

SEPTEMBER 14, 2026 CLOSED MEETING

Chairman Tony Wolff called the closed meeting to order at 6:00 pm. The meeting was held at the Cedar Lake Town Hall in Mikana. Present: Chairman, Tony Wolff, Supervisors, Kory Weiss and Jim Ludwig, and Clerk, Cindy Zuleger.

The town board talked with the town attorney, Ron Stadler who provided legal advice for handling the lawsuit between Liz Schulte and Ken Leners with the Town of Cedar Lake. An update was given that the Court of Appeals denied qualified immunity to Ken Leners. The law was well established at that time that you cannot censor public comments on a webpage. A meeting is set up on October 15 at 10:15 to set a court date moving forward.

Meeting adjourned at 6:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Zuleger, Clerk
Town of Cedar Lake

SEPTEMBER 14, 2026 MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Tony Wolff called the monthly meeting of the Town Board of Cedar Lake to order at 6:30 pm. The meeting was held at the Cedar Lake Town Hall in Mikana. Present: Chairman, Tony Wolff, Supervisors, Kory Weiss and Jim Ludwig, Treasurer, Gladys Roux, Clerk, Cindy Zuleger. There were 11 members of the public.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Tony to accept the minutes from the August 10, 2026 monthly board meeting, seconded by Kory, all were in favor, motion passed.

Public Input

- A resident reported opening the recycling container and encountering many hornets. The problem appears worse during warm weather. Kory said residents who find hornets can call the town shop. Staff can spray the insects, though the recycling-center issue is not considered a town responsibility.
- The board also heard that the cardboard opening is too small for large stacks. No better local recycling destination was identified. Burning was mentioned but rejected in the reported instance because conditions were dry.

Financial Report

- Monthly Financials:
 - Beginning of Month Balance (All Accounts): \$495,292.70
 - Deposits: \$214,159.95

- Interest: \$1,221.59
 - Withdrawals: \$36,963.90
 - Outstanding Checks: \$399.69
 - End of Month Bank Balance: \$673,310.55
- Buckthorn Account:
 - Beginning Balance: \$7,215.72
 - End Balance: \$7,215.72
- Fireworks Account:
 - Beginning Balance: \$13,288.76
 - Deposits: \$200.00
 - Interest: \$10.87
 - End Balance: \$13,499.63

Road Report

- The county replaced the double culverts on East Lake Shore as well as the culvert on Bayfield. Gravel spreading on Bayfield has not been firmly communicated. Mid-October was mentioned as the expected timing.
- Bridge inspection: The state requires an annual inspection and sends the town a report. Kory needs to review.. Any needed work would probably become a next-year item.
- Final charges for reconstruction and gravel will take a large part of the annual road budget. If the county finishes in mid-October, invoices may arrive around November. The town may close the work out by year-end.
- Fall mowing: One more mowing round is expected yet this fall.
- Equipment status: No road-equipment breakdowns were reported.

Birchwood Four Corners Emergency Services

1. The Cedar Lake fire report listed three local calls: two lift assists and one fire. The broader report gave seven calls for the month, compared with nine last year. Year-to-date calls were 57, compared with 73.
2. Cedar Lake EMS had four local calls. The broader monthly count was 25, compared with 12 last year. Year-to-date calls were 155, compared with 104. The report therefore showed fewer fire calls and more EMS calls.
3. BFCESD banking moved from Dairy State to Sterling Bank. Dairy State did not provide a competitive savings rate. It is estimated the lost in interest at about \$16,000 a year, or \$32,000 over two years. Sterling Bank works extensively with nonprofits and offer a better rate.
4. BFCESD increase exceeds the town's levy threshold
 1. Wage, insurance, and operating costs drove the increase
 2. EMS had increased 19.45% last year. The current combined change was discussed as roughly 5.7%. The town's own allocated share rose 7%.
 3. Firefighters received another \$1 an hour. EMS pay also rose by \$1 an hour because the service is near the bottom of the local pay scale.

4. The weekend EMS staffing was described as coverage for cases in which two ambulances must respond. Three people are not necessarily present continuously. On-call staff receive the higher pay only when they go on runs, and compensation varies with tenure.
5. The department budget retains \$30,000 for ambulance equipment and \$35,000 for fire equipment. Don opposed requests to raise those yearly reserve amounts.
6. No new fire equipment is currently expected. Don also noted that a future ambulance might be bought as a demonstration vehicle for about half the cost of a new unit. Donations fully paid for the current ambulance.
7. The 7% town increase cannot be added to the levy
 - a. Cindy said the Department of Revenue confirmed that the town may add an emergency-services increase to its levy only when the increase is 5.3% or less. Cedar Lake's total share increased 7%, so none of that increase can be claimed on the levy worksheet. It must otherwise come from the general budget.
 - b. Kory said added costs commonly reduce the road budget. He also noted the state limits how much the town may raise its levy without voter approval, but BFCESD can request higher amounts. He favored setting a cap on future increases.
 - c. The district uses two allocation factors. About 68% is based on equalized property value, which rose sharply in Cedar Lake. Another 32% uses a three-year call measure. If a change needs to be made it needs to be approved by all seven participating entities.
 - d. The department budget still requires board approval. It is to be placed on the October agenda.

