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

August 5, 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	

**Mrs. Dickson was present via Zoom.*

PUBLIC COMMENT
John Foreman, 12745 Parrish Ave, spoke on the Monsanto Class Action Settlement. He discussed having a plan and trying to follow a plan to the best of your ability. He stated they had a plan to learn about other successful communities. He stated past Councils went down to Carmel and learned about TIF. He stated they went to Lake Geneva and learned about lake communities. He stated when he first got into office, they had a plan with the Army Corps of Engineers. It was not feasible. They worked diligently. He stated he went with a group to Washington D.C. to meet with the Corp. They also went to Chicago and took State Representatives and State Senators. He congratulated them on the $2 million dollars from Monsanto. He stated it is wonderful news. He discussed the negativity of taking $2 million dollars from the sewer for the lake. He discussed the past and the green of the lake. He stated with the little bit of dredging they did, they have made a difference. He asked them to think of the difference in water quality if they finish it. He asked them to utilize the money wisely.
Bill Goers, 13546 Beach Place, stated he was confused because he did not see that on the agenda. Mr. Recupito stated it was on the agenda as a discussion item. He discussed to two public comment sections on the agenda. Mr. Goers stated it was great what John says. He has been here two and a half years and he cannot get an answer on what the plan is or is not. Mr. Goers stated it is hard to support or understand what is really going on with the lake issue and sewer issue without that plan. He asked where is the plan. He asked if they are going to see the plan. Mrs. Rivera asked him what specifically. She stated there is a lot of information available online from when they started the dredging. Mr. Goers asked for a complete plan. He referenced Mr. Foreman's discussion on a plan being followed and finished. Mrs. Rivera stated it is probably online. She stated they wanted to dredge more but the funds in place allowed for a certain amount of dredging and paid for the dewatering facility. The alum treatment was something that they were trying to secure funds from the state or county. She stated the short answer is they did a lot of dredging. She discussed completing phase one of the dredging. She discussed the Army Corps and stated they said they should finish it up with alum treatment. She stated that was in a 15-year study with Army Corp. She stated the Monsanto money was applied for in 2023. They asked for a million dollars for more dredging and another million for alum treatment. She stated they had the initial plan that they had funded. Anything else they were going to get from the County or State. She again discussed alum treatment and planting along the banks. Mr. Goers stated there was a portion that was completed. He stated there has to be detailed accounting, finances, and reports of the work that was done. He discussed work that was done and was not done and proposals moving forward. He asked where he can get that information. Mrs. Rivera stated he could do a FOIA for the specifics he is asking for. Mr. Goers asked why they do not provide those. Mrs. Rivera stated she could send him newspaper articles. Mr. Goers stated no. The actual plan and report of everything that they did. He stated the reason the Town Council flipped was because people were really unhappy and concerned. Mrs. Rivera stated he was asking for a ton of information and there is a ton of information out there. There are videos on YouTube and articles in the Post-Tribune. You can go to the museum. Mr. Goers stated if he understands correctly, they do not have that information. They have to do the homework themselves. Mrs. Rivera stated if he wants everything in one place, they can definitely dig into that. There were so many phases and the Army Corps Plan, which they took a lot of pieces from. The contract with Dredge America. Mr. Goers clarified. He stated there is not a comprehensive report that explains the work that was done or the work that was supposed to be done and an accounting of financials. Mrs. Rivera asked Jennifer if there was an accounting of financials. Ms. Sandberg responded yes, related to the phase one that was approved with Dredge America and things like that. Mr. Goers stated he could make a request to you guys and ask for all that information. He stated he should not have to do a foia. He should not have to do homework. Mrs. Rivera stated if she was him, she would do a foia. It sounds like he wants a ton of pieces of information that is not found in one binder. Mr. Goers stated this is the first time a past Council member has come up and defended the work

done. He is trying to figure out what John is describing, where the plan is, and where he can review it. To understand and make a decision of what he wants to support. Mr. Carnahan stated they had Frank Mrvan representatives that told them they should have never done what they did and should have waited for the Army Corps of Engineers. Mrs. Rivera stated Christopher Burke Engineering has a plan. Mr. Goers stated he is looking for what the past Council's plan was. If he has to make a request, he will do that. Mrs. Rivera told him to do a foia request. A brief discussion continued.

Terry Broadhurst, 2123 Arthur Ave, representing property at 14513 Morse St, stated there are some positives. He brought up the dewatering facility. He discussed dredging the lake at a slower basis ongoing where it is more feasible. He discussed past meetings with DNR and the use of gravity. He discussed the $2 million grant and maybe it could be used for a more permanent structure for pipe and hose. He discussed looking at making a more comprehensive plan. Mr. Carnahan stated he is considering suggesting a street sweeper. That way they do not let stuff in the road go back into the lake. He discussed the area across from the Chamber and a previous LARE grant. Mr. Broadhurst thanked Bob for his suggestion on preventive for sediment. A brief conversation continued on the lake.

