ordinance No. 1516 – Amendment to Town Code of Ordinance 30.29 – Council Affairs

Mr. Recupito stated this is an amendment to the ordinance in relation to Council Affairs. Ms. Sandberg stated it is an amendment to Town Code 30.29. Mr. Recupito stated it is to eliminate the Council Affairs Committee. They have a Town Manager to handle the duties.

A motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 1516 was made by Julie Rivera with second by Richard Thiel. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

A motion to suspend the rules and allow for a second reading was made by Chuck Becker with second by Julie Rivera. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

Mr. Thiel read Ordinance No. 1516 by title only.

A motion to adopt Ordinance No. 1516 was made by Julie Rivera with second by Chuck Becker. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Shades AA/AB Part-Time Construction Observation Services Proposal

Mr. Eldridge stated with the road construction coming up they had the option to have an engineer full time on-site or on-site part time. It was determined not to need one fulltime. They will be checking in a couple times each week and giving direction to the contractors. It was noted it is in the amount of \$62,380.

A motion to approve was made by Richard Thiel with second by Chuck Becker. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

2. Fire Department Emergency Vehicle Preemption Signs Project Change Order #2

Mr. Recupito stated there was an increase and asked if it was for the thermoplastic crosshatch. Mr. Thiel stated the increase was \$1,452.10. Ms. Sandberg stated it is a balancing change order representing actual field measured final quantities and the contractor proposed quantities. It is for the thermoplastic. Mr. Recupito asked about the funds for this project and if they come from the proceeds from the bonds. Ms. Sandberg stated she would have to double check. She thought this one was specifically covered under the bond but not the interest earned. Mr. Recupito asked if it was the owners contingency. Ms. Sandberg stated yes.

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A motion to approve Change Order #2 was made by Chuck Becker with second by Julie Rivera. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

3. Fire Department Emergency Vehicle Preemption Signs Project Final Pay Request from Hawk Enterprises Inc.

Mr. Recupito asked if this was closing the project out. Ms. Sandberg stated yes, it is the final pay request. Christopher Burke has given review of it and as Bob previously reported it is in the amount of \$60,760.90.

A motion to approve was made by Richard Thiel with second by Chuck Becker. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

4. Disbursement Request No. 26 of Funds from 2022A Construction Fund in the amount of \$3,540

Mr. Recupito asked if this was for the Police. Ms. Sandberg answered yes. Ms. Sandberg explained this is related to the purchase of the four Durango's. This finishes out that project. It is a striping package. Chief Gruszka stated they should be getting the vehicles soon.

A motion to approve was made by Mary Joan Dickson with second by Chuck Becker. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

5. Disbursement Request No. 22 of Funds from 2022B Construction Fund in the amount of \$72,827.98

Ms. Sandberg stated this is related to the Stryker proposal that was proposed a couple meetings ago and approved. It is in relation to equipment to outfit the new ambulance that the Township just purchased. Mr. Recupito asked if it is all new equipment. Chief Mager stated it is specifically the power system meaning the power loader and the power cot for the ambulance. Mrs. Dickson asked if any equipment is being taken off of the older ambulance. Chief Mager stated that is correct. Mrs. Dickson asked if there is additional why are they not buying all new. Chief Mager stated he does not believe it was discussed funding wise initially. Mrs. Dickson asked if they will be down an ambulance. Chief Mager stated that is correct. They will still maintain two ALS ambulances and one BLS ambulance. Mr. Recupito asked if that is what they currently have. Chief Mager stated yes. Mrs. Dickson asked what the point of having the fourth one was. Chief Mager stated it is in the plan for a new ambulance and to either transfer that to another department in town or auction it.

A motion to approve was made by Robert Carnahan with second by Chuck Becker. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

6. Sign Employee Handbook Updates

Ms. Sandberg reported the most recent updated draft of the handbook has been issued to everyone as of July 8, 2025. There were a few scrivener's errors to be corrected and an update to Indiana State Law regarding the Indiana Child Educational Activities Leave. That was the only new policy placed in as opposed to the previous draft they had all received. Mr. Austgen asked for clarity's sake, if this is going to replace the entirety of what exists by having one, clean document. Ms. Sandberg stated yes. It is the issue date, dated July 8, 2025.

Mr. Eldridge asked when the State adopts new laws pertaining to employees and those go into the handbook, does the handbook need to be signed off on by the Town Council each time it updates. Mr. Austgen stated yes. It is his experience that does not happen very often.

