

Village of Rothbury
December 16, 2025
Council Meeting

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Rothbury Village Council was called to order in the Village Hall at 7:02PM by President Vern Talmadge.

Council members present were Autum Drake, Mike Harris, Jim Fekken, Denise Kurdziel, Troy Voorhees and Dylan Zuniga.

Also present were Treasurer Deb Murphy, Police Chief Ethan Walker, DPW Director Scott Beishuizen, Bryan VanNett, John Heykoop, Andrew Heykoop, Roy Strait, Clare Marshall, MaryAnn Canales, Brandon Walsworth, Luke Sass and Rita Kobylski.

After the Pledge of Allegiance, the prior meetings minutes were approved as presented.

Treasurer Deb Murphy presented the monthly treasurer's report.

Police Chief Ethan Walker gave the monthly police report.

Mike Harris, Planning Commission Chair, gave an update to the council regarding the recent Planning Commission meeting. Mike Harris asked for council approval to appoint Stephanie Tallquist as the new planning commission secretary after the retirement of Carol Witzke has left a vacancy, council agreed.

Denise Kurdziel shared updates received by Scott regarding the Czarny Park Grant with final decisions to be submitted at the January council meeting.

The winners of the Village Light Decorating contest were determined by first place going to the Walsworth house, second place going to the Roeseler house, and third place to the Canales house. Gift cards for the winners will be delivered over Christmas break.

Honorable mentions going to the Lohman and Caniff households.

Motion by Mike Harris to have the Clerk handle the Christmas gifts for the Village Staff, seconded by Jim Fekken, 7 ayes, 0 nays motion carried.

Recreation Director Brandy Williams updated on the Santa visit, and that the turnout this year was better than the past 3 years combined.

RCC Director Deb Murphy reported that Community Center is booked up through the end of the year.

DPW Director Scott Beishuizen updated on snow removal in the Village.

President Talmadge reviewed the new committee lists and asked to be notified when committees were meeting so he could be present.

Motion by Autum Drake, with support by Mike Harris to approve the resolution read by President Talmadge to annex the Howard and Lucille Goerbig Estate, in addition to property owned by the Electric Forest into the Village of Rothbury.

7 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried. The Clerk will finalize the paperwork to be sent to the Oceana County Board of Commissioners.

Motion by Mike Harris, seconded by Jim Fekken to approve the proposed meeting dates for the Village Council and the Planning Commission for 2026, occurring on the third and second Tuesdays of the month respectively.

7 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried. The Clerk will publish the meeting dates with the local newspapers and on the website.

Motion made by Mike Harris for the cleaning of the corner of Michigan and Winston by the Old Newsies (GoodFellows) in the amount of \$1500, seconded by Denise Kurdziel.

7 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried.

Council member Denise Kurdziel read through the meeting attendance policy in the ordinance manual, offering clarification on the process of excusing absences. All council members who will not be present at a scheduled meeting will notify the clerk, who will ask council members to approve or disapprove if the absence is excused at a public meeting. Establishing a record of absences in the event of a seat needing to be vacated for absenteeism.

Motion to pay the bills made by Autum Drake, seconded by Mike Harris, 7 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried.

Denise Kurdziel read a prepared statement requesting its documentation in the meeting minutes: "The Village President has an opportunity to start fresh and fully step into the leadership role of this position. That means actively engaging in village activities and raising the bar on how the village operates. Leadership requires more than presiding over meetings-it requires engagement between meetings and an understanding of what is happening throughout the village. If that level of engagement cannot be provided, I believe it is in the best interest of the village for the Village President to consider resigning and allow the Council and Community to move forward. I welcome input from other Council members and respectfully ask that this statement be included in the meeting minutes."

Autum Drake offered support and understanding to Denise's concerns, noting lack of presence and participation. President Talmadge offered explanation for recent absences and ensured the position was not too much for him.

During Public Comment, Andrew Heykoop thanked Deb and the Village for the use of the Community Center and was able to provide over 1200 meals during their meal give away to members of the Community.

Roy Strait, retired Police Chief of New Era spoke, commending Chief Walker for his recent assistance with Victim Services, adding that he is a great Chief and the Village should keep him around.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:56 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Brandy Williams