Rich Loudermilk, 8503 W 131st Place, stated the first thing he would think beyond a street sweeper is actually cleaning out the catch basins. He stated he lives at the end of the street on the lake and his catch basin has been full for five years. He stated it has not been cleaned in years. Mr. Carnahan asked for his address. He discussed the alum treatment. He stated it is aluminum sulfate. He stated it is a chemical reaction that will attach and adhere to all of the phosphorus in the lake. He stated it will create aluminum phosphate. He stated that is a carcinogen. He voiced concerns about potential side effects of the aluminum phosphate. He asked why would that dump that into the lake when they whole reason they have this problem is because of dumping in the lake. He stated the phosphorus came from sewage. He questioned dumping more chemical. He stated the lake is as clean as it is going to get. He continued to voice concerns with the alum treatment and potential effects. Mr. Recupito clarified that they are not acting on this tonight. He referenced the meeting back in March 2024 when the DNR was present. Mr. Loudermilk stated the only way he sees to clean the lake properly is smaller, consistent dredging or draining the whole lake. He stated you cannot put chemical in the lake. It will affect more. He stated it is not the way to do it at the cost of other taxpayers. He stated there is always a better option. He stated they do not want quick fixes. They want permanent fixes. He discussed the recent culvert renovation at the south end. That was old and they got it done within a day. A brief discussion continued.

Mrs. Rivera responded to Mr. Goers comments and stated there is a Cedar Lake Restoration/Dredging Plan from Christopher Burke Engineering on the Town's website at cedarlakein.gov. It is an 18-page power point. That will help spell out the terms.

Bryan Kubal, 7600 W 136th Court, stated last time he was here when they were deciding what to do with the dredging. He thought they were on a roll and they were not. He stated the money came from Chris Salatas and commended him for that. Mr. Parker stated it was Don Oliphant who went after the money. Mrs. Rivera stated Chris and Don worked together on it. Mr. Recupito stated Don Oliphant submitted it on behalf of the Town. Mr. Kubal stated it is a good thing to have and debate about. He stated he has swam in the lake his whole life. He thinks the money has to be put back into the lake. Whatever they decided and how they use it on the lake still to be determined. The lake is the ace in the hole.

Doug Spencer, 8506 W 141st Place, stated he was on the committee that worked on the lake. The reason he was on the committee is because he had 20 years in wastewater treatment at BP/Amoco. He stated he had 15 years of wastewater treatment at US Steel. He stated he is very familiar with alum. They used it at both of those places. He stated it works good. It will drop the suspended solids in the water out of the water. You will get a pretty clean lake. It will get shallower. It will lock it down pretty good. He stated the problem is the fish. They can stir up the water and the alum. He discussed the alum being active in the summertime in the lake because of the heat and pH changes in the water. He discussed alum being safe. He stated you can go to Strack and Van Til and buy alum to use in your deodorant and cooking. Mr. Recupito stated you can buy cigarettes and Strack's too. Mr. Spencer stated the alum can be a little carcinogenic when you first treat it. The first two days because of the heavy dose. After that it will settle out. He stated maybe they should take the money and put it into a committee to treat on the lake. They are so focused on dredging that they miss the whole story. He continued to discuss treatment and the wetlands utilized. He discussed plans with the Army Corps of Engineers and plans for the wetlands. He stated that is the big tool there. He discussed running the water back through the wetlands so it was treated before hitting the lake. He continued to discuss the dredging. He discussed finding companies for the restoration of the lake. He discussed aeration systems and microorganisms. Mr. Recupito stated if and when the time comes for spending the money, they will do so in a public meeting. There will be a chance for them to debate how the money is used. Mr. Spencer stated there are other companies because phosphorus is becoming a problem. A lengthy discussion continued.

