



Meeting minutes

Call Meeting to Order

Mayor David Spesia called the Coal City Village Board Meeting to order on Wednesday, May 13, 2026, at 7:25 PM, immediately following the public hearing. A roll call was conducted with Trustee Dave Togliatti, Trustee Pam Noffsinger, Trustee Ross Bradley, Trustee Bill Mincey and Trustee CJ Lauterbur present. Absent, Trustee Dan Greggain. Also in attendance were Attorney Mark Heinle, Matt Halloran from Chamlin Engineering, Chief Mike Imhof and Matt Fritz, Village Administrator.

Pledge of Allegiance

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Public Hearing — April 22, 2026

No corrections, comments, or questions were raised.

Motion to approve the meeting minutes was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Mincey. The motion carried with all trustees voting yes.

Regular Meeting — April 22, 2026

Village Clerk noted one correction: a spelling error in the name of a member of the public who had appeared at that meeting. The correction was to be provided to staff.

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

Approval of Warrant List

No corrections, comments, or questions were raised regarding the warrant list totaling \$208,365.58.

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

Public Comment

Mayor Spesia read the standard public comment rules: speakers are limited to three minutes each, comments must be civil and addressed to the Board, no one may speak a second time until all have had an opportunity to speak once, and the total public comment period is limited to 30 minutes.

The following residents addressed the Board, with comments focused substantially on the proposed Aligned Data Center project:

Dave Heyn, resident of Diamond, cited examples from other jurisdictions where data centers had consumed large volumes of water without authorization, faced environmental fines, and contributed to rising electric rates. He offered several suggested protections for Coal City, including decibel limits, light shielding requirements, a "kill switch" provision to protect residential power supply, rate-payer protections, and a 60-day public notice requirement prior to land purchases related to the development. He also questioned whether any board members had signed non-disclosure agreements with the developer and called on the Board to be transparent rather than relying on Freedom of Information Act requests as residents' primary means of obtaining information.

Jim Phillips, Coal City (VFW) noted that this Friday is Police Officers Memorial Day and the flag will be lowered to half-staff at the Veterans Memorial. He announced the VFW's annual Memorial Day ceremony beginning at 11:45 AM at the Veterans Memorial site at Chapin Park and invited Mayor Spesia to give remarks. The Mayor confirmed his attendance.

Luke Konecny expressed frustration that residents should not have to attend board meetings and file FOIA requests to learn about major development proposals. He called on the Board to be proactive in protecting residents.

Janet VanDuyne, lifelong Coal City resident, spoke in opposition to the data center, citing concerns about health impacts, noise pollution affecting senior citizens with hearing aids, and the loss of the natural soundscape she had enjoyed for 67 years.

Elizabeth Ashcraft, of Coal City, raised concerns about grid reliability, drawing on her career in the nuclear industry. She noted that when multiple generating units are simultaneously offline for maintenance, the grid is already under strain, and adding a large power consumer such as a data center would worsen that situation. She also expressed concern that the data center would devalue residential property.

Thom Goetz reiterated his call for evidence of tangible community benefits, transparent financial agreements, and protections for Coal City before proceeding. He referenced a petition signed by more than 700 local residents opposing the project.

Kristin Kurdenok identified herself as a military widow and local business owner whose property had been designated a high priority acquisition target in developer communications obtained through FOIA requests as early as February 2026. She stated that she had been offered \$20,000 from the developer for Landscaping against what she described as a \$656 million TIF reimbursement cap arrangement. She asked the Board to treat affected property owners fairly rather than as obstacles to the project. Letter submitted for the record.

Lori Cora identified herself as Kristin's neighbor and fellow business owner. She stated that the village's own legal billing records from February 2026 showed the Village Attorney was already billing for a "site aggregation" involving properties in the area, while residents were being kept in the dark. She called on the Board to act as a shield for residents rather than as facilitators for the developer. Letter submitted for the record.

Owen Kurdenok, speaking as Kristin Kurdenok's son, described the family business as an operational facility built after his father's death. He questioned how the Village could expect the next generation of young entrepreneurs to invest in Coal City if established local businesses were being displaced through a closed-door process. Letter submitted for the record.

Alana Phillips spoke on behalf of her mother, whose property and home-based businesses were adjacent to the proposed data center site. She described the financial offers made to her family as

insufficient to allow realistic relocation and rebuilding. She urged the Board to consider the human impact of the project and to protect longtime residents and small businesses. Letter submitted for the record.

