

## **ST. JOHN TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, April 22, 2025; 6:00 P.M.**

**St. John Township Community Center, 1515 W. Lincoln Highway, Schererville, IN 46375  
Main Meeting Room**

Meeting was called to order at 6:09 p.m. by Chairman, Lisa Elder, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **PRESENT:**

#### **BOARD MEMBERS**

- Lisa Elder, Chairman
- Michael Quigley, Secretary
- Eric J. Stanich, Member

#### **TRUSTEE**

- Cathy J. Lareau

#### **TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY**

- Adam J. Sedia

#### **LAKE HILLS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT.**

- Steve Michalak, Fire Chief
- Tom VanVleet, Deputy Chief
- Missy Michalak, Lake Hills Board President

## **REPORTS**

### **1. Fire Department Reports**

#### **a. Lake Hills Fire Department January and February Hunniford Financial Reports, February and March 2025 Financial Reports, February and March 2025 Calls and EMS Reports**

Chief Michalak went over the EMS & Calls Reports. He made note the fire and EMS calls are now separated on the report. There is a lot of mutual aid due to the fire departments all being shorthanded. There was a Tri-Town chief's meeting in February. It was decided Lake Hills Fire Department will be working more with Dyer Fire Department, and all four fire departments will train together at least once a quarter. Missy Michalak briefly discussed all four bank accounts and the steps needed before they can close the First Financial accounts and retain the two Chase accounts. She stated they had a large vehicle expense the past month on an older truck. There was conversation regarding the repairs, expenses and the repair shop. Lareau questioned Lake Hills Fund Balance Sheets on all the bank accounts. The "Cash Available" on the "Grand Totals" for each "Fund Balance Sheet" for each bank account should all show the same "Cash Available." The Lake Hills February Financial Reports do not reflect this. Lareau recommended Michalak reconcile the report again and contact TOMSweb should she need further assistance. Michalak also now sends the TOMSweb report to their accountant, Matthew Hunniford & Company, P.C. There was discussion regarding the balances on the Hunniford Financial Reports.

**Elder accepted the Lake Hills Fire Department January and February Hunniford Financial Reports, February and March 2025 Financial Reports, and February and March 2025 Calls and EMS Reports as a matter of record.**

**b. Dyer Fire Department 2025 1st Quarter Report**

Lareau pointed out Chief Martin always breaks the report down to show calls for the St. John Township. She also addressed the mutual aid between Lake Hills and Dyer Fire Departments.

**Elder accepted the Dyer Fire Department 2025 1st Quarter Report as a matter of record.**

**c. Schererville Fire Department 2025 1st Quarter Report**

Lareau briefly discussed the report.

**Elder accepted the Schererville Fire Department 2025 1st Quarter Report as a matter of record.**

**d. St. John Fire Department 2025 1st Quarter Report**

Lareau briefly discussed the report.

**Elder accepted the St. John Fire Department 2025 1st Quarter Report as a matter of record.**

Chief Michalak questioned how Senate Bill 1 is going to affect their funding from the Township. Lareau briefly explained SB 1 and was uncertain how it would completely affect the Township. She stated that any reductions from the bill would affect the Township's funds from the Civil Levy not from the Fire Levy. Unlike towns that pay for fire out of their general fund, the Township receives a separate Fire Levy to pay for fire services. She is not too concerned about this bill affecting their funding.

Chief Michalak explained the ambulance previously purchased from Cedar Lake is having mechanical problems. There was discussion regarding selling this ambulance and borrowing an ambulance from another local fire department, if needed, before the new ambulance arrives next year. Chief Michalak expressed he would like to only have one ambulance in the future. This extra ambulance is maybe used a dozen times per year and there is not always a second paramedic to run on the second ambulance all the time. They do loan the backup ambulance out to other fire departments. Their contract with Franciscan is making a change that each fire department will have to have a DEA License and will have to purchase their own drugs to stock each ambulance. Having two ambulances to stock would be very expensive. Lareau questioned Sedia if the CUM Fire fund would be able to assist with the purchase of these drugs. Sedia is going to check the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) regulations to see if it is allowed under federal law. Lareau and the Board would like to see actual numbers showing the cost to keep the extra ambulance along with how often the ambulance is used and borrowed out. Also, once the new ambulance is delivered, Elder would like to see how much the old ambulance is being used and the expenses. If these numbers outweigh what the actual use of the ambulance is, then there may be no need to retain it. The Board would then vote on this. Lareau brought up the option of the new ambulance being delivered sooner so it wouldn't be a whole year with only one ambulance if this ambulance was sold in the near future. She does not like the idea of only having one ambulance available. Chief Michalak stated they also have limited space in the station. Selling the old ambulance would give them more room. He explained costs for the primary drugs and also the replacement drugs to be stocked in the ambulance. There is a standard protocol list of drugs from the hospital given to the fire departments of the drugs needed on hand. The price of the drugs is already included in the billing to customers. There is an increase every year with billing to adjust to any increase in the price of the drugs.

