

VILLAGE OF THORNTON

COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

August 17, 2026

The Committee Meeting of the Village of Thornton was called to order by Village President Maxine Reynolds on Monday, August 17, 2026, at 6:01 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Village Hall. The meeting was recorded by Village Clerk Kitakis and streamed live on the Village of Thornton Facebook page.

Roll Call

Present:

- President Maxine Reynolds
- Trustee Cunningham
- Trustee Middlebrooks
- Trustee Glaser
- Trustee Pratscher
- Trustee Pisarzewski
- Public Works Superintendent Roberts
- Park & Recreation Director Dunlop
- Police Chief Wesolowski

Absent:

- Trustee Kaye
- Fire Chief Schweitzer

Committee Reports

Building Committee — Trustee Pisarzewski

Trustee Pisarzewski reported that during the month of July, the Building Department issued 29 permits and collected \$4,767.50 in permit fees. The permits represented a combined construction value of \$493,698.25.

The Building Department also completed 400 code and building inspections and issued 39 citations during the month.

Finance Committee — Trustee Cunningham

Trustee Cunningham reported that he was unable to access the necessary financial information to provide the current balance and therefore had no report.

Recreation Committee — Trustee Middlebrooks

Trustee Middlebrooks reported that the Recreation Department was preparing for the start of preschool on August 24, 2026.

The Recreation Department was also preparing to participate in the Thornton Fall Fest on October 17, 2026. The Village continued to seek volunteers to assist with organizing the event, and interested residents were encouraged to contact the Village through the Fall Fest email address.

Trustee Middlebrooks further reported that the Recreation Department continued to host Senior Card Club and AA meetings, as well as the monthly Senior Bingo Luncheon and free Family Movie Night in partnership with the Library.

Residents were encouraged to follow the Village's Facebook page for upcoming events and Village news and to continue providing suggestions to the Recreation Department.

Public Works Committee

Trustee Kaye was absent. Trustee Pratscher served as proxy for the Public Works. Public Works performed 34 Julie locates.

Police Committee — Trustee Glaser

Trustee **Glaser** reported that during the month of July, the Thornton Police Department handled a total of **679 calls**, including:

- 386 traffic stops;
- 85 citizen assists;
- 38 assists to other agencies; and
- 5 theft/robbery-related calls.

The Police Department reminded residents that students would soon be returning to school and that a new traffic pattern had been implemented in the area surrounding the school. Brief discussion followed regarding the school's early dismissal schedule.

Fire Committee — Trustee Pratscher

No formal report was presented. It was noted that the Fire Department had been very busy.

Attorney's Report

No report was presented.

Administrator's Report

Administrator Payne presented one item for discussion: continuation of the proposed amendment to the Village Code regarding compensation for elected officials.

Administrator Payne explained that the matter had initially been discussed during the August 3, 2026 Committee Meeting and turned the discussion over to Trustee Cunningham to review the proposal for the Trustees who had been absent from the prior meeting.

Elected Officials Compensation

Trustee Cunningham reviewed the proposed changes to elected-official compensation.

Under the proposal:

- The Village President's compensation would increase from approximately \$3,300 annually to \$10,000 annually.
- Compensation for serving as Liquor Commissioner would increase from \$600 annually to \$1,200 annually.
- Trustee compensation, currently consisting of approximately \$3,600 annually plus a \$100 monthly expense allowance, for total annual compensation of approximately \$4,800, would increase to \$5,100 annually.

- The Village Clerk's compensation would be established at \$5,100 annually as well current clerk compensation is \$3,600 annually.
- The Village President, Trustees, and Village Clerk would receive an annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) on their stipends as well.
- Elected officials would be permitted to miss two meetings per year without a reduction in compensation. Beginning with the third missed meeting, compensation for the missed meeting would be withheld.

Attendance Requirements

A detailed discussion followed regarding the proposed attendance provision.

President Reynolds expressed concern regarding elected officials receiving compensation for meetings they do not attend. She noted that regularly scheduled Village meetings occur on the first and third Monday of each month, subject to holiday scheduling, and stated that elected officials have an obligation to the residents who elected them to attend Village meetings.

President Reynolds distinguished emergency circumstances from planned absences and expressed concern regarding repeated absences while an elected official continued receiving meeting compensation. She stated that under the proposed two-meeting allowance, an official could essentially have one sick absence and one personal absence before compensation would be withheld for additional missed meetings.

Trustee Pratscher acknowledged the concern regarding chronic absenteeism but expressed reservations about making the attendance provision overly restrictive. He expressed concerned stating accidents and sicknesses happen and 2 is not enough. Trustee Piszewski also agreed.