Bob Gross, 8505 W 140th Avenue, stated he is there to remind them of a few statements made. He quoted Mr. Parker from the March 5th meeting. He stated there has been talk of other funding sources and he thinks it is great. If others were to contribute, he stated, that if that were to happen, it would be wonderful. They would move on with the project. Mr. Parker stated that is absolutely true. They tried to get a million dollars that was available from the county. They refused. If they had given that million dollars the project would have kept going. It may have kept going to the point where the other $2 million. The only problem that most of this Council has ever had is using sewer money to dredge the lake. Mr. Gross stated he understands. He knows what their problem was. Now they have $2 million dollars. Unfortunately, he heard from the Superintendent of Dredge America, they offered to leave their pipe from his marina to the dewatering facility on a Zoom call or a phone call. One of the Council Members stated "No, take it and go." Mr. Parker stated that never happened. Mr. Carnahan stated he never heard that. Mr. Gross stated that was the Superintendent. Mr. Parker stated any call he was in, Bob was there, and Bob just said it did not happen. I am telling you it did not happen. Mr. Gross stated they said to him that they were willing to leave it in case they had additional funding. He stated he heard Senator Niemeyer was willing to look for money. Greg, you said that he was a good guy and he is going to help them out. Mr. Gross stated they did not have a plan. You have to go to the State with a plan. Here is Cedar Lake's plan. We do not have an ecosystem restoration committee. He stated he was a part of it along with Doug and Dan, Julie, and Bob. He stated you have to have a plan for them to give you money. Mr. Recupito stated the plan was they had everything here and set up. They would continue the dredge. They would not give any money. They wanted them to spend $1 million of the ratepayer's sewer money in order to get the match. It was all in motion at that time and they were scrambling for funds. Mr. Gross stated this has nothing to do with Jerry Tippy. He discussed a comment from Jerry Tippy where he said if they stop the project, he will not give them the million. Mr. Gross stated now they have that money. The lake is an economic engine and future of the town. It is getting shallower. He discussed mobilization and demobilization costs for dredging. He discussed moving forward with Sleepy Hollow ditch and using the money as a match for LARE. He discussed previous projects over the years that were matched with the LARE grant. He discussed getting a committee together and working on matching the money. Mr. Gross encouraged them to use the money to leverage more money for the lake.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. **Minutes:** June 17, 2025 and July 1, 2025
2. **Claims:** All Town Funds: $393,988.51; Wastewater Operating: $74,191.20; Water Utility: $85,570.47; Storm Water: $11,905.17; Payroll 07/17/25, 07/31/25, 08/01/25: $641,420.78.

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

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Permission request to display Hanover High School Senior Banners of Light Poles**
   Tracy Haskell, School Board Member, discussed the seniors in sports and the banners that hang in stadiums and gyms. She requested to place the senior banners on the light poles for the whole community to see.

   A motion to approve Hanover School Senior Banners to be placed on the light poles by Public Works was made by Robert Carnahan with second by Richard Thiel. Mrs. Haskell stated all winter and spring. About a month and a half for each season. Mr. Carnahan clarified that they are small banners. Mrs. Haskell stated they are the small ones they will just need a measurement. Mr. Carnahan stated she could check with Tim King at the Street Department. Roll call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Parker – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

2. **Tourism Funds Disbursement – Request of $2,000 to support the Museum at Lassen's Resort Dewey Line**
   Mr. Recupito stated they have a couple pages in the packet. He asked Ben if she has talked to Mrs. Zasada about this. Mr. Eldridge stated no. Mr. Recupito stated they received a request for the Council to do some of the tourism funds to sponsor the Dewey Line. Mr. Carnahan stated he attended a Summerfest meeting and they submitted a letter for funds and they stated they have never heard anything. Mr. Recupito stated he spoke with Ben and they were going to bring it up on the next agenda. Mr. Eldridge stated Mary Joan sent him the request from the Summerfest organization yesterday but the agenda was already set. Mrs. Rivera stated the Knights of Columbus asked for some of it as well for the haunted forest. A member of the audience stated they did submit a letter. Mr. Recupito stated he has not seen it yet. Mrs. Rivera again stated she thought that they had submitted a letter for the haunted forest attraction. She is unsure how many requests that comes out to. Mr. Recupito started that would be two official requests. Ms. Sandberg stated she has not been copied on any of the requests. She knows from past experience it is usually the museum and Summerfest. Maybe a couple of the other local organizations.

This is the first she is hearing of the Knights of Columbus. Mr. Eldridge asked Jennifer if she knew how much they have in the tourism funds. Ms. Sandberg stated the same amount they receive every year, $4,725. With that said, there was a request from the previous Administrative Assistant last year. Since that individual and that Town Manager are gone, she assumes the funds are not going to be used for whatever their intended purposes are. She stated they still have a little of last year's money left. Mr. Carnahan stated he was told $6,000. Ms. Sandberg stated that is approximately what the fund balance is showing. Mr. Carnahan stated he believes it is a little over $4,000 that they get. Ms. Sandberg stated the amount was $4,725.