A motion to approve the update to the employee handbook from July 8, 2025, was made by Richard Thiel with second by Mary Joan Dickson. Roll Call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Dickson – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 1. Ambulance Rate Increase** – Mrs. Dickson stated she thinks it is time to review the ambulance rates and they have also talked about the lift assists. She stated she does not know if they assign it to Nick but they definitely need to review the items. Chief Mager stated it is understood. It is something he has worked on the past couple of months with Clerk-Treasurer Sandberg and Town Manager Eldridge. The discussion is to meet and

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discuss in detail and give the Town Council a proposal. Mrs. Dickson asked if it gets approved by the Safety Board first and passed on to them. Mr. Austgen stated the Safety Board could be an advisory recommendation to them. It is a legislative act through rates and in ordinance form. Mrs. Dickson asked if it is okay to discuss with the Safety Board first and then bring it to them. Mr. Recupito stated he was okay with that. They will leave it on the agenda as an update and discussion item. Mr. Austgen reminded them this is cost based. Law requires assessment of what it takes to run the ambulance service and the cost where the service is rendered. A rate review. Mr. Carnahan asked if they need a financial consultant. Mr. Austgen stated not necessarily. At some point, verification, and the proposed fee schedule to be developed would have validity and be consistent with cost-based principles. Chief Mager stated part of that does include a justification report and capital plan. It would include the lift assists. A brief discussion continued on ambulance rates.

REPORTS

1. **Town Council** – Mr. Carnahan reported the Cedar Lake Chamber will have a golf outing on Sunday, August 24th. Participation will be \$100 and includes a cart and meals. He attended a meeting in Cedar Creek Township with the owner of the new newspaper, South Lake County Sun. They will try to cover Cedar Lake, Crown Point, Lowell, and the outskirts. He stated he ordered a subscription for \$104. The guy who owns it owns the Kankakee one. This would make the 9th in Indiana. It will come out once a week. Mrs. Dickson stated they made a request for a photo of everyone. Mr. Carnahan stated he sent it to everyone including Ben and Monica. Mrs. Dickson stated she was going to suggest they use the newsletter photos. Mrs. Rivera extended her condolences to Rick Sharpe on the passing of his wife Georgia Sharpe. Mr. Carnahan stated a former Cedar Lake Police Officer, Chuck James, was honored for his military service. Mr. Thiel stated he received an email regarding vehicles speeding on 129th. Discussion occurred on moving the speed sign to the area. Chief Gruszka stated it is on the list.
2. **Town Attorney** – Mr. Austgen reported the Town closed the transaction for the purchase of the Polk Street parcel. It was authorized several months ago. He thanked Jennifer and her team.
3. **Clerk-Treasurer** – Ms. Sandberg reported work continues on the 2026 budget.
4. **Town Manager** – Mr. Eldridge asked for direction. Jennifer gave him an agreement with Bose McKinney that was signed in December of 2023. They continue to be billed monthly. He reached out to them asking for an updated agreement because the signed agreement expired December 31, 2024. They did not have one and Mr. Austgen does not have one either. There is no existing, signed agreement for Bose McKinney to continue lobbying. He asked how to proceed. Mr. Recupito stated he has not received an email from them in quite some time. They used to send regular updates. Mr. Austgen stated that is what they were hired for. The PFAS and lobbying during the general sessions. Mr. Eldridge stated it was effective for 2024 but no one has an executed agreement for 2025 but they continued to be billed. Mr. Recupito stated he would cut it off. They have to be mindful of expenses. Mr. Austgen suggested notifying them of that. He discussed the transition in the last year. The remaining Council Members agreed with Mr. Recupito. Mr. Eldridge stated he would notify them tomorrow.
5. **Director of Operations** – No report.
6. **Police Department** – Chief Gruszka reported on the monthly calls report. He mentioned outstanding work by Officer Dills. In one day, she went from applying CPR and within hours she was applying pressure to a gun shot victim. He commended her work.
7. **Fire Department** – Chief Mager reported on the monthly training and call report. He briefly discussed the busy holiday week and additional staffing. He briefly discussed some of the notable calls. He stated the Township Ambulance is having equipment transferred. He will have an in-service report later this week. The ladder truck had a recertification test performed. Firefighter/Paramedic Beyer moves forward with car seat installations and also providing smoke detectors via the grant received. He briefly discussed the budget. He stated it is on track.
8. **Parks Department** - Mrs. Ray reported they have established the after-hours assistance for the Parks Department. Mr. Carnahan stated the Kiwanis Shelter is complete and they are working on Bartlett-Wahlberg. There will be a fee for Kiwanis but no fee for Bartlett-Wahlberg. Mrs. Ray stated that is correct. She stated they are planning to finish the sidewalk in back with the safety concern. They are working with the vendor and hoping to have it on Friday. The coating will be grittier. It will go by the gazebo as well.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

