



## Meeting minutes

### **Call meeting to Order**

At 7:00pm on Wednesday, March 11, 2026, Mayor Dave Spesia called to order the regular board meeting of the Coal City Village Board in the boardroom of Village Hall. Roll call was taken 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, Ryan Hansen from Chamlin Engineering, Chief Mike Imhof and Matt Fritz, Village Administrator.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Approval of Minutes**

#### **February 24, 2026 Public Hearing**

Mayor Spesia asked for any comments, corrections, or questions regarding the meeting minutes from February 24, 2026 public hearing. Hearing none, a motion was made to approve the meeting minutes.

*Motion to approve the meeting minutes for February 24, 2026 public hearing was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Mincey. The motion carried with all trustees voting yes.*

#### **February 24, 2026 Regular Meeting**

Mayor Spesia asked for any comments, corrections, or questions regarding the meeting minutes from February 24, 2026 regular meeting. Hearing none, a motion was made to approve these meeting minutes.

*Motion to approve the meeting minutes for February 24, 2026 regular meeting was made by Trustee Greggain and seconded by Trustee Togliatti. The motion carried with all trustees voting yes.*

### **Approval of Warrant List**

Mayor Spesia asked for any comments, questions, corrections, or additions to the warrant list. Hearing none, a motion was made to approve the warrant list.

*Motion to approve the warrant list was made by Trustee Bradley and seconded by Trustee Lauterbur. The motion carried with all trustees voting yes.*

### **Public Comment**

Mayor Spesia established ground rules for public comment, asking for civility, no profanity, no interruptions, and limiting comments to three minutes. Multiple residents spoke primarily about their opposition to a proposed data center development.

Natalie Bunton of unincorporated Grundy County, expressed opposition to the data center, citing concerns about water usage, light pollution, property values, noise pollution, and drought conditions. She questioned why Coal City would approve something other communities had voted down and emphasized her desire for peace and quiet.

Toni Vanderachis of Coal City, briefly supported Natalie's comments about data center problems and urged the board to reconsider.

Tina Johnson of Diamond, expressed strong opposition to the data center, specifically citing concerns about BlackRock's involvement as an investor. She mentioned BlackRock's purchase of utility companies, questioned the necessity of AI in society, criticized the lack of local jobs the project would provide, and urged the board not to accept what she characterized as bribes.

Wallace Dick of Coal City, delivered an impassioned speech against the data center and BlackRock, calling BlackRock "evil" and "seditious." He urged the board not to be bought out and invoked religious principles in opposing the development.

Coal City resident Luke Konecny questioned the village's ability to hold BlackRock accountable given their size and resources, wondering what recourse the village would have if the company failed to meet its obligations.

Barb Hammitt of Coal City, raised health concerns about data center emissions, including nitrogen oxides and particulate matter that can exacerbate COPD, heart failure, asthma, emphysema, and cancer. She argued that while data centers are necessary, they should be located away from residential areas and schools.

Coal City resident Michael Chiarappa emphasized the need for accountability and transparency, expressing concern about the village's ability to hold a massive corporation accountable for its commitments. He urged the board to ensure any agreement would provide substantial benefits to the town and stressed the importance of having enforcement mechanisms in place.

Patricia McClintock of Coal City, raised multiple concerns including traffic safety on the curve at Marguerite, plans for senior housing entrance/exit points, communication tower issues after tornado damage, and security concerns about data centers potentially attracting threats similar to what Dresden nuclear facility experienced.

John Hawkinson of Coal City, expressed support for the Hunters Run subdivision and park development but raised concerns about a gob pile (coal refuse) on the south half of the property. He questioned who would be responsible for the reclamation costs and whether the village board had addressed this issue with the developer.

Several speakers returned with additional brief comments reiterating their opposition to the data center project.

### **Ordinance 26-05 Variance to Install fence at 220 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St. Jason & Brandi Hamrick**

Administrator Fritz presented a variance request to install a fence at 220 East First Street for Jason and Brandi Hamrick. The variance is needed because the fence would be placed within the corner side yard, which requires board approval. The Zoning Board of Appeals unanimously recommended approval after a public hearing where no one appeared in opposition.

Fritz explained that the fence would start at the southwest corner of the house and extend to the vision triangle at which point it would follow on a diagonal along the vision triangle boundary before connecting to the westward boundary. The petitioners were present but did not need to speak.

*Motion to adopt Ordinance 26-05 allowing a fence within the corner side yard at 220 East First Street was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Mincey. The motion carried with all trustees voting yes.*

### **Authorize Mayor to enter into OSLAD Grant Agreement**

Administrator Fritz explained that the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) awarded the village a 50/50 grant maxed at \$600,000 for park development at Hunters Run and Marguerite. The grant will fund park amenities on both the north and south sides of the development area. Fritz noted that a comprehensive environmental review process will be required before funding can proceed, and the village will need to hire professional services for the final bid package.

