



Meeting Minutes

Call Meeting to Order

The Coal City Board meeting for Wednesday, October 22, 2025, was called to order by Mayor Spesia at 7:00 p.m. Trustees Dave Togliatti, Dan Greggain, Pam Noffsinger, Bill Mincey and C.J. Lauterbur were in attendance. Also, Ryan Hansen from Chamlin Engineering, Attorney Katie Nagy, Chief Mike Imhof and Matt Fritz, village administrator. Absent Ross Bradley.

Pledge of Allegiance

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Warrant List

The mayor had a couple of questions on payment requests. There were no other comments, corrections, or questions.

Motion to approve the warrant list was made by Trustee Mincey, second by Trustee Lauterbur. Motion carried with Trustee Togliatti, Trustee Greggain, Trustee Noffsinger, Trustee Mincey and Trustee Lauterbur voting yes. Trustee Bradley; Absent

Public Comment

No members of the public came forward for public comment.

Approval of Block Party on Oak Street, west of the intersection at Elizabeth and East DiPaolo

Village Administrator Matt Fritz presented a new block party request from Laura Sharer for Oak Street, west of the intersection at Elizabeth and East DiPaolo. He explained that the requester had collected signatures from neighbors and provided a detailed map of the event area. The block party would require barricades at DiPaolo and just passed Elizabeth on West Oak Street, allowing traffic to use Elizabeth Street to navigate around the closure.

Fritz noted that while the request did not yet have signatures from the Police Department and Maintenance Department, both had been consulted and were prepared to support the event if approved by the board.

The board approved the request without formal vote, as such approvals are handled administratively through the police chief and village administrator.

Ordinance 25-24 Granting a Variance at 69 S. Broadway, BBQ-Baker for the Placement of an Accessory Structure in the Rear Yard

Village Administrator Matt Fritz presented Ordinance 25-24 regarding a variance request for 69 South Broadway. He explained that Tracy Baker of BBQ-Baker, currently an itinerant vendor in Coal City, was seeking to establish a permanent location at the former Knockin Boots Restaurant. The variance would allow the placement of an all-steel building in the rear yard to house two smokers for food preparation.

Fritz explained that the Fire Code requires special provisions for food preparation, but lacks specific standards for low and slow cooking methods used in barbecue. A public hearing was held on Monday at the Planning and Zoning Board meeting, resulting in a unanimous recommendation for approval with specific conditions outlined in Exhibit A of the ordinance.

The conditions included that the smoker units would not exceed 350 degrees, a temperature specification that had been left blank in the original document. Other requirements included a double-walled chimney through the roof of the structure and placement at least 6 feet from an existing walk-in cooler.

Mayor Spesia expressed support for the request, noting this transition from an itinerant vendor to a brick-and-mortar establishment was exactly what the village hoped for when establishing the itinerant vendor program.

Motion to adopt Ordinance 25-24 granting variance at 69 South Broadway for placement of an accessory structure within the rear yard made by Trustee Lauterbur, second by Trustee Mincey. Motion carried with Trustee Togliatti, Trustee Greggain, Trustee Noffsinger, Trustee Mincey and Trustee Lauterbur voting yes. Trustee Bradley; Absent

Ordinance 25-25 Adding Solar Panel SSEC Review Fees for Installation Permits

Village Administrator Matt Fritz presented Ordinance 25-25 regarding the addition of specific fees for solar panel installation permits. He explained that while small-scale energy conversion systems (SSEC) were already addressed in the village code, the current administrative permit fee structure did not reflect the substantial time required for reviewing solar panel applications.

Fritz noted that each solar permit application typically requires multiple revisions due to Coal City's unique code requirements, particularly the standard requiring a 4-sided polygon for street-side solar arrays. The proposed fee structure would be \$500 for residential and \$750 for commercial/industrial applications, which is in line with other municipalities that charge between \$400-\$700 for similar permits.