Trustee Piszewski included circumstances involving illness, medical appointments, family emergencies, and other unavoidable situations.

It was stated that while chronic absences should be addressed, an elected official with a legitimate or excused absence should not necessarily lose compensation.

Trustee Piszewski stated that residents are able to observe whether elected officials regularly attend meetings and participate in Village business and ultimately have the ability to hold those officials accountable through the electoral process.

Amount of Proposed Compensation Increases

The Board discussed the amount of the proposed increases and how they could be perceived by Village residents.

Trustee Piszewski expressed concern that the proposed compensation represented an increase of more than 40%, while the proposed increase for the Village President represented a significantly larger percentage increase.

Trustee Piszewski stated that she had received feedback from residents questioning the timing of elected-official raises, particularly following recent employee salary increases and the implementation of residential garbage collection fees.

Concern was expressed that some residents could perceive the Village as imposing an additional fee on residents while simultaneously increasing compensation for elected officials.

Residential Garbage Collection Fees

Discussion followed regarding the Village's residential garbage collection costs and the historical manner in which those expenses had been paid.

It was explained that garbage collection had historically been paid by the Village rather than appearing as a separate charge to residents.

Trustee Pisarzewski discussed a longstanding understanding involving the quarry and garbage collection services. Members recalled being advised that an informal arrangement associated with quarry operations, street cleaning, dust, and other impacts had historically resulted in garbage collection being covered without residents receiving a separate bill.

It was acknowledged that the historical arrangement apparently had never been formally documented in writing.

The Board further discussed that the Village had since implemented a residential garbage collection fee and had already taken formal action regarding that matter.

Several members emphasized that the garbage collection fee and the proposed elected-official compensation changes were separate matters. However, the Board acknowledged that residents could perceive the timing of the two issues differently.

Comparison with Surrounding Municipalities

Discussion also addressed how the proposed compensation figures had been developed.

It was explained that compensation levels for elected officials in surrounding municipalities had been reviewed, similar to the process previously used by the Village when evaluating compensation for other positions.

Members stated that the proposed compensation for the Village President and Village Clerk was not outside the range paid by comparable municipalities and was believed to fall approximately within the middle of the compensation levels reviewed.

Expense Allowance

The Board discussed the existing \$100 monthly expense allowance provided to elected officials.

Discussion included how the allowance is paid, whether receipts are required, how the payment is identified on Village records, and the tax treatment of expenses incurred by elected officials while performing official Village duties.

It was noted that the payment is identified as an expense stipend/allowance. Members also discussed previous practices under which an elected official could submit actual receipts rather than automatically receiving the monthly allowance.

Effective Date of Compensation Changes

Administrator Payne clarified that adoption of a new compensation ordinance would not immediately change the compensation of officials currently serving their existing terms.

Any revised compensation would become applicable to an affected office only upon the beginning of a new term following election or reelection.

Annual Cost of Living Adjustment

Before preparation of the proposed ordinance, clarification was requested regarding how the annual Cost of Living Adjustment would be determined.

Discussion established that the proposed annual adjustment would be based upon the national Cost of Living Adjustment announced by the Social Security Administration.

Direction of the Board

Following discussion, the Board agreed that the proposed elected-official compensation amendment should be placed on the next meeting agenda for formal consideration.

No formal action was taken during the Committee Meeting.

President's Comments

President Reynolds thanked everyone who went above and beyond to assist the Village during the recent severe storms and tornadoes.

President Reynolds stated that Thornton had been fortunate compared with several surrounding communities that experienced significant storm damage and expressed appreciation to everyone who stepped forward to assist the Village and its residents.

Public Comment – Agenda Items

President Reynolds opened the floor for public comment concerning items appearing on the agendas.

No public comments were offered.

Old Business

The Board recognized the efforts of the Public Works Department during the recent severe storms.

A Trustee stated that Public Works consistently does a good job and particularly recognized the Department's response during the recent severe weather.

President Reynolds noted that Public Works Superintendent Roberts had delayed his vacation because of the storms and thanked him for remaining available to assist the Village.

Superintendent Roberts responded that the storm response had been a group effort.

It was also noted that the generator at Village Hall experienced difficulties during the storm response.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

Trustee Pratscher moved to adjourn the Committee Meeting.

Seconded by Trustee Glaser.

A voice vote was taken.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Motion carried.

The Committee Meeting was adjourned.

Nikki Kitakis
Village Clerk
