

VILLAGE OF THORNTON

COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

MAY 18, 2026

The Committee Meeting of the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Thornton was held on Monday, May 18, 2026, at Village Hall, 115 East Margaret Street, Thornton, Illinois.

President Reynolds called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

The meeting was recorded by Clerk Kitakis and streamed live on the Village's Facebook page.

ROLL CALL

Present:

President Reynolds
Trustee Cunningham
Trustee Middlebrooks
Trustee Glaser
Trustee Pratscher
Trustee Piszczewski

Absent:

Trustee Kaye

Also Present:

Public Works Superintendent Bryan Roberts
Park & Recreation Director Dunlop
Police Chief Wesolowski
Fire Chief Schweitzer
Treasurer Jackson
Engineer Kaminsky
Administrator Payne
Attorney Touhy

AWARD PRESENTATION – SOUTH SUBURBAN EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (S.S.E.R.T.)

President Reynolds turned the meeting over to Sergeant Patrick Leone regarding a special presentation honoring the South Suburban Emergency Response Team.

Sergeant Leone reported that on April 27, 2026, Thornton Police officers responded to a residence on Blackhawk Drive for an unknown disturbance. Upon arrival, officers encountered a mother and two small children fleeing the residence while another male subject remained inside holding two children hostage at gunpoint.

A perimeter was immediately established and neighboring agencies responded to assist. Sergeant Leone stated that approximately nine outside agencies assisted Thornton officers. Chief Wesolowski, acting as Commander of the South Suburban Emergency Response Team, activated the SSERT Team.

Once the SSERT Team arrived, containment procedures were initiated around the residence. During negotiations and tactical positioning, officers identified a separation between the offender and the hostages. Less-lethal force was deployed against the offender, incapacitating him long enough for officers to conduct an emergency assault and safely rescue the two child hostages.

Sergeant Leone stated that due to the professionalism, courage, and coordinated response displayed during the incident, the Village wished to present the SSERT Team with a Unit Citation and Lifesaving Award recognizing their actions during the hostage rescue operation.

President Reynolds thanked all responding officers, fire personnel, and emergency responders for their service and dedication to the Village.

Photographs were taken following the presentation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BUILDING DEPARTMENT – TRUSTEE PISARZEWSKI

Trustee Pisarzewski reported the following for the month of April 2026:

- 29 permits were issued totaling \$4,984.74 in fees collected.
- Permit valuations totaled \$424,087.13 in completed work.
- 380 inspections were completed.
- Six stop-work orders were issued.
- 77 citations were issued during the month.

No further discussion followed.

FINANCE REPORT – TRUSTEE CUNNINGHAM

Trustee Cunningham reported the Village cash position for the month ending April 2026 was:

\$8,908,219.02

No further discussion followed.

PARKS & RECREATION REPORT – TRUSTEE MIDDLEBROOKS

Trustee Middlebrooks reported:

- The 2025–2026 preschool program concluded the previous week.
- Summer camp and workshop registrations were now being accepted.
- Weekly senior card club, AA meetings, and TOPS meetings continued at the Recreation Center.
- Free digital learning classes sponsored by the library were held every Tuesday during May.
- Monthly Senior Bingo Luncheons and Free Family Movie Nights continued.
- Residents were encouraged to follow Village updates through Comcast Channel 4, Facebook, and the Village website.

Trustee Middlebrooks encouraged residents to continue providing suggestions and participating in community activities.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT – TRUSTEE KAYE

Due to Trustee Kaye’s absence, the report was presented by Trustee Pisarzewski.

The following Public Works activity was reported for April 2026:

- 74 JULIE locates
- 1 water main break
- 0 hydrant repairs
- 1 water service line repair
- 3 sewer complaints

Additionally:

- 20 lead and copper samples were collected and submitted for laboratory testing.
- An IEPA water facility inspection was conducted on April 14, 2026, with no violations noted.

No further discussion followed.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT – TRUSTEE GLASER

Trustee Glaser reported the Thornton Police Department handled 644 calls for service during April 2026, including:

- 315 traffic stops
- 61 citizen assists
- 23 suspicious activity calls

- 5 theft/burglary/robbery related calls
- 46 assists to outside agencies

No further discussion followed.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT – TRUSTEE PRATSCHER

Trustee Pratscher reported the following Fire Department activity for April 2026:

- 50 inspections completed
- No tickets or fines issued
- 121 emergency responses
- 301 training hours completed

Additional updates included:

- Ambulance 145 remained out of service for repairs.
- Two firefighters completed engineer training and passed their State examinations.
- Three firefighters completed firefighter training.
- One firefighter passed the State examination, while two others were scheduled for testing.

