

## Revitalizing Rutland: Mayor Tyler Eblin's Journey to Financial Stability and Community Renewal

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Rutland, Ohio, a small village in the heart of western Meigs County, holds a unique place in the region with its close-knit community and rich coal-mining history. Known for its strong sense of pride and love of football, Rutland draws not only its residents but also visitors from neighboring areas who feel connected to its historic charm and welcoming spirit. When Mayor Tyler Eblin assumed office on January 1, 2020, he was determined to secure a better future for Rutland despite the daunting challenges he encountered. With a commitment to transparency, community unity, and steady leadership, he began tackling the village's immediate and

significant financial hurdles.

When Mayor Eblin first stepped into his role, Rutland's finances were in dire shape. Annual revenue was insufficient to cover even the most pressing obligations, putting Rutland's future at risk. Addressing these issues became his top priority, and through careful financial planning and negotiation, he was able to reduce the village's liabilities significantly. Working closely with the village council, he implemented cost-saving measures and streamlined spending. Over the next two years, Rutland emerged from its financial crisis, debt-free and with a solid fiscal foundation. With more than \$300,000 in grant funding secured, the village not only recovered but also positioned itself to pursue much-needed growth and development.

As finances stabilized, Mayor Eblin turned his attention to the village's aging infrastructure, which had suffered from years of neglect. Rutland had been without a functioning public works department for several years, leaving critical needs unaddressed. Recognizing this gap, he revitalized the department, beginning with the purchase of essential equipment and submitting a grant application for a new service truck. Key infrastructure projects followed, including storm sewer repairs to prevent sinkholes and mitigate stormwater issues, as well as sidewalk replacements in areas of disrepair. To improve community safety, the village installed

new street signs, and a new work order system was introduced to enable quicker responses to public concerns. Applications were also submitted for road paving grants, and the mayor is actively pursuing funding to revitalize the village's downtown streetscape and coal-abandoned areas.

In addition to these infrastructure projects, Mayor Eblin prioritized parks and recreational improvements. The village recently added a new safety surface to its playground, creating a safer environment for families and children. Addressing abandoned and deteriorating buildings also became a key focus, leading to the demolition of five unsafe structures, at no cost to the village. Among the initiatives closest to his heart is the renovation of the Rutland Civic Center. This 70-year-old building holds personal significance for Mayor Eblin, who fondly recalls playing basketball there as a child. Restoring it has transformed the civic center into a social and economic hub, drawing people to Rutland for events and gatherings, which in turn supports local businesses and enriches the village's economy.

Through it all, Mayor Eblin has led with transparency and a dedication to organization, keeping the community informed about decisions and changes. One of his first tasks was to reorganize the village's disordered records, reflecting his belief that a well-run office starts with effective organization. He values treating people with respect and communicating openly, ensuring that residents feel informed and involved in their village's progress. Early in his tenure, he also became involved with the Mayors Partnership for Progress (MPP), a coalition that has proven invaluable to Rutland. Through technical assistance and grant-writing support, the MPP has opened new doors for the village, offering resources that have furthered the mayor's goals and allowed Rutland to thrive.

Looking toward the future, Mayor Eblin envisions a vibrant Rutland that combines economic growth with a unified community spirit. He sees sustainable revenue generation and continued infrastructure improvements as crucial to the village's long-term success. To help guide Rutland's growth, he plans to develop a comprehensive five-year plan and, in collaboration with partners like Small Nation and the MPP, explore new development opportunities to foster economic vitality. His hope is to add trails and attractions that will draw visitors, further boosting the local economy.

Reflecting on his journey, Mayor Eblin encourages other leaders to be transparent, engage with their communities, and make decisions with both immediate and long-term impacts in mind. He believes that trust, honesty, and active community participation are the cornerstones of effective governance. Through careful stewardship, dedication, and a passion for his community, Mayor Eblin is helping shape Rutland into a more resilient and thriving village that its residents are proud to call home.