

VILLAGE OF THORNTON

COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

February 2, 2026 – 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Village President Maxine Reynolds called the Committee Meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

This meeting was recorded by Clerk Nikki Kitakis and streamed live on the Village of Thornton Facebook page.

All electronic devices were requested to be silenced.

ROLL CALL

Clerk Kitakis called roll.

Elected Officials / Staff – Attendance

- President Maxine Reynolds – **Present**
 - Trustee Cunningham – **Present**
 - Trustee Middlebrooks – **Present**
 - Trustee Kaye – **Present**
 - Trustee Glaser – **Present**
 - Trustee Pratscher – **Present**
 - Trustee Piszczewski – **Present**
 - Public Works Superintendent Roberts – **Present**
 - Park & Recreation Director Dunlop – **Present**
 - Police Chief Wesolowski – **Present**
 - Deputy Chief Duvall – **Present**
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PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was accepted for items on the agenda only.
No public comment was offered.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & TOPICS

Trustee Piszczewski- No report.
Trustee Cunningham - No report
Trustee Middlebrooks- No report
Trustee Kaye- No report
Trustee Glaser- No report
Trustee Pratscher- No report

TREASURER’S REPORT

Treasurer Simone Jackson reported the Village cash position as of January 28, 2026, in the amount of **\$8,205,146.54** of which 66% is attributable to the SOS Grant Program.

No discussion.

ATTORNEY’S REPORT

Attorney Touhy – No report.

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Administrator Payne

1. Corrected 2026 Board Meeting Calendar

Administrator Payne reported a correction to the June 2026 Board Meeting dates.

The dates were incorrectly listed as June 8 and June 22 and should be June 1 and June 15.

Updated calendars were provided.

2. Proposed Ordinance – One-Way Streets (Wolcott & Hubbard)

Administrator Payne presented a proposed ordinance to amend the Village Code to establish one-way traffic on portions of Wolcott and Hubbard Streets near the school area. The Administrator explained that the item originated from discussions with the School District Superintendent and Principal, along with Police Chief Wesolowski, Director Roberts, and the Administrator, following repeated concerns regarding traffic speed and pedestrian safety in the school zone.

The Administrator stated that the Village has experienced ongoing issues with vehicles traveling at excessive speeds on Wolcott and Hubbard Streets, including motorists failing to stop or rolling through the stop sign at Harriet and Wolcott. These issues are exacerbated when train crossing gates are activated, resulting in drivers attempting to avoid delays by cutting through residential streets at unsafe speeds.

Options Reviewed

The Administrator reported that two primary traffic-calming options were evaluated:

1. Speed Bumps

- Temporary rubber or plastic speed bumps were discussed and determined to be problematic for snow removal, short-lived, and cost-inefficient over time.
- Permanent pavement speed bumps (asphalt or concrete) were described as more durable but requiring engineering review, funding, and additional budget considerations.

2. One-Way Streets

- Converting Wolcott and Hubbard Streets to one-way traffic was presented as the fastest and most cost-effective short-term solution, allowing implementation within the current school year if desired.

A proposed traffic configuration map was displayed for Board review. The Administrator emphasized that the matter is a significant safety concern, particularly due to the volume of school-aged children and pedestrians in the area.

Board and Staff Discussion

Discussion among Trustees and staff included the following key points:

- Trustee Kaye stated cars go upwards of 60MPH down that road and a one way street would not stop it, but speed bumps would.
- Trustee Piszewski expressed concern for the safety of T-ball participants, stating that drivers may continue to speed even with one-way streets in place and that traffic congestion could increase. Trustee Piszewski indicated that permanent speed bumps would be the more effective solution.

- Trustee Glaser was in favor of one way street.
- Trustee Pratscher was in favor of speed bumps opposed to the way street.
- Trustee Cunningham was in favor of a one way street and permanent speed bumps.
- Trustee Middlebrooks was in favor of permanent speed bumps, and if the speed bumps are not enough then implement a one way street.

- **Resident Access and Special Events**

The Administrator noted a resident at the corner of Wolcott and Harriet expressed concern that one-way traffic could limit access during events at Hubbard Park. Police Chief Wesolowski stated that during special events, the Village provides traffic control and would assist residents with access and egress as necessary.

- **Harriet Street Considerations**

Discussion included whether Harriet Street should remain two-way and whether installing speed bumps only on Harriet would sufficiently address cut-through traffic. Police Chief Wesolowski cautioned that leaving Harriet unchanged could allow drivers to

continue using Hubbard and Harriet as alternate routes, only partially addressing the issue.