No further discussion followed.

TREASURER'S REPORT – TREASURER JACKSON

Treasurer Jackson reported the following financial activity for the month ending April 30, 2026:

General Fund

- Revenues: \$1,087,757.56
- Expenditures: \$577,818.73
- Excess of Revenues Over Expenses: \$509,938.83

Water Fund

- Revenues: \$50.00
- Expenditures: \$140,486.65
- Excess of Expenses Over Revenues: \$140,436.65

No further discussion followed.

ENGINEER'S REPORT – ENGINEER KAMINSKY

Engineer Kaminsky stated he had no items for discussion.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT – ATTORNEY TOUHY

Attorney Touhy reported no items.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – ADMINISTRATOR PAYNE

PRESENTATION – TURNING POINT ENERGY

PROPOSED BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE FACILITY

350 RIDGE ROAD

Administrator Payne introduced representatives from Turning Point Energy regarding a proposed Battery Energy Storage Facility planned for 350 Ridge Road near the Reliable Asphalt property.

Administrator Payne explained the proposal involved utilizing reclaimed property near the Homewood Memory Gardens area and stated the purpose of the presentation was to provide an overview of the project and obtain feedback from the Village Board regarding whether Turning Point Energy should proceed with additional due diligence and permitting efforts.

Representing Turning Point Energy were Mike Marsh and safety consultant Eric Wood.

COMPANY OVERVIEW

Mr. Marsh explained that Turning Point Energy is a development company specializing in battery energy storage and solar energy projects throughout Illinois and ComEd territory. He stated the company has operated for approximately twelve years and prioritizes community engagement prior to formally pursuing development projects.

Mr. Marsh further explained that the company regularly supports nonprofits and community initiatives and has contributed nearly \$3 million to community organizations during its operation.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Mr. Marsh explained that battery energy storage systems consist of large lithium-ion battery containers approximately the size of shipping containers. He noted the same type of lithium-ion battery technology is commonly found in cell phones and laptops.

The proposed facility would store electricity during periods of low demand and discharge electricity back into the ComEd grid during high-demand periods, particularly during extreme summer peak usage days. He stated this process helps stabilize the electrical grid while reducing strain on infrastructure and assisting with lowering regional electricity costs.

Mr. Marsh referenced Illinois Senate Bill 25, known as the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act, which established a framework for battery energy storage projects and created mechanisms for such projects to support grid reliability.

He stated each five-megawatt battery installation generally occupies less than one acre and consists of approximately five battery containers. The proposed Thornton facility could potentially contain multiple five-megawatt systems totaling approximately thirty battery containers overall.

TAX REVENUE AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Mr. Marsh stated the proposed facility could generate significant incremental tax revenue over the lifetime of the project compared to traditional industrial or residential uses.

Additional benefits discussed included:

- Increased electrical grid reliability
- Reduced stress on existing electrical infrastructure
- Minimal traffic generation
- Minimal noise impacts
- No increased burden on schools or municipal infrastructure
- Potential economic development opportunities

Mr. Marsh described the facility as a “quiet neighbor” due to limited activity occurring onsite after construction.

SITE LOCATION AND DESIGN

Representatives explained the proposed project would be constructed atop a reclaimed plateau area within the Reliable property near Ridge Road. Access would utilize existing roads already servicing the property.

Detailed site plans were distributed to Board members.

The proposed layout included:

- Battery storage containers
- Internal access roads
- Landscaping and screening
- Electrical interconnection equipment
- Incident management stations
- Onsite water storage tanks for fire safety purposes

Mr. Marsh stated the facility would sit approximately 40–50 feet above surrounding grade levels and would likely not be visible from surrounding areas.

SAFETY PRESENTATION

Eric Wood, Director of Training for Energy Safety Response Group and a retired firefighter, addressed the Board regarding battery safety.

Mr. Wood explained that his organization conducts destructive testing on lithium-ion battery systems and participates in Underwriters Laboratories (UL 9540 and UL 9540A) safety standard committees.

He stated the proposed systems are continuously monitored electronically and include sophisticated battery management and thermal management systems designed to detect abnormalities, overheating, or operational issues.