A motion to approve $2,000 to the museum was made by Robert Carnahan with second by Julie Rivera. Roll call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Parker – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

3. **Favorable Recommendation from the Parks Department to Permit the sale of beer, wine and spirits at Bands, Brews, and Bugaboos Event – September 13, 2025**
Mrs. Rivera reported they needed the okay for the alcohol at the event. Mr. Recupito asked for clarification on the action. Mr. Austgen stated to approve subject to compliance with the alcohol laws. A brief discussion continued on the Town ordinance for alcohol.

A motion to approve subject to the compliance with the alcohol laws was made by Julie Rivera with second by Richard Thiel. Roll call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Parker – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

4. **Request to waive Parks and Recreation rental fees for the Parks Foundation's Fundraiser – September 27, 2025**
A motion to approve was made by Robert Carnahan with second by Richard Thiel. Roll call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Parker – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

5. **Favorable Recommendation from Board of Safety for approval of EMS billing rate and lift assist proposal**
This item passed 5 – 0 at the Board of Safety meeting on July 23, 2025. Chief Mager reported over the past few months, many hours have been invested into the current budget, future budget, and the financial sustainability. He discussed the impact of the tax reform bill Senate Bill 1. He stated they did an evaluation on the current EMS rates and have come up with a proposal to meet the market rate around the Town. That is included in the proposal, the surrounding communities that provide the same service. Justification of that increase would be inflation costs over the past few years. Service demands have climbed 50% in the last five years. There has not been a billing rate proposal increase in almost five years. It includes a lift assist charge after three occurrences within 30 days. Additionally, as part of the proposal is an EMS equipment replacement plan. It is a six-year plan which would warranty all of the EMS equipment. The dedicated money would be split between the General Fund and the EMS Billing Non-Reverting Fund. That money would be earmarked towards this future plan in 2031. Mr. Carnahan asked about the figures for the different communities and if they were from five years ago or current. Chief Mager stated they were from late 2024 or early 2025. All communities around the Town are evaluating their rates. Mr. Carnahan stated Valparaiso is lower than them at it blows his mind. It seems St. John is more of what they would probably want to do. Chief Mager stated Valparaiso is evaluating too. Instead of earmarking it towards a community similar to the Town, they did 95% of the average cost of surrounding communities with a flat rate increase as it was in the proposal. Mr. Carnahan stated they cannot take any action tonight other than directing the Town Attorney to prepare an ordinance to amend the rates. Mr. Recupito commended Chief for the detailed proposal. He asked about the billing increases and it not affecting Medicare and Medicaid. Only self-pay and private insurance. Chief Mager stated that Medicare and Medicaid have flat rates across the board. They will pay for certain services. Mr. Recupito asked if they are considering offering a discounted rate to residents. Chief Mager stated it is a flat 95% of the average rate increase. There is no difference between resident and non-resident. Mr. Carnahan again stated they could not pass anything tonight because there is not an ordinance in the packet for the public. It will have to be maybe in two weeks. Mr. Recupito asked Mr. Austgen if that is the action item to have him draft the ordinance. Mr. Austgen stated or finalize it. Chief Mager stated the proposal includes an increase from 16%, the split to the non-reverting, up to 25% and 75% to the General Fund, for future sustainability. The reporting program for the department comes out of that fund. Ms. Sandberg stated it is currently 15% of the annual revenue from EMS billing. Annually, on the first consent agenda, it is moved to the EMS non-reverting fund. Mr. Recupito stated he knows they are considering an increase. He asked if they are going to have any problems with shortfalls in the General Fund if they increase that another 10%. He asked if the increased

collections would make up for that. Ms. Sandberg stated that does give her pause if the request is to move that to a higher percentage, like 25%. Especially with the unknown and without seeing what the actual revenue is. As they can see from Mr. Mager's proposal, the total billed is not the total revenue that is actually collected. It is much less. She stated she does worry about General Fund shortfalls and the ability to maintain operations within as it currently stands. Mr. Carnahan stated they only get so much money from Medicare and they usually do not get the full amount. Mr. Recupito asked Chief Mager if that is something they can work on. A good number that sustains the General Fund but also funds the EMS non-reverting fund sufficiently. Chief Mager stated the proposal figures it at approximately 60% collected from what they billed. That was based off of 2024. There could be some fluctuation but with the proposal, the flat rate increase would bump the General Fund revenue as well. It is not guaranteed revenue it is based off of last year. Mr. Recupito asked Ms. Sandberg where she is comfortable from a budgeting perspective. Ms. Sandberg stated she would like to see the revenue coming in. It is their pleasure to direct the attorney to work on the EMS billing rates. The ordinance for the money that is transferred to the EMS non-reverting fund is a separate ordinance. That is something that can be done at a later time once new rates are in effect. They can look over the period and see what was collected and make a determination on the non-reverting fund at a later date. Chief Mager stated part of the proposal was to include a full quarter of collections. Mr. Recupito asked if there was any discussion from the Council or if the attorney needed to weigh in. Mr. Austgen stated no. He concurs fully with the Clerk. Her recommendations to them are good and solid. Chief Mager asked the Council if they wanted him to work with Jennifer and the Town Attorney with numbers and the proposal. Mr. Carnahan stated he thinks that is a good plan. Work with Jennifer and Dave.

