

**Minutes of the Sparta Fire Board Meeting  
June 19, 2025**

**Present:** Cumings (village), Goodfellow (twp), Van Patten (village), Anderson (twp), & Chief Olney. Bergman (twp-chair), Deputy Chief Wood

**Absent:** Peoples (village)

Bergman called the meeting to order @7:00 pm.

**Additions to Agenda:** Fire Authority Village – Township with Jim Lower Input

**Approval of the Agenda:**

**Motion:** Cumings to approve the agenda with addition.

**Second:** Bergman

**Motion Passed:** 4-1

**Public Comment:** None

**Approval of the Meeting Minutes May 22, 2025:**

**Motion:** Made Van Patten to approve May 22, 2025, minutes.

**Second:** Cumings

**Motion Passed:** 5-0

**Finance Board Update:**

Cumings stated that the finance board has met once since the last board meeting. They reviewed and approved all department invoices of \$7,009.18. Cumings stated that most of all invoices were autopay. The department has accumulated \$19,429.03 in interest YTD with a fund balance of \$1,109,383.

**Approval of the bills:**

**Motion:** Made Anderson to approve bills through June 17, 2025

**Second:** Cumings

**Motion Passed:** 5-0

**Fire Authority Village – Township:** The discussion included the fire board, public attendee, and Jim Lower (Village Manager). Michigan Act 57 of 1988 allows for the creation of emergency services subject to all state laws and regulations. (Fire Authority)

Fire authority is an intergovernmental entity that serves as an organization where multiple agencies (township, village) can provide fire protection services. Main advantages of a fire authority is economy of scale modeled by two or more tax-based fire jurisdictions come to agreement on a budget and the jurisdictions when a contract is formed. A fire authority is considered a governmental agency which can issue bonds, use building and equipment as collateral for a commercial loan and have the ability to request the voters for a tax millage to fund the Fire Authority. In the development of a fire authority, the village and township would need to agree on a format, transfer of assets to the authority and a funding arrangement. Once a fire authority is agreed upon between the village and township, a fire authority board would be elected/selected to manage and run the fire authority. As discussed, the current funding would continue at the same rate and sources until such time that Village may become a city and the current fire department millages expires. At such time, the fire authority would have to review the funding sources and terms of the funding going forward.

Chief Olney will check with USDA if there will be any problems/issues with changing from a fire department to a fire authority as it pertains to the grant.

**Motion: Made Cumings** to move forward with forming a "Fire Authority", using the current funding sources, transfer of assets to the fire authority, appointing a Fire Authority Board, using the fire department lawyer.

**Second: VanPatten**

**Motion Passed: 5-0**

**Old Business:**

The USDA grant update: The chief received several documents from the USDA. Request for obligation of funds, Letter of Conditions and Letter of intent to meet conditions and projected costs. The Chief will contact the USDA to review the current funding obligations.

**Motion: Made Goodfellow** to have the Chief to sign and return the Letter of Intent to the USDA

**Second: VanPatten**

**Motion Passed: 5-0**

**Motion: Made Goodfellow** to have the Chief to sign and return the Request for Obligation of Funds Certification Approval.

**Second: Cumings**

**Motion Passed: 5-0**

**Chief's Report:** Chief Olney presented the **Chief's report**. (attached) There were 514 runs YTD. There were 3 mutual aid calls. There were 3 accidents, with 2 minor injuries this past month. Several alarms and hazardous conditions due to the latest storm which swept through the township.

The fire department **audit** is underway with an on-site meeting last week.

The Chief covered the fire board on the on-going issues at **event venues** and the amount of people allowed at each venue. The Chief met with Dale Bergman, Ashley Johnson, Steve Boluyt, Kevin Yeomans and representatives from Briar Barns, Whippoorwill Farm and Apple Valley Events. The Chief stated that the capacity of the event buildings and fire codes were discussed and reviewed. The Chief made it clear he was the person who determined how many people there could be at an event and if there were any issues he is the township point of contact. In setting up the requirements for the buildings, all the event venues representatives agreed to the fire chief's requirements for floor plans, event crowd managers, fire department on site along with the number of people attending a event. The Chief suggested that the township and village include these requirements as part of their venue plans. (attached are the recommendations/requirements that the fire chief will be implementing).

