ST. JOHN TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 21, 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 6:02 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 July and August 2026 Financial Reports, July & August 2026 Calls and EMS Reports
Chief Michalak presented the EMS & Calls Reports, highlighting that a major storm on August 11 drove the month's total to 130 calls. Following this, the Lake Hills Board President, Michalak, reviewed the financial reports, noting recent expenditures due to major repairs on an existing ambulance. The Board then discussed the department's new ALS ambulance, specifically emphasizing how the integrated power loader has significantly enhanced patient lifting safety and operational efficiency. Concluding the discussion, the Trustee stated the new ALS ambulance is serving both the Lake Hills Fire Department and local residents well.

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

b. Dyer Fire Department 2026 1st and 2nd Quarter Reports
Elder noted that Chief Martin was unable to attend the board meeting.
Elder accepted the Dyer Fire Department 2026 1st and 2nd Quarter Reports as a matter of record.

c. Schererville Fire Department 2026 1st and 2nd Quarter Reports

Elder noted that Chief Patterson was unable to attend the board meeting.

Elder accepted the Schererville Fire Department 2026 1st and 2nd Quarter Reports as a matter of record.

d. St. John Fire Department 2026 1st and 2nd Quarter Report

Lareau explained no reports were submitted due to software problems. Chief Adams informed Lareau they will be submitting a yearly report. Sedia suggested to ask for a motion to accept the St. John Fire Department report with the usual year-end report.

Quigley made a motion to accept the St. John Fire Department report with the usual year-end report. Stanich seconded the motion.

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

2. Trustee Report

Lareau announced that the DAV Walk, originally scheduled for August 22, 2026, was postponed due to the storm on August 11th. The event has been rescheduled for October 10, 2026. During the meeting, she reviewed the day's agenda and noted that Township bus transportation will be available for participants unable to walk the route.

The DAV Walk serves as a demonstration of the Township's support for our veterans and a celebration of 250 years of freedom secured by their service. Now in its fifth annual year, this walk has successfully raised awareness among veterans regarding the benefits to which they are entitled. Same-day, walk-up registration will be available the morning of the event.

Lareau provided a comprehensive update on the severe impact of the August 11, 2026, storm, which caused widespread damage and a prolonged power outage from Tuesday until Friday evening. In the immediate aftermath, township landscaping crews worked continuously from Thursday morning through Friday afternoon to clear numerous fallen trees, including those that damaged the bus garage, which is currently the subject of an active insurance claim. Once the property was secured, the Community Center utilized the generator to open as a cooling, charging, and emergency food station. To provide continued disaster relief, the Township transitioned to an accessible, minimal-application process to distribute emergency food and grocery gift cards on Friday for two hours and Saturday, August 15; Monday, August 17; and Tuesday, August 18 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., marking the Township's first-ever drive-through food pantry operation.

Community support and strategic partnerships further amplified these relief efforts. The Township ensured that all subsequent residents requesting emergency food assistance were accommodated. Additionally, on Wednesday, August 19, the Salvation Army distributed sandwiches in the Township parking lot, followed by Operation BBQ Relief donating 50 meals on Thursday, August 20, after Lareau expressed gratitude to their volunteers at a local Walmart. The Community Center also served as a critical hub for DAV Chapter 17 and the State DAV, who successfully distributed $35,000 in emergency disaster relief financial assistance to veterans, supplemented by an additional 100 sandwiches from Operation BBQ Relief. Looking forward, Lareau announced that St. John Township will receive a grant from The Legacy Foundation and NIPSCO, which will be fully dedicated to purchasing additional grocery and fuel gift cards for residents impacted by the storm.