Motion to adopt Ordinance 25-25 increasing the SSEC building permits to \$500 for residential and \$750 for commercial/industrial applications made by Trustee Greggain, second by Trustee Mincey. Motion carried with Trustee Togliatti, Trustee Greggain, Trustee Noffsinger, Trustee Mincey and Trustee Lauterbur voting yes. Trustee Bradley; Absent

Ordinance 25-26 Authorizing the Purchase and Sale Agreement for 35-55 S. Broadway

Village Administrator Matt Fritz presented information about a proposed purchase of vacant property at 35-55 South Broadway. Fritz explained this represents three parcels (referred to as Parcel 3 in the marketing map) that together with the village's existing parcel (Parcel 2) would provide significant consolidated space for potential development.

Fritz stated the purchase price would be \$265,000 for approximately 21,870 square feet of land. He noted that negotiations were still ongoing for Parcel 1, and that consolidating ownership of these parcels would make development more feasible by reducing the number of owners involved.

Mayor Spesia commented that the lot had been vacant for a long time, and consolidating ownership would make it easier to encourage development or even allow the village to potentially develop the space itself. Several trustees expressed support for the acquisition as a step toward addressing the longtime vacant corner lot in the downtown area.

Motion to adopt Resolution 25-26 authorizing the village to enter into an agreement to acquire commercial property from the current owner made by Trustee Lauterbur, second by Trustee Togliatti. Motion carried with Trustee Togliatti, Trustee Greggain, Trustee Noffsinger, Trustee Mincey and Trustee Lauterbur voting yes. Trustee Bradley; Absent

Preliminary Reading - 2025 Annual Property Tax Levy

Village Administrator Matt Fritz presented the preliminary 2025 property tax levy for board consideration. He noted that the proposed levy would increase by just under 5% for operational line items, which means no Truth in Taxation hearing would be required.

Fritz explained that the proposed tax rate would actually decrease from \$1.78 to \$1.73 per \$100 of assessed value, representing approximately a 3% decrease in the tax rate. This would result in a reduction of about \$14.37 per \$100,000 of market value for property owners. The figures were based on a conservative estimate of a 6% increase in assessed property values.

Fritz noted that the largest levy item continued to be the police pension fund, which required maintaining current funding levels to address ongoing pension obligations. The preliminary levy will be set for formal consideration at the December 10th meeting.

Authorize Mayor Spesia to enter into Professional Services Agreement with Studio GC for the Police Department and Village Hall Facilities Space Needs Analysis

Village Administrator Matt Fritz presented a recommendation to hire Studio GC to conduct a space needs analysis for the Police Department and Village Hall facilities at a cost of \$25,000. Fritz explained that a committee including Trustee Togliatti, Chief Imhof, Mayor Spesia, and himself had interviewed multiple firms and selected Studio GC based on their experience with police facilities and positive references.

Fritz explained the purpose was to determine whether rehabilitation, reconstruction, or replacement would be most appropriate for the aging facilities, particularly the police department which has significant functional limitations. The study would provide cost estimates for various options and is expected to be completed by the end of the first quarter or early second quarter of 2026.

Chief Imhof commented that the department was not seeking a "Taj Mahal," but rather a facility that would be conducive to proper police operations, including basic necessities like more than one functioning bathroom and proper interview spaces.

Village Attorney Katie Nagy noted that the agreement was quite basic and suggested adding standard language regarding termination options and the local government prompt payment act, subject to attorney review.

Motion to authorize the Mayor to enter into a professional service contract with Studio GC for the Coal City Police and Administration Space Needs Study that costs \$25,000 subject to final legal review and approval made by Trustee Lauterbur, second by Trustee Mincey. Motion carried with Trustee Togliatti, Trustee Greggain, Trustee Noffsinger, Trustee Mincey and Trustee Lauterbur voting yes. Trustee Bradley; Absent

Authorize the Purchase of a Compact Utility Tractor for Public Works not to exceed \$34,959.91

Village Administrator Matt Fritz presented a request to purchase a compact utility tractor for Public Works at a cost not to exceed \$34,959.91. He explained this would replace existing equipment that was no longer

supported by John Deere, requiring all new attachments. Although the village had considered switching to Kubota, price comparisons showed John Deere to be more economical. Fritz confirmed that this purchase was budgeted two years ago and was now ready to proceed.