## **2. Trustee Report**

Lareau stated the new sign has been installed and still needs to be painted. She explained the Senate Bill 1 has already been touched on earlier in the meeting. Lareau stated this bill will be affecting all Township funds excluding CUM Fire. The House Bill 1461 started out as a bill to take 30% of this year's Townships budgets to give to roads because it was believed Townships were sitting on a lot of money. If this money was taken from the Township, it would have been catastrophic. The amount would have been approximately \$600,000 of the 2025 budget to be paid out in July 2025. The ITA lobbied and worked on behalf of the Townships to get an amendment to this verbiage. Lareau contacted Representative Hal Slager. He recommended she contact both the author of the bill in the House, Representative Pressel, and, Senator Crider, Chairman of the Committee. Lareau explained the emails she sent which stated to them if this bill was passed it would be catastrophic to the Township. Lareau proved this statement with several charts which were included in the email. Senate Bill 1 has been signed by the Governor. HB 1461 has been signed by the President Pro Tempore and the next step is the Governor's desk. ITA was able to get an amendment to the Bill on behalf of townships. Lareau read the amendment currently being proposed and explained how this would affect the Township. The Legislators want to take the money from Townships not producing but it is affecting the Townships that are producing and doing their job well. A new form will be distributed to the Townships from DLGF to create a yearly capital improvement plan. Lareau explained the process of what would be required by the townships at the end of the year to transfer money to a Road Fund. The townships will then be required to partner with towns or the County in their township to have roads in the township repaired. It would go before the Board for approval to partner with any of the entities to provide the funding for road improvements.

Lareau lastly explained the plumber put in a grease trap double the size of the old grease trap in the Community Center kitchen. This bigger grease trap left no room for a set of drawers originally placed next to the old grease trap. The plumber could not adjust the plumbing of the new larger grease trap to fit the set of drawers back in the original space. An invoice was sent a week ago to which Lareau replied with the help of Sedia regarding getting the problem resolved. The plumber is not responding to Lareau's emails or texts.

## **3. Attorney Report**

Attorney Sedia stated there will be a small amendment to the Employee Manual next month.

## **4. Board Reports**

None

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. Approval of February 25, 2025 Executive Board Meeting Minutes**

There were no questions.

### **2. Approval of February 25, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes**

There were no questions.

### **3. Approval of March 18, 2025 Executive Board Meeting Minutes**

There were no questions.

Quigley made a motion to approve the February 25, 2025 Executive Board Meeting Minutes, February 25, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes and the March 18, 2025 Executive Board Meeting Minutes as submitted. Stanich seconded the motion.

**Elder called for a vote. Motion carried 3-0.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. February and March 2025 Financials**

Lareau briefly explained the February Centier Bank mistake of inputting a check. This mistake has been corrected and the bank balances. The documents indicating the correction are attached. There were no questions.

**Elder accepted the February and March 2025 Financials as a matter of record.**

### **2. February and March 2025 Township Assistance Reports**

There was a discussion regarding the number of denials and how this number is calculated.

**Elder accepted the February and March 2025 Township Assistance Reports as a matter of record.**

### **3. Resolution 2025-05 Ratifying Community Service Agreement with Lake County Community Services, Inc. (LCCS)**

Lareau stated Lake County Community Services has the senior program that meets in the Community Center. There must be an agreement with the Township and LCCS. The agreement was signed and the Board must now ratify it.

Quigley made a motion to approve the Resolution 2025-05 Ratifying Community Service Agreement with Lake County Community Services, Inc. (LCCS). Stanich seconded the motion

**Elder called for a vote. Motion carried 3-0.**

### **4. Pleasant View Cemetery**

Lareau explained after the boring sample was performed, the engineer gave two options to deal with the erosion problem. The first option of hydroseeding will only slow the erosion. The second option, installing a metal piling wall, will stop the erosion with an estimated cost of \$400,000. The Town of Schererville will be creating a Historic Preservation Commission in May specifically for the Township in order for the cemetery to be named in a historic district. The cemetery will then be labeled a historic site which will make it possible to receive grants. Lareau stated the next steps to be taken to proceed with the second option. She explained the benefits of hiring an engineer and specifically discussed the proposal submitted to the Township by Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd. (CBBEL). This proposal did meet Attorney Sedia's approval. There was no vote taken by the Board, but it was unanimous to move forward with retaining the services of CBBEL.

## **CITIZEN INPUT**

None

**ANY AND ALL OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY COME BEFORE THE TOWNSHIP BOARD**

None

**1. The next scheduled meeting of the Township Board to be held Tuesday, May 27, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.**

**2. Other**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Quigley made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Elder seconded the motion.

**Elder called for a vote. Motion carried 3-0.**

**Meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.**

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Lisa Elder, Chairman

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Michael Quigley, Secretary

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Eric J. Stanich, Member

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Submitted and attested by Cathy J. Lareau, Trustee