**Self- Storage Facilities:** In response to a med call at a storage facility it was apparent that the storage unit was being used for personal housing. The Chief stated that this is not the first time the department has been called to a storage facility. The Chief has contacted Kevin Yeomans (township) the village to have "Planners" send out letters to storage facility owner stating that these sites are not to be used a living quarter.

**Next Meeting Date:** July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 7:00 PM at the fire station.

Next Finance Meeting Dates: July 1<sup>st</sup> and July 15<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM at the fire station.

**Public Comment:** Rob Steffens stated that he thought that the proposed fire authority would work well for everyone.

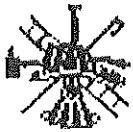
**Adjournment:**

**Motion: Cumings** to adjourn at 8:30 PM.

**Second: Van Patten**

**Motion Passed: 5-0**

Minutes by Goodfellow 6-20-25.



# Sparta Fire Department

36 Elmwood Street  
Sparta, MI 49345  
Telephone: 616-887-0900

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## Chiefs Report June 19, 2025

### Previous meeting information and updates:

1. Station Grant update
2. Audit – started
3. Event venue meeting
4. Self-storage buildings

### New Business:

1. Monthly report
  1. Fire calls (NFIRS 100 classifications)
    1. 867 9-mile - auto aid to Alpine for a garage fire (fire out upon arrival)
    2. M37 and Peach Ridge – mutual aid to Kent City on a dumpster fire full of tires
    3. 4243 Alpenhorn – auto aid to Alpine for an apartment fire (mattress fire Alpine units handled and we were cleared)
  2. Explosions calls (NFIRS 200 classifications)
  3. Rescue calls including accidents (NFIRS 3- classifications)
    1. S. State and Spartan Drive: (no injuries)
    2. M37 and 10-mile: (one minor injury) units assisted with traffic
    3. M37 and Sparta Ave: (one injury) single motorcycle accident-cost recovery
  4. Hazardous Conditions (NFIRS 400 classifications)
    1. 190 15-mile: power line down
  5. Service calls (NFIRS 500 classifications)
    1. S. State and Division: assist to PD with traffic on an accident
    2. 118 Ida Red: assist to PD with the search for a missing subject
  6. Good intent calls (NFIRS 600 classifications)
    1. 3 – dispatched errors
    2. 1- cancelled call after being dispatched
  7. False alarms (NFIRS 700 classifications)
    1. 142 Homestead Acres – faulty detector
    2. 140 E Averill - fire alarm (false trip)
  8. Severe Weather incident (NFIRS 800 classifications)
  9. Special incidents (NFIRS 900 classifications)