Motion to authorize the acquisition of a compact utility tractor along with the necessary attachments for a price not to exceed \$34,959.91 made by Trustee Greggain, second by Trustee Togliatti. Motion carried with Trustee Togliatti, Trustee Greggain, Trustee Noffsinger, Trustee Mincey and Trustee Lauterbur saying yes. Trustee Bradley; Absent

Report of the Mayor

Mayor Spesia thanked everyone who attended the State of the Village event held that afternoon at Lyons Hall.

He also reported on discussions from the recent Finance Committee meeting regarding the 1% grocery tax. The committee decided not to reinstate the tax after January, resulting in an estimated revenue loss of \$40,000-\$45,000 for the village. The Mayor explained that while the savings for residents are relatively small (50 cents per \$50 spent), the board agreed that any tax reduction on essentials would benefit residents and potentially help Berkot's grocery store remain competitive with Jewel. He noted that the village had previously approved gaming for Berkot's to help with their maintenance costs.

Report of the Trustees

Trustee Lauterbur expressed condolences to Kayla Melvin on the loss of her mother, explaining her absence from the meeting. He also commended the board for their decision on the grocery tax, noting that while the state's original decision to eliminate it was frustrating, the board ultimately agreed that taxing essentials like meat, cheese, vegetables, and fruit was inappropriate.

Trustee Mincey expressed condolences to Kayla and her family as well as Jill Breneman (Planning & Zoning Board Member) on the loss of her father.

Trustee Noffsinger reported on plans for the 250th US celebration scheduled for June 20th, which would include a parade at noon and conclude with a drone and fireworks show at Coal City High School around 9:30 PM. She also mentioned the upcoming tree lighting ceremony and Kriskindle event in the park on November 30th.

Trustee Greggain expressed condolences to Kayla and her family.

Deputy Clerk, Linda Sula reported the veteran banners should be in this week and hopefully installed no later than Monday.

Mayor Spesia added the veterans' program has 36 veterans' banners that will be displayed around Veterans Day until the Monday of Thanksgiving. He noted there was capacity for approximately 14 more banners. He thanked Sula for her work on the banners as well as Officer Jones for initiating the program.

Report of Village Attorney

Village Attorney Nagy had no report but expressed her pleasure at attending the meeting.

Report of Village Engineer

Village Engineer Ryan Hansen provided updates on three projects:

The water plant work is nearing completion, with testing completed and programming underway to ensure proper system integration. Epoxy flooring and windows were recently installed.

The Broadway bridge project has progressed with the removal of the bridge deck, installation of riprap, and ongoing pier repairs. Bridge beams were scheduled for delivery the following Monday with completion expected the week before Thanksgiving.

The Hunters Run subdivision utilities installation was progressing well.

Report of Chief of Police

Chief Imhof reported on security measures taken for a recent vigil event in the city. Though not a city-sponsored event, the department coordinated with Morris Police Department and the county to ensure public safety. The Chief also announced that Officer Brandon Larson had been selected to join the county's REACT team and would be receiving training soon.

Report of Village Administrator

Village Administrator Fritz reported on his recent participation in the Illinois Public Works Mutual Aid Network conference, where he gave a presentation on the 10-year retrospective of the Coal City tornado response. He announced that the Hunters Run senior residential subdivision would have its groundbreaking on the 29th at 10:00 AM, and that the annual Veterans Day event would be held at Diamond Banquet Hall on November 11th at 11:00 AM, with Officer Nugent representing the village as a speaker.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 PM made by Trustee Lauterbur, second by Trustee Mincey. Motion carried with Trustee Togliatti, Trustee Greggain, Trustee Noffsinger, Trustee Mincey and Trustee Lauterbur and Trustee Mayor Spesia voting yes.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Sula".

Linda Sula, Deputy Clerk