- **Train-Related Traffic Congestion**

Trustees discussed how stopped trains contribute to congestion and driver impatience. Questions were raised as to whether one-way streets would worsen congestion. It was noted that train-related congestion is unavoidable and that the primary focus should remain public safety rather than traffic convenience.

- **Safety Concerns**

Trustees expressed strong concern that current conditions pose a risk of serious injury to students and pedestrians. It was noted that the Village cannot staff the area with continuous police presence.

- **Preference for Speed Bumps**

Several Trustees indicated a preference for **installing permanent speed bumps first**, citing concerns that one-way streets could:

- Increase congestion during school drop-off and pickup times,
- Shift traffic problems to nearby streets,
- Create challenges during youth sports activities,
- Still allow speeding without physical deterrents.

Trustees noted that while speed bumps existed historically, traffic volumes and conditions have changed, warranting reconsideration.

- **Combination Approach**

A combined approach of speed bumps and one-way streets was discussed as a potential future option if speed bumps alone prove ineffective. Trustees discussed placing multiple speed bumps per block within the school-area segments to discourage non-resident cut-through traffic.

Direction / Consensus

Following discussion, the consensus of the Committee was to pursue engineering review and cost estimates for permanent pavement speed bumps as an initial step. Staff was directed to gather information regarding:

- Recommended placement and quantity of speed bumps,
- Engineering requirements,
- Estimated costs,
- Potential funding options, including possible collaboration with the School District or other partners.

The proposed one-way street ordinance may be reconsidered in the future depending on the effectiveness of the speed bumps and ongoing safety concerns.

3. **Ordinance – Compensation for Boards & Commissions**

Administrator presented a draft ordinance to standardize stipends for Planning Commission, Fire & Police Commission, and Ethics Commission members. Proposed stipend: \$15 per meeting attended and \$25 per meeting for the Chair, with annual caps.

This item will be placed on the Regular Board Meeting agenda for consideration.

4. **Ordinance – Temporary Extension of Water Bill Due Dates**

Due to numerous resident reports of delayed or missing water bills, the Administrator proposed extending the due date for the current billing cycle and authorizing administrative extensions in similar circumstances.

Proposed timeline:

- Original due date: February 5
- Extended payment deadline without penalty: February 20
- Penalties added: February 23
- Red tags issued: February 26

Second notices will include notification of the extension.

This ordinance will be considered at the Regular Board Meeting this evening.

5. **Generator Automatic Transfer Switch Replacement**

Administrator reviewed a proposal from Alternative Energy Solutions in the amount of **\$15,219.44** for replacement of the automatic transfer switch controller at the Police Department and Recreation Center.

\$18,000 was budgeted for the project.

One proposal was obtained due to vendor familiarity and compatibility considerations.

No discussion.

MAYOR'S REPORT

President Reynolds

- Thanked Washington Memorial Gardens for their generous donation to the Fire Department
- Thornton Court will be held Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 2:00 PM
- SSMMA Vendor Fair Social – March 11, 2026 at 3:30 PM (Village will cover trustee attendance)
- IML 113th Annual Conference – September 17–19, 2026
- Pickleball Open Gym now available at the Community Center
- Coffee with the Mayor – Saturday, February 14, 2026 at 9:00 AM

- Senior Bingo – February 11, 2026
 - Village facilities closed Monday, February 16, 2026 for Presidents’ Day
 - Fire Department services, blood pressure checks, and car seat inspections ongoing
 - Fire Academy applications due February 6, 2026
 - 2026 dog tags available for \$5
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OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Trustee Pisarzewski suggested that the Village consider formally recognizing the Village’s crossing guards for their long-standing service and dedication to student safety. It was noted that some crossing guards, including Michelle and Judy Martin, have served the Village for several decades. The Trustee suggested possible recognition options such as a proclamation (e.g., Crossing Guard Week) or another form of appreciation, such as a small luncheon or acknowledgment, to show gratitude for their service. The suggestion was presented for consideration only; no action was taken.

Trustee Cunningham inquired regarding the status of the 7-Eleven location. It was clarified that the business remains open and was temporarily closed to customers due to floor cleaning and maintenance, including stripping and waxing. Gas sales remained available during that time. It was further noted that the business has indicated it may be in the process of changing ownership. No Village action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by **Trustee Pratscher**, seconded by **Trustee Cunningham**.
Motion carried.

The Committee Meeting adjourned at 6:41PM.

Nikki Kitakis
Village Clerk, Village of Thornton