1. **Building Department Report** – Mr. Recupito stated for the month of June they have ninety other permits issued and eight new construction permits. 56 total for the year.
2. **Christopher B. Burke Report** – Mr. Recupito stated a lot of this stuff is no change. He stated he is getting calls about 141st Avenue west of Parrish. The road is all beat up. He asked Bob about the report and discussing preliminary design of the corridor ongoing and

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funding through CCMG. The funding source is currently on hold by the state until further notice. Mr. Carnahan stated he did not know anything about the funding. He stated that was not going to be CCMG. He stated they were going to look and see if there was some money in bonds or something. Mr. Recupito stated they have the road project but he is also questioning about CCMG as he is hearing there may not be a call in July. Ms. Sandberg stated that her understanding is they have suspended the second call. She stated there were legislative updates to CCMG. It is her understanding that the way it has operated for the last few years, it will continue to operate that way. The Town would still have a 50/50 match due to the size of the community. There was an update with funding and somewhere at the end there will be additional funds available and that is where you have to potentially implement a wheel tax in order to be eligible to the additional funds, not what they can currently qualify for. Mr. Recupito asked if they had ever applied for the extra excess funds. Ms. Sandberg stated there have never been extra excess funds. Discussion continued on CCMG, wheel taxes, and registrations.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carol Kerr, 9900 W. 129th Place, she stated this is for Tim Kubiak. She discussed the Indiana Department of Environmental Management citing 14 deficiencies. She asked him if he has fixed any of them. Mr. Kubiak stated yes. He asked the date of the letter. Mrs. Kerr stated it was originally October 2023. She stated she called IDEM today and they said none of them were fixed. She discussed a few of the deficiencies such as greater than 25% loss in the water system that not regularly tracked. The valve system maintenance and replacement system are in place but not enough staff to exercise valves. Overflow pipes in the ground storage tank did not have vest screens as required. She stated she could go on. She asked Mr. Kubiak if any of this was done. She asked if he could write it up. Mr. Kubiak stated a lot of that stuff has been taken care of. Currently, the valve maintenance is just exercising the valves. They do not have an official program due to the size of the Town and staff. The coating of the tank is Parrish where they put a new bottom and paint. That has been taken care of. The 25% water loss, they believe, is a miscalculation by whoever did the audit and numbers for them. He stated they did not have a 25% loss. It was a mathematical error. Mrs. Kerr continued to voice concerns with deficiencies and IDEM being unaware. She asked again about the 25% water loss. Mr. Eldridge stated the Town had 25% water loss or unaccounted for water. It states it was calculated inaccurately because there are two separate water systems. They are not connected. The calculation was done combining the water loss from the east side and the west side. He stated there is not really 25% loss because there are two systems. Discussion continued on the water.

ADJOURNMENT President Recupito called the meeting to adjournment at approximately 8:23 PM.

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COUNCIL OF THE CIVIL TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA

Robert Carnahan, Ward 1

Julie Rivera, Ward 2

Nicholas A. Recupito, Ward 3

Chuck Becker, Ward 4

Greg Parker, Ward 5

Mary Joan Dickson, At-Large

ATTEST:

Richard C Thiel Jr., At-Large

Jennifer N. Sandberg, IAMCA, CMC, CPFIM
Clerk-Treasurer

The Minutes of the Cedar Lake Town Council are transcribed pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-4(b), which states:

(b) As the meeting progresses, the following memoranda shall be kept:

- (1) The date, time, and place of the meeting.
- (2) The members of the governing body recorded as either present or absent.
- (3) The general substance of all matters proposed, discussed, or decided.
- (4) A record of all votes taken by individual members if there is a roll call.
- (5) Any additional information required under section 3.5 or 3.6 of this chapter or any other statute that authorizes a governing body to conduct a meeting using an electronic means of communication