A motion to direct Nick work with Dave and Jennifer on getting the ordinance prepared and submitted was made by Robert Carnahan with second by Richard Thiel.
Roll call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Parker – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

6. **Annual Engagement with Peterson Consulting for the FY 2025 Capital Asset Report**
Ms. Sandberg stated this is the recurring engagement agreement with Peterson Consulting. They are a CPA firm and they provide a GASB 34 compliant capital asset report for the Town. It will meet all state and federal reporting standards and it is for the year ending 2025. They do this so the Town is compliant and has a proper report to be filed with the annual financial report. Mr. Recupito stated it is a fixed fee of $3,825. Ms. Sandberg stated yes. She believes that is approximately $100 more than last year.

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

7. **Proposed donation of Police Department artifacts to museum**
Chief Gruszka stated with the move, these are items that the public and town should she. They are part of the history of the Police Department. He believes it is a good move to have that on display for everybody to see. Mr. Carnahan asked what they are. Chief Gruszka stated there is a hat, some nightsticks, radios, patches, articles, and photos. They show how the department has changed over the years.

A motion to approve the donation was made by Robert Carnahan with second by Greg Parker. Roll call: Carnahan – Yes, Rivera – Yes, Becker – Yes, Thiel – Yes, Parker – Yes, Recupito – Yes. Vote 6 – 0.

8. **133rd Avenue Road Reconstruction Wetland Credit Agreement**
Mr. Carnahan stated this is for the raising of 133rd. They are purchasing some wetland and it is $90,000 an acre and for the 2/10th of an acre it will cost them $27,000. He believes once you purchase wetlands, they have to move it to some other part of the state. Not necessarily in our area. He discussed the address being inadvertently listed as 2133 instead of 133rd. He talked to Monica and it is their typo not the Town's. Mr. Recupito stated this is probably a requirement for getting the matching monies for the project. Mr. Carnahan stated yes. Mr. Recupito asked if they make wetlands somewhere. Mr. Carnahan stated that is usually what they do. They do it somewhere else. Mr. Austgen stated that was correct.

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

Mr. Thiel noted that Mary Joan texted him to say that she did lose signal and would be unable to rejoin the meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. **Monsanto Class Action Settlement**
   Mr. Eldridge stated everyone knows they received $2 million from the class action lawsuit. It was applied for with the intent to clean up the lake. They applied for a million dollars for alum treatment and money to be used for cleaning up the dewatering facility. The discussion he has had with each of them is that it needs to be used for what it was intended for, cleaning up the lake. What that looks like he does not know. He discussed alum treatment, cleaning up storm inlets, planting, etc. That is engineers and environmentalists to get involved in so they can get the best bang for their buck. He thinks it does need to be used for the lake clean up. Currently, the Clerk-Treasurer has invested it in fund Indiana. Ms. Sandberg clarified that it is Trust Indiana. They are getting some interest earned on the million dollars. Today he directed her to invest the other million so that they are earning interest on the money while they decide how to spend it. Mr. Carnahan stated he indicated a street sweeper and trying to stop sediment coming in the lake. Mr. Eldridge stated he had a conversation with CBBEL and he is glad he does not have to make the decision. There is a lot of differing opinions. There is work that is cut out for the Town for cleaning up the lake. Mr. Carnahan stated Mr. Eldridge also suggested drainage work out here and maybe expanding the beach. Mr. Eldridge stated that was a discussion he also had with CBBEL. How they can clean up some of the wetland like areas. There are options to do that. There is a lot of runoff and silt and areas to be addressed. He would take the advice of the experts. Mrs. Rivera stated she get very passionate about the subject. She understands that everyone has their reasons for what happened last year. She did not agree, however, now that they have the money, no one has said they are not using it on the lake. She cautioned folks from using Google and AI to look up alum treatment. She does not agree that alum in dangerous. She is not saying it is going to be the answer. The fifteen-year study from the Army Corps definitely pushed for the alum treatment for different reasons. She stated she talked with Don Oliphant. She stated he does not work for CBBEL anymore. He suggested alum and plantings along the banks. She stated they need to talk to experts not people using Google. She stated she would like to start using Jedd at CBBEL so he can narrow down the best bang for their buck. She discussed collectively making a decision and relying on the different studies and lakes of their size. She asked everyone to keep an open mind. Mr. Parker stated they are not going to solve it tonight. Mrs. Rivera further discussed talking with the engineers. Mr. Recupito discussed the DNR meeting and alum treatments. He discussed further figuring out whatever they do makes sense and is sustainable. Mr. Eldridge stated he has always wanted to work in a community with a feature like Cedar Lake has. There is so much that they could do with the lake. He discussed taking the time to think about what they could do with the lake. He thinks they do need to pump the brakes and seriously consider what they could do to clean up the lake. Mr. Recupito stated the color of the lake does not stop him or his family from going in the lake. It is like a picture is painted sometimes like the lake is a cesspool but it is a gem right now. A brief discussion continued.