Filter statement

Filters

Alarm Date Range 5/19/25 to 6/15/25 | Is Locked true | Is Active true

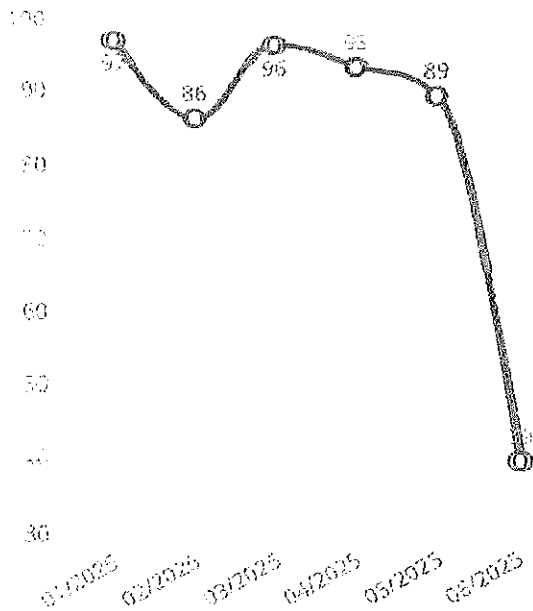
# Incident Count

Count of Total Incidents Year to Date: 501

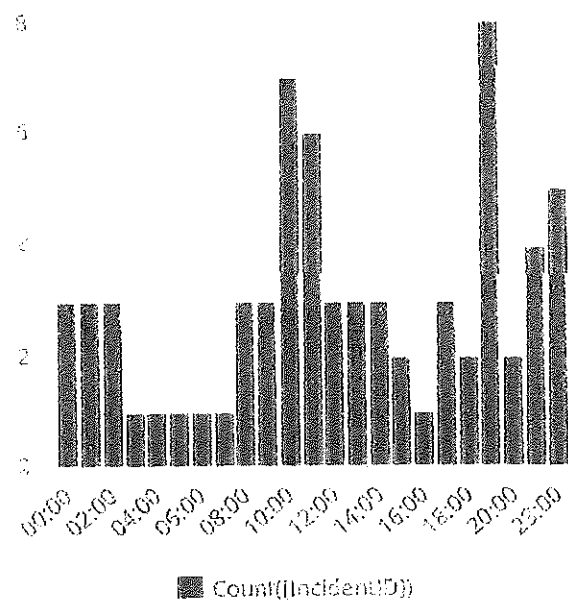
Count of Incidents

# 69

Incident Count by Month (This Year)



