



Meeting minutes Public Hearing for Phillips/Togliatti Annexation Agreement

Call meeting to Order

A public hearing for the Phillips/Togliatti Annexation Agreement was called to order by Mayor Spesia on Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at 7:00 PM. A roll call was conducted with Trustee Dave Togliatti, Trustee Dan Greggain, Trustee Pam Noffsinger, Trustee Ross Bradley, Trustee Bill Mincey and Trustee CJ Lauterbur present. Also in attendance were Attorney Mark Heinle, Matt Halloran from Chamlin Engineering, Chief Mike Imhof and Matt Fritz, Village Administrator.

Before beginning the hearing, Mayor Spesia provided detailed procedural information about the public hearing process, including the requirement for sworn testimony, the right to speak, and the procedures that would be followed throughout the evening.

Phillips/Togliatti Annexation Agreement

Administrator Fritz explained that the public hearing was being held to consider a proposed annexation agreement for 80 acres of farmland east of and adjacent to South Carbon Hill Road in unincorporated Grundy County. The property is jointly owned by Joseph Thomas Phillips and Joseph John Phillips as co-trustees of the Joseph Thomas Phillips revocable trust, and Karen A. Togliatti as trustee of the Karen Togliatti trust, each holding a one-half undivided interest.

Fritz outlined that within the annexation agreement, the owners requested two primary provisions: industrial zoning designation upon annexation, and a partial property tax rebate for portions of the municipal levy (specifically parks and existing debt) that would remain as long as the current owners retain ownership of the property.

Village Attorney Mark Heinle provided additional legal context, noting that the annexation agreement has a 20-year term (the maximum allowed by law) and requires a super majority of five out of seven trustees to pass. He emphasized that while the property tax rebate provision would expire if the property is sold, the annexation agreement runs with the land, meaning future owners would be bound by its terms.

Heinle clarified that the scope of tonight's hearing was limited to the annexation agreement itself, and that any future development proposals, special zoning entitlements beyond industrial zoning, subdivisions, or economic agreements would be subject to separate future hearings and proceedings.

Property Owner Presentation

Joseph J. Phillips, representing the two-family trusts, addressed the board. He explained that the property has been in their family since the late 1920s and that the family has long been part of the Coal City community, having owned substantial property along Carbon Hill Road. Phillips noted that adjacent properties to the north have already been annexed and industrially zoned, and properties to the east have also been annexed and zoned. He pointed out that railroad infrastructure crosses the area and aims directly at this 80-acre parcel, making industrial development a logical fit. Phillips also noted that

the property sits at a natural boundary, with everything south being in the Gardner School District and everything north in the Coal City School District.

Public Comment

The hearing included several public commenters:

Dave Heyn (Diamond Resident) indicated he had intended to make a comment but had addressed his concerns with Administrator Fritz prior to the meeting, so he had no public comment at that time.

Georgette Vota (Resident) spoke in favor of data center development, though this was beyond the scope of the annexation hearing. She highlighted the economic benefits of data centers, including significant capital investment, high-skilled jobs, infrastructure improvements, and sustainability features. She expressed support for the village's elected officials and their due diligence on economic opportunities.

DavyLynn Wills (Mazon) representing the David and Jean Wills irrevocable trust, spoke on behalf of a 156-year-old farm south of the proposed project. She emphasized that they were not opposing the project but seeking transparency and respect for all relevant factors. The family had submitted a letter to the board outlining their concerns.

Allen Wills and Darren Wills echoed the call for transparency and honesty, emphasizing the long history of their family farm.

Kema Alyo raised concerns about environmental and health impacts, particularly regarding proximity to schools and potential effects on children. She questioned water usage, noise pollution, and cited concerns about health impacts including lung cancers and miscarriages associated with data centers. She also noted that data centers provide relatively few permanent jobs compared to construction jobs.

Michael Chiarappa (Resident) provided a different perspective on the economic development, questioning the actual job creation numbers being promoted and expressing skepticism about claims of 200-300 jobs. He argued that data centers typically employ relatively few people in security, landscaping, supervision, and maintenance roles. Chiarappa advocated for the community to consider alternative development approaches that would better preserve the town's character while still providing economic growth opportunities. He emphasized Coal City's proximity to Chicago as an advantage for other types of development.

Hearing Closure

After all sworn speakers had the opportunity to comment, Mayor Spesia closed the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Mayor Spesia noted that while tonight's hearing focused specifically on the annexation agreement, the village would address data center questions and provide transparency on that separate matter in future meetings, as everyone deserves honest information and transparency on such important issues.

Adjourn

The public hearing was adjourned at 7:24pm, with the regular village board meeting to commence immediately following to consider the annexation agreement ordinance and related matters.

Motion to adjourn the public hearing was made by Trustee Lauterbur, seconded by Trustee Greggain. Motion carried unanimously on roll call vote.


Village Clerk