2. **Request for Direction Regarding Founders Creek Trail**
   Mr. Recupito asked who is requesting this. He knows Attorney Austgen has been working on some stuff with this. There is an outstanding parcel. Mr. Austgen stated the Founders Creek project has been open for three years. There were six parcels of property that needed to be acquired to make the project work. They have acquired five of them. The sixth one is the elusive, difficult to connect to parcel. Without it, there is no project. Mr. Recupito stated his understanding was that at the Park Board meeting on Thursday, there is some consideration for an engagement or agreement to get the project moving along. Mr. Recupito asked if they can move forward without the parcel. Mr. Austgen stated he was told they cannot. Mr. Eldridge asked if they could move forward as far as putting a trail up to that property. Mr. Austgen stated they can, right up to the property line. Mr. Eldridge stated kind of like they are doing with the sidewalk. Mr. Parker asked if there was potential to go around it. Mr. Austgen stated he asked the engineers that and they gave him no solution nor a different parcel. Mr. Recupito stated the idea of eminent domain has been floated and this Council is not on board with taking folks property. Trying to come to a resolution with the property owner is the best thing. Mr. Recupito asked Mr. Austgen if he would be attending the Park Board meeting on Thursday. Mr. Austgen stated yes. Mr. Recupito asked if he needed any direction now or knew where this Council is on it. Mr. Austgen stated he thinks he does know and they will talk about it at the Park.

REPORTS

1. **Town Council –** Mr. Carnahan discussed notice sent to the Board of Safety by Chief Gruszka regarding a notice from Thomas Dodge about the 2023 Dodge Charger being sold. Mr. Carnahan stated they had a 2019 Dodge that got wrecked. A brand new 2023 Dodge was going to be purchased. The Safety Board and Town Council approved it and then it was sold from underneath them. Mr. Carnahan stated he sent all the Council, Ben, and Monica about the Plan Commission trying to get the culverts under the railroad tracks cleaned. He met a guy named William Miller at NIRPC and he gave a phone number. He gave it to Luke Sherry. He contacted them and he was told it was going to be submitted to someone. Mr. Carnahan stated he called Norfolk Southern and was told they do not own that section of railroad. Chesapeake and Indiana Railroad own it. He got their number and contacted them today. The representative he spoke with was going to try and get someone out tomorrow to inspect them and see about getting them cleaned. He sent everyone that information and the phone number of the person he contacted. Mr. Carnahan discussed the Summerfest dates for next year being July 2nd through July 5th. They will do fireworks on the 2nd and 3rd. They will have the parade on July 4th on a Saturday. They are in desperate need of cones for the property. Mr. Carnahan stated he suggested they contact the Crown Point Community Foundation and maybe they could get a grant to purchase cones. He stated Project Love Food Pantry will be open tomorrow from 9 to 11:30. Melissa Wonder submitted a grant to Crown Point Community Foundation and got a $1,000 to buy a new freezer. It will be delivered tomorrow. Mr. Thiel asked Bob about the police car and what the plan is now. Mr. Carnahan stated Chief Brittingham stated they really did not need to purchase one. They have enough pool vehicles to handle that. Chief Gruszka stated they should be getting the four new vehicles in in the next week or so. A brief discussion continued.
2. **Town Attorney –** No report.
3. **Clerk-Treasurer –** Ms. Sandberg reported work continues on the 2026 budget. Next week she will be out of the office attending the Indiana League of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Annual Conference. That is a joint effort with the Indiana State Board of Accounts. It is a State Called Meeting. I must attend. Mr. Recupito asked about the budget. He stated they get emails from the Commissioner. It mentions deadlines for filings and a recent one came up for excess levy appeals. Originally, he heard they would not be able to appeal for one. Now it says they have one last year. Ms. Sandberg stated she previously sent out an email to them stating that was her intention. During the budget process, they will do one final excess levy appeal based on the growth appeal. Try to get the little bit before everything is gone. After this year it will no longer be available.
4. **Town Manager –** Mr. Eldridge discussed the Great Gold Rush Event for the Northwest Indiana Cancer Kids.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION
None