Mr. Wood explained that while lithium-ion battery fires differ from conventional fires, current best practices involve allowing affected batteries to self-consume while surrounding areas are cooled to prevent spread.

He further explained:

- The systems are grounded and protected against lightning strikes.
- Facilities are engineered for varying climates and seismic activity.
- Testing has shown no significant environmental contamination from battery incidents.
- Water runoff from testing has not exceeded hazardous waste thresholds established by federal environmental agencies.
- Facilities are monitored 24 hours per day remotely.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Board members engaged in extensive discussion regarding the proposed project.

Questions and concerns raised included:

- Potential environmental impacts
- Possible effects on soil and air quality
- Fire safety procedures
- Noise levels from cooling systems
- Structural stability of reclaimed land
- Potential sinking or shifting caused by quarry blasting activity
- Long-term maintenance obligations
- Decommissioning procedures after the project lifespan
- Whether the project would directly reduce resident ComEd bills
- Ownership and monitoring responsibilities
- Long-term development plans for the property

Reliable representatives explained the reclamation process used at the site included engineered soil placement and compaction procedures similar to those used in residential and commercial developments.

It was further explained that the site had been professionally reclaimed over many years and that Reliable had extensive experience reclaiming quarry properties for future development.

Turning Point representatives stated the projected operational lifespan of the batteries would be approximately twenty years. At the end of the project's life, decommissioning and removal would occur pursuant to state-required decommissioning plans and financial bonding requirements.

Administrator Payne clarified that no vote was being requested during the Committee Meeting. The purpose of the presentation was solely to determine whether the Board had sufficient interest to allow Turning Point Energy to continue its due diligence and permitting process.

Several Trustees stated they wished to conduct additional research before providing consensus.

Representatives from Turning Point Energy indicated they were willing to return for additional meetings and presentations as needed.

No formal action was taken.

SOUTHLAND COMMUNICATION CENTER INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT

Administrator Payne presented an Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village and Southland Communication Center regarding tower use and communication infrastructure.

Administrator Payne explained:

- E-Com and SouthCom had merged into Southland Communication Center.
- Southland recently established a new state-of-the-art 911 communication facility in Hazel Crest.
- The agreement would transition existing infrastructure agreements from E-Com to Southland.
- The agreement would allow Southland to install, operate, and maintain communication equipment supporting police and fire operations.

Administrator Payne noted there were no direct financial obligations associated with the agreement.

No further discussion followed.

ORDINANCE 2026-020

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY AMENDMENT

Administrator Payne presented Ordinance 2026-020 amending the Village Code related to the Emergency Management Agency.

The amendment would eliminate the prior Mobile Support Team structure and replace it with a designated Emergency Management Coordinator position.

Administrator Payne explained Deputy Chief David Duvall was proposed as the Emergency Management Coordinator.

Discussion followed regarding staffing responsibilities during emergencies, special events, and road closures.

Chief Wesolowski stated the changes would not significantly impact operations and explained the previous team had become increasingly inactive.

Administrator Payne recognized Janet for her years of service and commitment to emergency response efforts, noting she would continue serving as the Village’s emergency weather response coordinator.

Both the ordinance amendment and appointment were scheduled for consideration during the Regular Board Meeting.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

President Reynolds reported the following:

- Flood Brothers “Dump Your Junk Day” would occur Friday, May 22, 2026.
- Memorial Day Parade participation forms were available at Village Hall with a submission deadline of May 20 at 4:00 P.M.
- The parade route had been modified to proceed south on Chicago Road, west onto Eleanor Street, then south onto Hunter Street ending at Village Hall and the Fire Department.
- A memorial ceremony would follow the parade.
- The last day of school would be May 29, 2026.
- The Village was currently accepting vendors, crafters, and food trucks for the October 17, 2026 Fall Fest.
- Residents were reminded to call 9-1-1 for emergencies and to utilize the non-emergency police line for routine assistance requests.

President Reynolds also congratulated fire personnel recently recognized for line-of-duty and lifesaving awards.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Cunningham and seconded by Trustee Middlebrooks.

Roll Call Vote:

- Trustee Cunningham – Yes

- Trustee Middlebrooks – Yes
- Trustee Glaser – Yes
- Trustee Pratscher – Yes
- Trustee Piszewski – Yes

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:08 PM

Nikki Kitakis Village Clerk