Incident Count by Hour of Day



# Fire Board Report

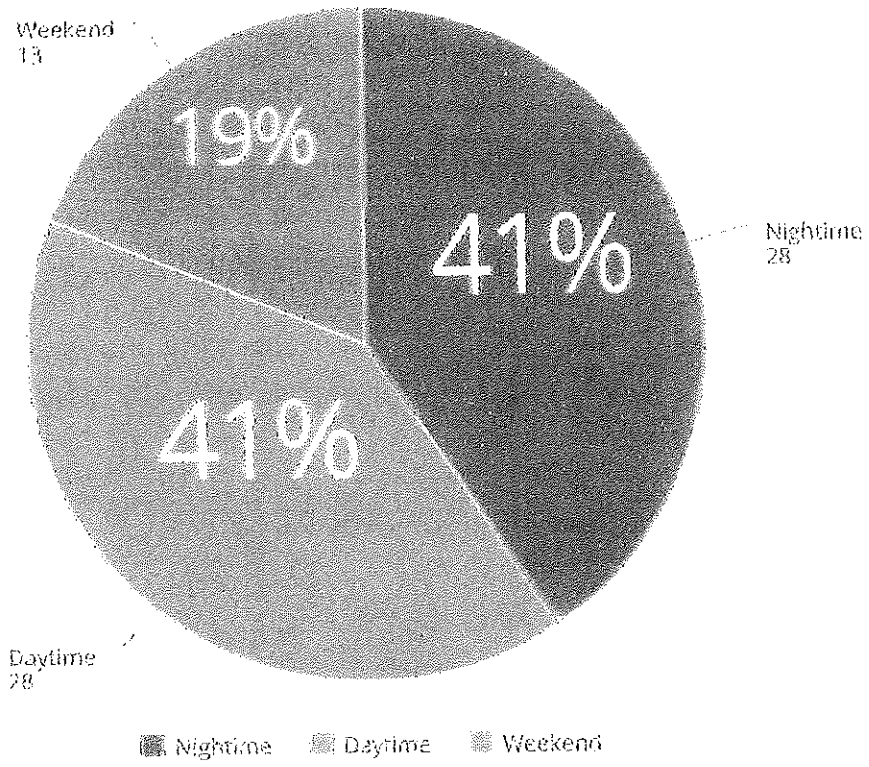
Fire Incidents

Filter statement

Filters

Alarm Date Range 5/19/25 to 6/15/25 | Is Locked true | Is Active true

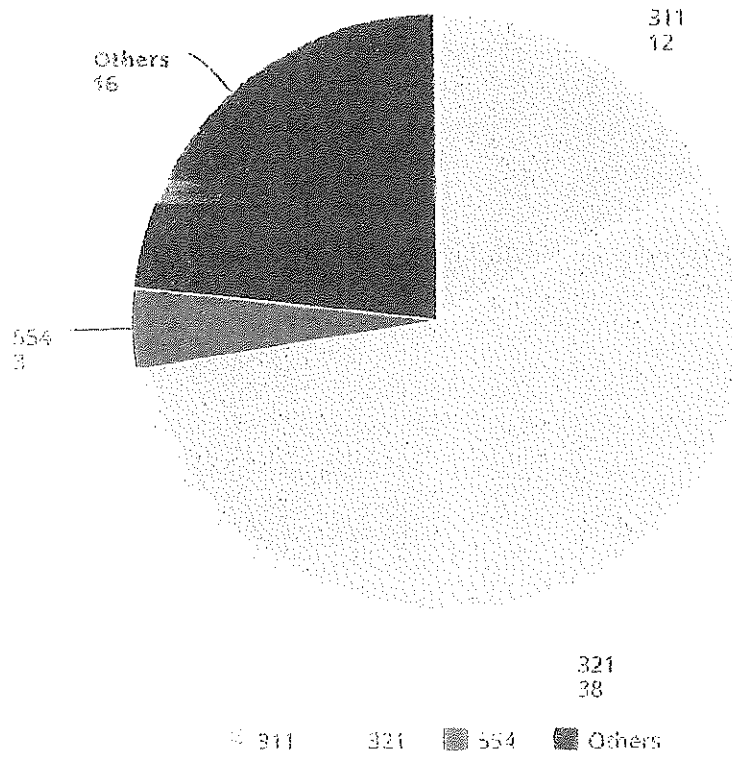
## Incident Count by Shift

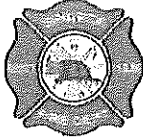


Filter statement

Filters Alarm Date Range 5/19/25 to 6/15/25 Is Locked true Is Active true

Percent of Incident Responses by Incident Type





## Sparta Fire Department

36 Elmwood Street  
Sparta, MI 49345  
Telephone: 616-887-0900  
[www.spartafiremi.org](http://www.spartafiremi.org)

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First off, thanks for taking the time out of your schedule to sit down and talk with us about your venues. The end goal for everyone is to have a safe venue that everyone can enjoy. I have included some of the code reference information that we use to determine the occupancy of these types of occupancies.

I have also included a couple of links for crowd manager training. One of the classes is a free online class, and the other has a minor cost. Once your staff has completed the training, can you please send me a copy of the certificate that we can also keep on file. As we discussed at the meeting, could we have a list of contact people and event dates so we can get hold of someone if needed during an event (event planner, crowd manager, etc.), this can be on a monthly or bi-monthly basis.

At some point, I would like to schedule a time to come visit your venue and walk around to discuss an emergency/safety plan that we can put together that is specific to your venue.

**Daniel Olney – Fire Chief**  
Sparta Fire Department  
36 Elmwood Street  
Sparta, MI 49345

Office (616) 887-0900 ext. 100  
Cell (616) -813-9625  
[danolney@spartafire.com](mailto:danolney@spartafire.com)

### Reference information:

#### Michigan Building Code and Fire Code (both NFPA and IFC)

- All the codes provide guidance on the number of people allowed to occupy a given space based on the square footage and set-up.
- All of the following factors must be considered when determining the occupancy load:
  - number of exits
  - arrangement of the floor plan (chairs only, tables and chairs, standing room)
  - suppression system
  - travel distance to an exit point
  - where do the exit points lead to (referred to as the exit discharge)
- General Information:
  - A building that has a room with fewer than 50 people only needs one exit
  - Once the number of people increases, the number of exits will also increase to handle the occupants. The code states that the main entry doors should be able to handle 50% of the building's occupants.

- For a non-sprinklered building, the travel distance from any given point in the building to an exit can not exceed 75' (for reference, this distance is doubled for a suppression system)
- All exit points from a building must lead to an open, unobstructed area. If the exit path leads down a set of stairs to exit onto a level surface, additional provisions and exits may be required.
- The occupancy load is based on the arrangements of the building. I have found it best to have a couple of different floor plan layouts to choose from, so you are setting things up consistently the same every time, based on the plan.
- Suppression standard
  - Any assembly occupancy over 99 people requires a suppression system (this is in both the building and fire codes)
- Options
  - Event less than 99 – no action needed
  - Event with between 100-200 – add a crowd manager
  - Event with between 200-300 – add a second crowd manager
  - Events over 300 – will require contact with the Fire Chief and Township for approval. Additional resources may be required, and a potential cost could be for this event. This will include outdoor events.
  - Ensure that there is an adequate number of fire extinguishers on-site.
  - Crowd managers are for managing events to prevent injury or property damage in the event of an emergency. Crowd managers are to be trained people who are not directly involved with event attendees. Their duties include keeping the aisles clear, ensuring the maximum occupancy capacity is being held to, and making sure all exits are always clear and unobstructed

<https://www.iafc.org/topics-and-tools/resources/resource/crowd-manager-training>

[https://alison.com/course/mastering-crowd-management#google\\_vignette](https://alison.com/course/mastering-crowd-management#google_vignette)