PUBLIC COMMENT
Ralph Miller, 13338 Fulton Street, it was super they gave the museum $2,000. It is a great project. The Knights of Columbus have been doing a fabulous job with their haunted forest. He asked if he could get them to redo the agenda. Jennifer said they have close to $6,000. Summerfest Committee is asking for some money. They just gave the museum $2,000. He would like to see $2,000 go to the Knights of Columbus for their haunted project to bring more people to Cedar Lake. He was hoping they could redo the agenda. He asked Mr. Eldridge if he saw the paper from the Knights. Mr. Miller stated they could really use some help for some new attractions. Mr. Parker stated they need a written request. Mr. Thiel asked when the date is for it. Mr. Carnahan stated it is in October. Mr. Thiel stated this is probably something they could have on the agenda in two weeks as long as they see the written request. Discussion continued on the request. Mr. Recupito stated if they get that in and consider it on the next agenda in two weeks, they would be glad to do that. Mr. Becker asked for an exact of how much money is in the account. Mrs. Rivera stated $6,800 minus the $2,000. Mr. Parker stated if it was $6,800 now it is $4,800. Ms. Sandberg stated she said $6,000 originally. Work with $4,000. A brief discussion continued.
Carol Kerr, 9900 W. 129th Place, stated online they had the Cedar Lake Waterworks Consumer Reporting. It is always a year behind. It is 2024 and there is a Safe Drinking Water Act. The Town had gross violations. She stated it really bothers her. She does not know who is supposed to do this. She believes it is Ryan Kuiper. He has done it before where he gets away with this. She stated it has 48 violations of the drinking water. Some but not all monitoring samples and it goes on and on. She stated what is really disturbing is when you turn on the water, you smell chlorine. A lot of times if you take a shower, you will smell chlorine. She stated they need the chlorine but there are byproducts like TTHM and others that can give you kidney cancer. Those were not monitored. Those are pretty routine. She asked Mr. Eldridge how Mr. Kuiper got away with it. Mr. Eldridge stated the trihalomethanes and haloacetic acids are required to be tested annually as they are carcinogens. He stated he has not seen the CCR. He can look at that. He stated they had a phone conversation with IDEM yesterday. IDEM did not reference any violations by the Town.

