

ST. JOHN TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 28, 2026; 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 6:08 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 Van Vleet, Deputy Chief
- Matthew Michalak, Assistant Chief
- Missy Michalak, Lake Hills Board President

CITIZEN INPUT

None

REPORTS

1. Fire Department Reports

a. Lake Hills Fire Department March 2026 Financial Reports, March 2026 Calls and EMS Reports

Lareau stated Assistant Chief Matthew Michalak, now does the Calls reports. Chief Michalak, went over the March 2026 Calls and EMS Reports. There was discussion regarding the Billing Details and Medicaid and Medicare accounts. Lake Hills will be transitioning to new software, Image Trend, soon. Elder questioned University of Chicago being added to the hospital list. Chief Michalak confirmed it is newly added and, after applying for rights, they can now transport patients there at the Crown Point location. Deputy Chief Van Vleet, stated the patients that will be taken to University of Chicago in Crown Point most likely will be patients in our area, such as cancer patients, that are being treated at the University of Chicago in Chicago and request to be taken to the Crown Point University of Chicago hospital and are stable enough to do so. Lake Hills can take an emergency patient to the University of Chicago in Crown Point but there are other closer hospitals to

take them to. Chief Michalak added that Franciscan Crown Point is still their sponsoring hospital. This means Lake Hills works under Franciscan Crown Point doctors, malpractice insurance, etc. and receive medical direction from them. Lake Hills Board President, Michalak, then went over the financial reports. Lake Hills stated they will be paying their portion of the headsets next month from the fundraiser proceeds. Lareau mentioned they will be looking at the new ALS ambulance parked outside after the meeting. The agreement to obtain this ambulance started in 2023. Chief expressed their appreciation to Lareau and the Board for the new ambulance to which Lareau noted that it was the result of a collaborative effort to enhance services for residents. At the Trustee's request, Assistant Chief Michalak explained his recent call to the Trustee regarding potential assistance for residents whose home sustained structural damage after a tree fell on it. This elderly couple did not call 911 for assistance. Lake Hills was running down power line calls when they noticed this house. Assistant Chief stopped to make sure the couple was okay. After verifying the couple had contacted their insurance company and were being taken care of, the Trustee's emergency shelter assistance was not needed. The Trustee commended Assistant Chief Michalak for his efforts. Elder noted that several lines may remain down for up to five days and emphasized the need for the community to remain considerate of residents who may still require assistance. She also expressed her appreciation for the first responders.

Elder accepted the Lake Hills Fire Department March 2026 Financial Reports, March 2026 Calls and EMS Reports as a matter of record.

2. Trustee Report

Lareau stated she attended the State Board of Accounts (SBOA) mandatory annual meeting for all trustees. The meeting covered updates on new and existing legislation as well as an overview of the audit process. SBOA audits trustees a minimum of every 4 years. The St. John Township will have an audit in 2027. Lareau then went over the new House Enrolled Act 1048. This bill increased the clothing and automobile allowance paid to each active and participating member of a volunteer fire department effective July 1, 2026 from \$100 to \$250 per year. State statute requires the trustees to have the fire agreements finalized by the end of January. Therefore, the 2026 agreements have already been signed. Lareau briefly went over the Township's fire agreement with Lake Hills. This new bill requires townships to pay directly to each active and participating member rather than including it in the fire agreement. The bill doesn't address how to handle the change with a fire agreement already in effect. Lareau stated SBOA suggested to seek legal counsel regarding what to do in that situation. Sedia said this means SBOA doesn't have an interpretation and the Township will bear the risk of it if the legal counsel advises in a way SBOA doesn't agree with. Lareau addressed another issue the bill is that all townships already have their 2026 budgets. This new act and the additional monies needed for the increased clothing and automobile allowances were not included in the 2026 budget. There was discussion regarding what Lake Hills allowances are now and "line of duty" clarification.

Lareau announced she partnered with DAV Chapter 17 for a Veterans Information Seminar for this Sunday, May 3 from 11:00a.m. to 4:00p.m. There was a post card sent by State DAV to all the veterans within a 25-mile radius of the Township Community Center. The DAV service officers available at this seminar acts as a liaison between the veteran and the VA and a claim will be able to be submitted that same day for possible benefits. Lareau mentioned how the DAV Walks she cosponsors not only help to raise funds for DAV but also raise awareness of the entitled benefits veterans may have. Lareau invited the Board to stop by this seminar on Sunday.

3. Attorney Report

Attorney Sedia explained the tax appeal is in the middle of briefing and still pending with the tax court. He will keep Lareau and the Board posted as the case moves forward.

4. Board Reports

None

OLD BUSINESS

1. Approval of March 24, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes

Quigley made a motion to approve the March 24, 2026 Board Meeting minutes as submitted. Stanich seconded the motion.

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

NEW BUSINESS

1. Township Assistance Report March 2026

Lareau commented how the number of requests for township assistance is lower. The Township Assistance Director added there is nothing normal about the cases coming in. They are more difficult to investigate. There were no questions.

Elder accepted the Township Assistance Report March 2026 as a matter of record.

2. Township Financial Reports March 2026

Lareau pointed out the outstanding 2023 cleared checks will be reflected on the next statement. There were no questions.

Elder accepted the Township Financial Reports March 2026 as a matter of record.

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

Lareau mentioned next Tuesday, May 5, 2026 the office will be closed for the Primary Election due to it being a voting site.

- 1. The next scheduled meeting of the Township Board to be held Tuesday, May 26, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Center Hall.**

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

Meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Lisa Elder, Chairman

Michael Quigley, Secretary

Eric J. Stanich, Member

Submitted and Attested by Cathy J. Lareau, Trustee