Jessica Heinrich, resident of Coal City, asked the Board directly why, if data centers are beneficial, communities must be approached in a non-transparent manner, and requested that a board member look her in the eye and state the concrete benefit to the average Coal City citizen.

An email from Jon Garman submitted for the record opposing potential Data Center.

Mayor Spesia acknowledged the public comments and thanked attendees, stating that the Board hears residents each time they appear and that there would be a time when all questions could be answered. He noted that the Board was refraining from detailed public responses at this stage because if statements were made before a formal PUD plan was submitted and later proved inaccurate, those statements would be on the public record.

Presentation of North Broadway Reconstruction

Village Engineer Matt Halloran (Chamlin & Associates) presented the design concept for the North Broadway and North Street Reconstruction Project, which is funded 80% through federal transportation funds with a target bid date requiring pre-final plans to be submitted to IDOT by July 2026 for a planned November letting.

The project encompasses three distinct segments:

North Broadway (Division Street to North Street): Full road reconstruction, including new subbase, curb and gutter, and resurfacing with asphalt. The roadway will be widened to match the existing width at the Route 113 intersection. The corridor will receive streetscape improvements consistent with the South Broadway design, including decorative lighting, brick pavers between the curb and sidewalk, planters at key intersections, and a 10-foot multi-use path. The North Park sign area at the corner will be enhanced with decorative pavers. High-visibility crosswalk striping will be installed, particularly near the school. Angle parking in front of the elementary school will be preserved and redesigned to meet IDOT standards, allowing vehicles to back out of spaces without entering the travel lane directly. The gravel parking area between the school and The Cove will be replaced with defined parallel parking and the multi-use path.

North Street (Broadway to Second Avenue, the "blue section"): This segment already has curb and gutter in place and will receive resurfacing only, along with addition of a 10-foot multi-use path and sidewalks.

North Street (eastward to Dresden Road curve): Full reconstruction with curb and gutter, multi-use path, sidewalks, and new lighting using black aluminum poles (functional rather than decorative).

The Board discussed several details, including the parking layout near the school, safe backing distances, the design tie-in to the existing concrete apron at Route 113, whether the section between the concrete apron and the project limits should have sidewalk improvements considered, and the use of pavers (which are cleared without salt or heat application in winter). Trustee Noffsinger asked about the storm sewer design, and Halloran confirmed that prior storm sewer work by Robinson Engineering had been incorporated into the current design, reducing the scope of new storm sewer work required. Village Administrator Fritz confirmed that CB Bell is the engineering partner handling storm sewer and lighting design.

The presentation was identified as a concept approval, not a final design approval.

Approval of North Broadway Design Concept

Motion to approve North Broadway Design Concept was made by Trustee Togliatti and seconded by Trustee Mincey. The motion carried with all trustees voting yes.

250 Authorization/Summary

Village Administrator Fritz presented an updated summary of the America 250: A Coal City Salute celebration planned for June 20, 2026. He reported that sponsorship contributions are being received from local businesses, with Freedom-level sponsors (at \$10,000 each) including Bank of Pontiac and Grundy Supply, bringing total sponsorships to date to \$31,750.

The items presented for approval this evening were:

- T2 Enterprises (Horse & Buggy for the parade) — \$950
- Joliet Police Pipe and Drums (parade) — \$1,500 (not to exceed)
- Ben Franklin Historical Presentation — \$300 (not to exceed)
- Fireworks (Patriotic Showcase) — additional \$7,500 contribution (base amount of \$10,000 previously covered by in-kind Freedom sponsorship)
- Babe's Supply (beer garden provisions) — reimbursement up to \$1,925 after the event
- About Faces Entertainment (caricature artist) — \$640 (added at the meeting)

The total new approvals requested at this meeting, including the About Faces addition, amounted to \$10,890. Village Attorney Heinle confirmed that the T2 Enterprises and Ben Franklin contracts were in good legal order. He clarified that T2 Enterprises would be providing parade services only (no public rides), resolving a potential liability question. Fritz also noted that Jesse White Tumblers and the dunk tank are being donated by Broadway Dance Center and Megan's Mission respectively, at no cost to the Village. The Color Challenge team competition launched on June 13, with winning teams to appear on the entertainment stage on June 20.