Mrs. Kerr stated it says right here. She asked him what he was talking about. She referenced the report and violations noted. Mrs. Kerr asked how they got away with it. It is drinking water. Mrs. Kerr continued to voice concerns. Mr. Recupito stated they plan on hosting an informational meeting on the water system that will be open to the public. Mrs. Kerr stated she was told it was going to be today and then it was cancelled. Mr. Eldridge stated the conversation with IDEM yesterday was on the water master plan. IDEM confirmed that it is not a document to be made public as it is a document that outlines critical infrastructure. Originally, they planned to have a presentation by CBBEL. They are planning a meeting outside of a Town Council meeting to allow the public to take as much time as they want to ask questions. It will be a presentation on what the water system is, where it comes from, how it is tested, etc. Mrs. Kerr asked who is responsible for the drinking water. Mr. Eldridge stated that falls back on the Water Superintendent. Mr. Eldridge stated he was not here in 2024 but that will be changing moving forward. Mrs. Kerr asked if they would test all that so they know what they are drinking and not get kidney cancer. Mrs. Kerr continued to voice concerns and ask about testing. Mr. Eldridge stated he believed they had until September 30th to test for trihalomethanes and haloacetic acids. He will make sure that they do get tested. It is supposed to get tested every year.
Kevin Toth, 9725 B W 129th Place, commented on the Monsanto money. Asked them to have a plan and a fully funded plan. Not like they had in the past. He stated they have heard a lot about alum. He stated it will not solidify. It will be like jello. He stated he worked with it and it will work for a while. Carp will destroy it. Boats will destroy. He discussed no wake zones on the lake. It might help to clear the water but there are a lot of steps in between. If sediment still comes in it will not help. Mr. Recupito discussed the DNR meeting and efficacy and sustainability. It was mentioned the boats being a concern. You cannot just wave a wand and fix it with alum. A brief discussion continued on alum. Mr. Toth asked about what Medicare and Medicaid reimburse. He asked if there was an amount the reimburse regularly. Chief Mager stated yes. He did not have the numbers in front of him. It is dependent on category. Mr. Toth asked if the new rates would still get full payment for Medicare and Medicaid. Chief Mager stated it will not be 100% of the proposed increase. Mr. Toth asked where most of the loss is at between billing and revenue. Chief Mager stated he did not have that information with him. Mr. Carnahan asked Jennifer if she could answer any of that. Ms. Sandberg stated no. Unfortunately, she is not involved with the specifics of EMS billing. Mr. Toth discussed the proposal and anticipated collections from private insurance and self-pay. Medicare and Medicaid would not be affected. Mr. Toth continued to ask what they do not get on private pay. Chief Mager stated he does not have those figures. Mr. Toth continued to ask if there was a normal amount on private pays and insurance. Chief Mager stated each company is different and it depends on the category. Mr. Toth asked if he knew if the rates proposed are within basically most people's insurance that would cover or if there would be out of pocket to them. Chief Mager stated he did not have an answer. Mr. Toth wondered if it would be an out of pocket hit to people. A brief discussion continued.
Bob Groszek, 14055 Deodor, asked if the dredging was done and everything was done. Where did the money come from to pay for the dredging. He asked if it came from the sewer money. Mr. Carnahan stated $2.2 million. Mr. Groszek asked if it would be repaid. Mr. Carnahan stated they took $2.1 million out because they needed to pay some sewer bills. Mr. Groszek asked about paying it back. Mr. Carnahan stated they took what was left out and put it back. Mr. Parker stated in a perfect world that would be the right thing to do. Mr. Parker stated the settlement money cannot be used to pay themselves back. Discussion continued on payback.
Father John Kowalcyzk, 14338 Violet Circle, discussed 141st between the railroad tracks and Parrish. He stated he heard that maybe it is on the docket to get fixed. He asked if it was. Mr. Recupito stated he did not want to speak for the road committee but they did have a survey contracted out with engineer. He believes that was completed. He asked Ms. Sandberg. Ms. Sandberg stated she believes it was. She saw it on the April billing. Mr. Recupito stated he thinks it is a project they want to get done still but it will not get done this year. The money has been allocated for other road projects. Mr. Carnahan stated they will bond out for it. That was their suggestion. He discussed working with Jennifer. Ms. Sandberg stated that is the first she is hearing of it and that will have to be a very lengthy discussion. Ms. Sandberg asked if they have been given an estimated cost from Christopher Burke. That is what she is waiting for. Mr. Parker stated that is what the survey work is for. Mr. Carnahan stated they were waiting on that. Ms. Sandberg stated so they have not received that yet. It was stated it is a work in progress. Mr. Recupito stated it is not forgotten. Mr. Kowalczyk discussed increased public safety calls and shortage of staff. He asked the Council what are they going to do to get more officers in the buildings. According to the shifts, they have enough to run two ALS ambulances at one time. He stated that is two calls. He voiced concerns with overlapping calls and the need for mutual aid. He voiced his concerns. He implored them, even with Senate Bill 1, to get more personnel. He implored them to find a way to make it happen. He thanked them for what they are all trying to do. Discussion continued on the fire service and increased call volume. Mr. Recupito stated last year they made a big increase to wages for public safety, police, and fire. They were also told if they bumped up wages for part-time, they could draw more part-time people. That would help with the exhaustion. He asked Chief Mager how that was working and if there was more interest in part-time employees. Chief Mager discussed career employees and the strain. He stated there are multiple issues. Mr. Carnahan stated they were going to hire another officer in 2025 but they

talked to the Police and they chose to get a pay increase of nearly 8%. None of the department heads received pay raises. It all went to police and fire. Mr. Becker asked about the lift assists and how many call were related. Chief Mager stated he did not have the report with him. Mr. Becker stated it has to be close to 40%. Chief Mager disagreed with that number. The second meeting has the monthly report and it has a breakdown of every EMS incident responded to. At the end of the day, if someone calls 911, it is an emergency and they will respond. Discussion continued on the matter.
Joyce Ivy, 13874 Hatteras, asked about the big red barn at Parrish and Beacon Pointe Lane. She stated there was a realtor sign there at one time. The sign is gone. She was wondering what the plan is. Mr. Thiel stated he did not know the sign was down. They were before the Plan Commission for a rezone from B to R. Mr. Parker stated they brought in a construction plan. Mr. Thiel stated to convert it into a house. Mr. Recupito stated the core of it was they wanted to see the barn preserved. Mr. Thiel stated it was on the unsafe list but the goal was to see it not torn down. A brief discussion continued on the potential future of the barn.

ADJOURNMENT President Recupito called the meeting to adjournment at approximately 9:10 PM.

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

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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