Lareau informed the Board that the recently enacted AGA Bill 1048 introduces new regulations regarding automobile and clothing allowances for volunteer fire departments. Effective July 1, 2026, these allowances must be distributed directly from the Township Trustee to the volunteer firefighters. After outlining the specific qualifications and monetary thresholds mandated by the new legislation, Lareau noted a conflict with an existing contract signed between the Township and the Lake Hills Fire Department. Under that active contract, the fire department is responsible for distributing the allowances, and the contracted amount falls below the minimums required by the new bill. Addressing this discrepancy, Sedia clarified that existing contracts are legally amended to comply with newly enacted statutory requirements, confirming that the Township will collaborate with the Lake Hills Fire Department to ensure the additional funds are properly distributed to the firefighters.

3. **Attorney Report**
   Attorney Sedia explained there was oral argument in the tax court and our tax appeal is still under advisement. When an opinion comes down, he will update the Trustee and the Board.

4. **Board Reports**
   None

2027 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

1. **Open for Public Comment**
   Lareau pointed out the Notice to the Taxpayers in the Board's folders. Proper notification was given. It was uploaded into Gateway in the time frame that is required and published on the Township doors and website.

   Elder opened the floor for public comments on the 2027 Budget. She called for public comment three times. There were none.

2. **Close Public Comment**
   Elder closed the Public Hearing.

OLD BUSINESSOLD BUSINESS

1. **Approval of July 20, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes**
   There were no questions.

2. **Approval of August 12, 2026 Executive Board Meeting Minutes**
   There were no questions.

Quigley made a motion to approve the July 20, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes and the August 12, 2026 Executive Board Meeting Minutes. Stanich seconded the motion.
Elder called for a vote. Motion carried 3-0.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **July & August 2026 Financials**
   Lareau stated both accounts balanced. There were no questions.
   Elder accepted the July & August 2026 Financials as a matter of record.

2. **July & August 2026 Township Assistance Reports**
   Lareau clarified the Total Number of Requests for Township Assistance are the numbers we granted assistance to and the Total Number of Recipients of Township Assistance that received the assistance in the households. She also went over the Total Value of Benefits Provided Through Efforts of Township Staff from Sources Other Than Township Funds. Lareau added the August numbers included school supplies but did not include the emergency food assistance given out for the August 11, 2026 storm. Once all the numbers are inputted, an amended August 2026 Report will be printed out.
   Elder accepted the July and August 2026 Township Assistance Reports as a matter of record.

2. **Resolution 2026-05 Approving Community Services Agreement**
   Lareau explained this agreement with the Tri-Town Safety Village was to provide money strictly to help pay for instructors for students within the Township. This would help to maintain and attract quality instructors. A Community Service Agreement was signed in 2024 for this same purpose and all of those funds have been used. The Executive Director of the Safety Village has requested another agreement to provide additional funds. A Community Service Agreement, not a grant, must be established to provide this money. She offered an agreement for $2,500 and then it can be revisited once these funds have been expended. They are required to provide documentation on how the money was paid out in December 2026 and June 2027 for verification it was used for schools within the Township. The Board must approve the Community Service Agreement and then Tr-Town Safety Village will have to also approve it. The Agreement can then be signed to move forward with the funding. Lareau added it is within the Township budget to provide this funding.

   Stanich made a motion to approve the Resolution 2026-05 Approving Community Services Agreement. Quigley seconded the motion
   Elder called for a vote. Motion carried 3-0.

3. **Resolution 2026-06 Amending Employee Benefits Provisions in Employee Manual**
   Elder stated she would like to table this for further discussion to the next board meeting.

   Quigley made a motion to table Resolution 2026-06 Amending Employee Benefits Provisions in Employee Manual. Stanich seconded the motion.
   Elder called for a vote. Motion carried 3-0.

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 is the 2027 Budget Adoption Meeting to be held Tuesday, October 20, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.**

2. **Other**
   None

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 6:29 p.m.

_____
Lisa Elder, Chairman

_____
Michael Quigley, Secretary

_____
Eric J. Stanich, Member

_____

Submitted and attested by Cathy J. Lareau, Trustee