

VILLAGE OF THORNTON

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 19, 2026

The Special Board Meeting of the Village of Thornton was called to order by Village President Maxine Reynolds on August 19, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

President Reynolds advised those in attendance that the meeting was being recorded by Village Clerk Kitakis and requested that all electronic devices be silenced.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by a moment of silence for public servants, members of the military, the sick, and those recently departed.

Roll Call

Official	Status
President Reynolds	Present
Trustee Cunningham	Present
Trustee Middlebrooks	Present
Trustee Glaser	Present
Trustee Pratscher	Present
Trustee Pisarzewski	Present

Public Comment

President Reynolds opened the floor for public comment.

Simone Jackson

Simone Jackson addressed the Board regarding her proposed removal as Village Treasurer. Ms. Jackson referenced her comments from the August 17, 2026 Regular Board Meeting and stated that she remained concerned that her abrupt and unexplained removal as Treasurer presented significant operational, financial, and compliance risks to the Village.

Ms. Jackson noted that at the August 17 meeting, the Board approved more than \$655,000 in Village payments without receiving a cash position summary or the July Treasurer's Reports. She stated that the financial books had not yet been balanced and that proper fund allocations had not been completed by her prior to her removal.

Ms. Jackson reiterated her concern that removing her without an orderly transition of institutional knowledge and financial processes could expose the Village to operational, financial, and compliance risks. She stated that she also believed the Board and the public deserved clarity regarding the allegations being presented as justification for taking that risk.

Ms. Jackson stated that she had never received a formal performance evaluation while serving in the position and that, prior to receiving President Reynolds' notice demanding her removal, she had never been advised that her performance warranted removal from office.

Ms. Jackson stated that the notice identified five categories of allegations that were being offered as reasons why her immediate removal was allegedly in the best interest of the Village.

First, Ms. Jackson stated that she was accused of failing to maintain familiarity with and proper oversight of Village finances. She stated that she had never previously been advised of such a failure and that the removal notice did not identify a specific instance supporting the allegation.

Second, Ms. Jackson stated that she was accused of producing deliverables containing defects, errors, and oversights resulting in unacceptable work product. She stated that she had never previously been advised that her work product was considered unacceptable and that the notice did not identify a specific defective report, error, or oversight.

Third, Ms. Jackson stated that she was accused of consistent tardiness, misuse of employer time, and failure to arrive at work prepared. She stated that she and Administrator Payne had previously addressed the attendance matter and that their discussion had uncovered what she described as a substantial administrative error concerning her resulting work schedule. Ms. Jackson further stated that she had not been informed what conduct constituted the alleged failure to arrive at work prepared.

Fourth, Ms. Jackson stated that she was accused of insubordination, fostering a negative work environment, and damaging team morale. She characterized these as serious allegations and stated that, prior to receiving the removal notice, no such concerns had been communicated to her. She further stated that the notice did not identify specific incidents supporting those allegations.

Fifth, Ms. Jackson stated that she was accused of unprofessional conduct and overstepping the boundaries of her assigned duties. She stated that she had never previously been counseled or advised that her conduct was considered unprofessional or outside the boundaries of her position and that the notice did not provide a specific example.

Ms. Jackson emphasized that she was not raising these matters during public comment for the purpose of litigating each individual allegation. Rather, she stated that the Trustees were being asked to make a consequential decision on behalf of the Village and its residents and that she believed the record should clearly reflect the circumstances surrounding the proposed removal.

Ms. Jackson stated that she was facing immediate removal based upon serious but generalized allegations that, to her knowledge, had never been presented to her before she received the removal notice and that were not supported by specific examples within the notice.

Ms. Jackson then requested, as a matter of procedural fairness, that she be permitted to participate in the Executive Session for the portion of the discussion concerning her performance and proposed immediate removal.

Ms. Jackson stated that she had served the Village for less than one year and noted that the Board had recently approved a \$10,000 increase in her salary based upon what she described as the value she was providing to the Village. She stated that she was now facing immediate removal based upon allegations she had not heard before receiving the notice.

Ms. Jackson concluded her statement by beginning to reference her refusal to engage in conduct that, in her personal opinion, qualified as governmental misconduct. Her statement concluded at that point in the recording.

President Reynolds thanked Ms. Jackson and asked whether there were any additional public comments.

There were no additional public comments.

Executive Session

At 6:07 p.m., President Reynolds requested a motion to enter Executive Session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of a specific employee of the public body, with action anticipated following the Executive Session.

Trustee Cunningham made the motion.

Trustee Glaser seconded the motion.

Request to Participate in Executive Session

Prior to the roll call vote, Trustee Pisarzewski asked whether Ms. Jackson would be permitted to attend the Executive Session as she had requested during public comment.

Legal counsel advised that Ms. Jackson's attendance was not required under the statute and advised against permitting her to attend, while explaining that the ultimate decision rested with the Board.

Trustee Pisarzewski stated that there are two sides to every story and expressed a desire to hear both sides of the matter. Another member of the Board expressed agreement with that position.

It was also noted that the Board had heard a portion of Ms. Jackson's position during public comment.

Legal counsel recommended that the Board first enter Executive Session to discuss the legal implications of permitting Ms. Jackson to participate. The Board could then reach a collective decision regarding whether she would be invited into the Executive Session for the portion concerning her performance and proposed removal.

Ms. Jackson was asked to remain available outside the Executive Session while the Board discussed her request. Legal counsel advised that Ms. Jackson would be informed of the Board's decision or asked to join the Executive Session if the Board elected to permit her participation.

President Reynolds then proceeded with the roll call vote on the motion to enter Executive Session.

Trustee	Vote
Cunningham	Yes
Glaser	Yes
Middlebrooks	Yes
Pratscher	Yes
Pisarzewski	Yes

Motion carried.

The Special Board Meeting recessed into Executive Session at 6:07 p.m.

President Reynolds advised that the Special Board Meeting would resume following the conclusion of the Executive Session.

Reconvene to Open Session

The Special Board Meeting reconvened in open session at 7:01 p.m.

Village Clerk Nikki L. Kitakis conducted the roll call.

Official	Status
President Reynolds	Present
Trustee Cunningham	Present
Trustee Middlebrooks	Present
Trustee Glaser	Present
Trustee Pratscher	Present
Trustee Pisarzewski	Present

Old Business

None.

New Business

President Reynolds requested a motion to confirm the action of the Village President pursuant to 65 ILCS 5/4-3.1-35-10.

Trustee Cunningham made the motion.

Trustee Glaser seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion, Clerk Kitakis conducted the roll call vote.

Trustee	Vote
Cunningham	Yes
Glaser	Yes
Middlebrooks	Yes
Pratscher	Abstain
Pisarzewski	Yes

Motion carried.

Adjournment

There being no other business for the good and welfare of the Village, President Reynolds requested a motion to adjourn.

Trustee Glaser made the motion.

Trustee Cunningham seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion, Clerk Kitakis conducted the roll call vote.

The recording reflects affirmative votes from Trustees Glaser, Cunningham, Middlebrooks, and Pratscher. A vote from Trustee Pisarzewski was not clearly reflected in the portion of the recording provided.

Motion carried.

The Special Board Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nikki L. Kitakis
Village Clerk

Approved: _____