Old Business

- Cindy was able to take the extensions off of the Mosaic phone number. The town shop number as well as the main number will remain the same. The main number will be forwarded to Cindy's phone. All other board members will have their personal number on the website.

New Business

- John McMahon and his partner had met with a surveyor about continuing development around existing buildings on Hemlock Lake Resort. The surveyor advised them to ask the town how to treat their driveways as a private road rather than convey them to the town. The existing driveway is already a private lane, not a town road.
 - Kory described a similar county subdivision case. In that matter, the county sought town confirmation that a private road met town standards, even though the town had no roadway or right-of-way there. The town previously wrote that it had no specific road-design requirements for subdivision approval. It also stated that any later request to convey the drive to the town would require a new review.
 - A public road would generally require enough land for a 66-foot width. That would require agreement from every parcel owner along the drive.

- Kory agreed to tailor an earlier letter into a generic form and send it to Cindy within the next couple of days. The form could then be kept for similar cases. He would sign as road supervisor if needed.
- Cindy proposed using Constant Contact to email residents and property owners about important notices. Estimated cost would be \$250/year. The board agreed to assess Constant Contact at the budget work meeting against.

Correspondence

- ATV crash increase could affect town-road access
 - A state notice on ATV fatalities was posted to the town website. The reported figures were 31 fatalities so far this year and 66 self-reported nonfatal accidents. The notice said injuries and deaths were trending upward.
 - Tony said the sheriff had issued tickets around Labor Day. He warned that continued crashes and violations could eventually affect whether town roads remain open to ATVs
- Lawsuit appeal dismissed
 - A closed session preceded the regular meeting concerning the lawsuit involving Elizabeth Schulte, the Town of Cedar Lake with Ken Leners. Tony reported that the court dismissed an appeal seeking qualified immunity for Leners. Attorneys were expected to meet on October 15 to schedule a possible trial date as the lawsuit moves ahead.
- Surplus truck awaits a valuation
 - Kory had contacted Ascendants about the surplus truck but received no valuation. The truck has a wing plow but no front blade, which is being kept for the new truck.
 - Plowing season is approaching, and Kory thought winter demand might improve the market. He wants to list the truck once Ascendants provides a value.
- Reduce Speed in the Loch Lomond Beach Club area
 - The board received a letter from John Christopherson reporting speeding in the Lockwood and Beach Club area. The current limit is 35 mph. The letter called 35 mph dangerous because delivery trucks, waste-management trucks, and construction vehicles use the area. It described the neighborhood as residential, with no sidewalks or designated walking space. Children live there, and the road is on a bus route. Christopherson asked the board to consider reducing the speed limit to 25 mph and requested follow-up. This will be added to the October board meeting.
- Managed forest request:
 - Barron County notified the town that Daniel Graf sought to place land in managed forest status, or return it to that status, for 25 years. The town could object by September 26. Cindy did not know whether all the land was forestry, and no objection was approved.
- Special assessments:
 - The county proposed paying special assessments to municipalities in full in August. A municipality would repay amounts that property owners later failed to pay. Cedar Lake has no current special assessments, so the proposed change has no immediate effect.
- Barron County unit-meeting update:

- Managed forest request: Barron County notified the town that Daniel Graff sought to place land in managed forest status, which would be for a period of 25 years. The town could object by September 26.
- Senior property-tax idea: Assemblyman Dave Armstrong said officials were considering a way for people age 65 and older to stop paying property taxes. He described it only as an idea because governments would still need to replace the revenue.
- Data centers: County-unit speakers argued that data centers also hold medical and banking data. They said communities should protect themselves through detailed contracts rather than treat all centers as inherently harmful. They also warned about U.S. data being hosted abroad. A full-day data-center event was announced for Tuesday, September 29, from 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Eau Claire. The \$25 fee includes lunch.
- Unit meeting host: Cedar Lake will host the next county unit meeting on November 16 at 6:30 p.m. Refreshments may consist of water, soda, cheese and crackers, or cookies.
- Gladys asked whether the town wanted to include a newsletter with tax bills. Her material was finished, but she needed any additional content sometime in October. The exact deadline was not known. Cindy asked whether it could wait until after the budget meeting. That timing would allow the newsletter to mention the proposed email service. Gladys said space was limited but might allow another item. No final newsletter content or deadline was set.

Tony made a motion, seconded by Jim to pay the bills and adjourn the meeting. All were in favor, motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:17 pm.

This meeting was posted at the Town Hall, Red Cedar Country Store, LLBC and the Town of Cedar Lake website.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Zuleger, Clerk
Town of Cedar Lake