

Village of Rothbury
7804 S. Michigan Avenue
Rothbury, Michigan 49452

Dear Neighbors and Friends,

I am writing this open letter to address concerns that have been raised by the community regarding the Electric Forest Music Festival and the Mass Gathering Permit that was issued by the Village of Rothbury.

The Neighborhood Wristband Program has, from its inception, never been a part of the Village's Mass Gathering Permit with the Electric Forest Music Festival. The Neighborhood Wristband Program has always been voluntarily provided by Electric Forest at its own discretion and expense.

In the fall of 2023, the Village was approached by Electric Forest with a request, in part, to extend its Mass Gathering Permit through 2035 as it was previously set to expire in 2031. The Mass Gathering Permit was brought before the Village Council for discussion at seven public meetings between November 7, 2023, and January 4, 2024. An Amended and Restated Permit was approved on January 4, 2024. Throughout this process, the Neighborhood Wristband Program was never a topic of discussion.

For those who might not be aware, the Village collects a surcharge on each ticket sold to Electric Forest. The revenue collected from the surcharge represents about 51% of the Village's annual revenue. To accommodate the extension and other requests made by Electric Forest, the Village sought to increase the surcharge revenue and to streamline the payment timeline.

Under the previous permit, the Village would collect a \$7.50 surcharge, per ticket sold, from 2025 – 2031. Under the Amended and Restated Permit, the Village will collect \$7.50 in 2025, with a compounding 1% increase in ticket surcharge from 2026 through 2035. The result is an increase in Village revenue over the lifetime Permit and will allow the Village to collect the increased surcharge beginning in 2026 instead of 2031. The Village is projected to generate \$4,700,000 in revenue over the lifetime of the Amended and Restated Permit.

The Village will continue to reinvest these funds for the benefit of the community through capital improvements to Village infrastructure, including roads, buildings, and parks, and Village assets, including the recent purchase of a new police cruiser. The Village also manages to maintain a lower property tax rate of just 5 mils, a significant difference from the surrounding areas' rates of 14 mils. The Village is also in the process of implementing a community-wide garbage service that will be provided to Village residents at no charge.

As elected officials, our duty is to our entire community. We believe this revenue holds substantial value and will be instrumental in promoting positive change and long-term sustainability within our community year-round and for years to come.

Thank you,



Vern Talmadge
Village of Rothbury, President