*Motion to authorize the mayor to enter into an agreement with IDNR for development of the Hunters Run park with OSLAD funding was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Togliatti. The motion carried with all trustees voting yes.*

### **Authorize 3-year Extension on Garbage Collection Services with LRS**

Administrator Fritz presented a three-year extension proposal for garbage collection services with LRS. The contract would increase rates from \$26.00 to \$26.65 in the first year, with minimal increases in subsequent years. This allows the village to maintain current resident rates. Jordan Kramer from LRS was present to answer questions and confirmed that all current services would remain the same, including weekly garbage and recycling pickup, seasonal yard waste, bulk item collection, and appliance collection upon request.

*Motion to authorize the mayor to enter into an agreement with LRS for continuation of garbage collection services upon final legal review of the prepared extension was made by Trustee Greggain and seconded by Trustee Mincey. The motion carried with all trustees voting yes.*

### **Authorize Payment for Services - SpaceCo (Site Readiness Grant)**

Administrator Fritz requested authorization for payment of \$56,204 to SpaceCo for additional work completed on the site readiness grant project. This represents the first invoice exceeding \$25,000, which requires board approval. The payment relates to ongoing work under a grant that provides up to \$120,000 in reimbursement.

*Motion to authorize payment of \$56,204 for additional work completed to date by SpaceCo related to the site readiness grant was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Bradley. The motion carried with all trustees voting yes.*

### **250 Celebration Update/Summary**

Administrator Fritz provided an update on the America 250 celebration planned for June 20th. The event will feature a parade, afternoon activities, and evening festivities including hot air balloon rides, entertainment, and a fireworks display. Several contracts need approval for entertainment and balloon services totaling \$11,025. Village Attorney Heinle noted that contracts require legal review for insurance and liability issues, particularly regarding hot air balloon operations.

*Motion to authorize the mayor and/or administrator to enter into agreements for procurement of \$11,025 worth of contracted services for the America 250 celebration, including contracts with Midwest Balloon Rides, The Clients (band), and The Hot Toddlies (band), pending legal review and approval was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Greggain. The motion carried with all trustees voting yes.*

## **Coal City Junior Women's Club Permission Request for 2026 Activities**

The Coal City Junior Women's Club requested permission for their annual activities including pinwheel displays and use of Campbell Park. Village Attorney Heinle recommended formal approval for village property usage.

*Motion to authorize Coal City Junior Women's Club usage of village property for the display of pinwheels for the month of April was made by Trustee Bradley and seconded by Trustee Lauterbur. The motion carried with all trustees voting yes.*

## **Report of the Mayor**

Mayor Spesia had no items to report this evening.

## **Report of the Trustees**

Trustee Lauterbur reported that the Parks Board meeting may be cancelled next week due to lack of agenda items.

Trustee Mincey shared good news about a traffic signal coming to the intersection of Route 113 and Carbon Hill Road near the high school. After research showing 1,200-1,400 cars passing through twice daily, the state conducted a study and has committed to installing a temporary traffic light improvement, potentially this year with implementation likely next year.

Trustee Bradley had nothing to report.

Trustee Noffsinger provided updates on America 250 parade progress, noting many confirmations pending for military bands and other participants. He also congratulated the Coal City wrestlers on their second consecutive state championship.

Trustee Greggain had nothing to report.

Trustee Togliatti had nothing to report.

## **Report of Village Clerk**

Village Clerk Melvin reminded board members about economic interest forms that are due by May 4th, encouraging trustees to complete them promptly and check spam folders if they haven't received them yet.

## **Report of Village Attorney**

Village Attorney Heinle had no additional report beyond his contributions to the evening's discussions.

## **Report of Village Engineer**

Village Engineer Hansen reported that North Broadway project plans are taking shape and he hopes to present them to the board next month in April for feedback.

## **Report of Chief of Police**

Chief Imhof congratulated the wrestling team on their achievement and announced the police department's participation in a polar plunge event on Saturday, March 15th at Braidwood Recreation Club beginning at 12:00 PM. He also presented new police department patches featuring updated designs while maintaining connection to the original patch design, with different colored stars for administrative and patrol personnel.

### **Report of Village Administrator**

Administrator Fritz congratulated Tara and Nate from Babe's Tap for receiving an entrepreneur of the year award at the recent Grundy Economic Development and Chamber dinner. He also reminded residents about the upcoming high school production of "Frozen" this weekend.

### **Adjourn**

*Motion to adjourn at 8:04pm was made by Trustee Greggain and seconded by Trustee Togliatti.  
The motion carried with all trustees voting yes.*

X   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kayla Melvin  
Village Clerk