Motion to authorize the Mayor and/or Administrator to enter into agreements for the procurement of \$2,750 worth of contracted services for the America 250 Celebration, to include contracts with T2 Enterprises, Joliet Police Pipe and Drums, and Ben Franklin Historical Presentation; a \$7,500 contribution toward the fireworks presentation; a reimbursement to Babe's up to \$1,925 for beer garden provisions; and \$640 for About Faces Entertainment, was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Mincey. Motion carried with all Trustees voting yes.

Report of the Mayor

Mayor Spesia thanked the Board for its patience during the lengthy public comment period. He acknowledged that it is increasingly difficult not to respond to public questions but noted that the appropriate time to address those questions would come once a formal development plan is submitted. He announced that he would attend tomorrow's Grundy County Law Enforcement Association memorial ceremony at Chapin Park in Morris at 10:00 AM. He also reported that he and Administrator Fritz and Trustee Togliatti had recently toured several police department facilities in preparation for the feasibility study on a new Coal City Police Department and Village Hall, finding many useful and cost-effective design ideas.

Report of the Trustees

Trustee Lauterbur reported that the North Park playground equipment installation is complete, the ground has been smoothed, and the new surface cover will be installed imminently.

Trustee Mincey expressed anticipation for the time when the Board would be able to openly discuss the data center project with residents.

Trustee Noffsinger remarked on how difficult it is to hear residents say they do not trust the Board.

Trustee Bradley had no report.

Trustee Togliatti echoed comments about the police department tours, noting it was hard to believe the Village would someday have a modern facility after all these years.

Report of Village Clerk

Village Clerk reported that Governor Pritzker signed a proclamation recognizing May 3–9, 2026 as Professional Municipal Clerks' Week. She acknowledged Police Officer Appreciation Week (May 10–16) and extended thanks on behalf of the Board to Chief Imhof and the entire department. She reminded the Board that Memorial Day is approaching and asked the community to honor those who served. She also noted upcoming community events listed on the Grundy County Chamber of Commerce calendar (grundychamber.com), including tabletop games at The Cove on May 19, a Connect at 4 event at Sunshine Garden Center on May 21, a Coffee Connect at Hexagon Real Estate on May 28, and Sweet Treats and Tasty Eats celebrating its one-year anniversary on May 30. She noted that she now serves as the Village's representative on the Grundy County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

Report of Village Attorney

Village Attorney Heinle provided a brief overview of the Governor's proposed Build Plan for Illinois, a package of initiatives that would mandate certain overrides of local zoning controls statewide with the goal of increasing housing production, particularly affordable housing. He noted that nothing has been enacted yet and that the Illinois Municipal League (IML) has submitted a counterproposal. Several municipalities have already passed resolutions expressing opposition. He offered to prepare a summary memo for distribution and suggested the matter could be presented in more depth at the upcoming Planning and Zoning Board meeting. Administrator Fritz confirmed that the Village has already submitted opposition slips at committee hearings.

Report of Village Engineer

Village Engineer Halloran noted that the overhead door installation at the water treatment plant is now complete, and the contractor was also able to refinish the floors within the existing plant as a cost offset from a change in skylight specifications. The treatment plant is anticipated to receive its final payment in June, pending arrival of the generator — expected in the last week of May — which is being funded through a FEMA BRIC grant in the amount of approximately \$245,000. He also confirmed that design work for the Valeria Road connection is underway and that Diamond has committed to the project.

Report of Chief of Police

Chief Imhof reported on the police department facility tours undertaken with the Mayor and Trustee Togliatti, noting that the goal is to identify solutions appropriate for Coal City's size and needs rather than replicating larger facilities. He offered public tours of the current 1891 building to any interested residents, emphasizing that the existing approximately 3,000 square foot space is not conducive to

modern policing. He noted that he was marking his one-year anniversary as Chief. He also echoed the announcement about tomorrow's police memorial ceremony at Chapin Park in Morris.

Report of Village Administrator

Village Administrator Fritz provided two updates. First, the Village will bring forward a resolution to increase the total IEPA low-interest loan authorization for the water treatment plant project to reflect actual final costs, which exceeded original projections. Second, he reported that with water treatment plant funding now resolved, he has directed staff to proceed with soliciting bids for a generator at Well No. 7. Fritz also briefly summarized the recent legislative breakfast, noting that legislators expressed uncertainty about the current session's outcome on most items, and that predictions about the Bears stadium were divided largely along party lines, with Republicans favoring Hammond and Democrats favoring Arlington Heights.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 8:51pm was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Bradley.
Motion carried with all trustees voting yes.

X 

Kayla Melvin
Village Clerk