



Meeting Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Spesia called the Coal City Village Board Meeting to order on Wednesday, June 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, Ryan Hansen of Chamlin Engineering, Chief Mike Imhof and Matt Fritz, Village Administrator.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Note: The agenda was reordered at the start of the meeting. Item 7 (Approval of the 2026 5K Holiday Hustle Event) was advanced to immediately follow the Warrant List, as the event representative was present. The remaining items were addressed in their original order thereafter.

3. Approval of Minutes

Mayor Spesia asked if there were any corrections, comments, or questions regarding the meeting minutes from June 10, 2026. Hearing none, he entertained a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

Motion to approve the meeting minutes was made by Trustee Togliatti and seconded by Trustee Lauterbur. Trustees Togliatti, Noffsinger, Bradley and Lauterbur voting yes. Abstain, Trustees Greggain and Mincey. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Warrant List

No substantive comments or corrections were raised regarding the warrant list, aside from a brief clarification regarding Beaver Creek golf carts for the America 250 event.

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

5. Approval of the 2026 5K Holiday Hustle Event

A representative of the Holiday Hustle Committee, presenting on behalf of Lori Bonarek Realty, addressed the Board regarding the 8th Annual Holiday Hustle 5K Run/Walk. She noted that the event has raised funds for local charities each year, with the 2025 event — held virtually due to weather — drawing 159 participants and raising nearly \$14,000 for its designated charity. For 2026, six charities have submitted applications, and the committee will vote in July to select the beneficiary. She also confirmed that the event date had been adjusted to Sunday, November 29 (the Sunday after Thanksgiving), to avoid a scheduling conflict with the Junior Women's Club's Market.

Village Attorney Heinle advised the Board that under village code, the Village Administrator has the authority to issue a special event permit following consultation with the Chief of Police and Public Works Director. As this is an established, recurring event, no formal board vote was required. The information was presented as a courtesy to the Board and the public.

6. Public Comment

Mayor Spesia outlined the rules governing public comment prior to opening the floor, including the three-minute per speaker limit, a 30-minute aggregate cap, and requirements for civil discourse. The following residents addressed the Board, with the majority of comments focused on the proposed Aligned Data Centers development and the related TIF resolutions on the evening's agenda.

Dominic Messina, of Coal City, stated that he moved to the community for its rural character and open spaces. He raised concerns about the data center project, questioning whether it would pose risks to water tables, affect property values, generate noise, or emit harmful frequencies near the schools. He expressed frustration that the community had not been kept fully informed during the planning process and urged the Board to conduct independent research rather than relying solely on information provided by the developer. He questioned whether promised jobs would actually materialize for local residents.

Bob Jacovec, of Coal City, stated that the proposed data center site is adjacent to his property. He asked directly whether a public hearing would be held. Mayor Spesia confirmed there would be one or more public hearings once the Planned Unit Development (PUD) submittal is received, which he anticipated would occur in July. Village Attorney Heinle provided further procedural detail: any project of this scale would require zoning relief, triggering review by the village's Planned Development Committee, followed by public hearings before the Zoning Board of Appeals — potentially over multiple nights — and ultimately a decision by the Village Board. He noted that required public notices include newspaper publication, on-site signage, the village website, and individual mailings to nearby property owners within specified distances. Jacovec also expressed concern over the number of diesel generators the facility might operate, noting that a vice president of the company had indicated there could be five or more generators per building across eleven buildings — potentially over fifty generators — and that prevailing winds could carry fumes toward the school and town.

Tom Crawford, of Coal City, expressed frustration regarding the potential use of TIF funds, asserting that TIF money was intended for schools and should not be directed toward the data center project. He also raised concerns about fire risk and the burden the facility would place on police and fire departments.

Wayne Holligan, of Coal City, noted that the number of residents present at the meeting, and the number of signatures gathered against the data center — which he stated exceeded 1,000, surpassing the combined vote totals of the two mayoral candidates in the last election — should signal to the Board the depth of community opposition. He raised questions about the selection of HR Green as a consultant, suggesting that the Village Administrator had a prior financial relationship with the firm. He also questioned a property transaction involving the administrator and a company connected to a construction contractor, as well as the circumstances under which competitive bidding was waived during the COVID-19 pandemic. He expressed concern about the proposed inclusion of Richards Crossing subdivision in a TIF district, arguing it would serve only to benefit the property owner. He urged the Board to scrutinize whose interests were being served before proceeding further with the data center project.

Owen Kurdenok, of Coal City, stated that documentation obtained through FOIA requests revealed the project had been in development well before the public was informed. He asserted that internal emails from February 2023 showed the area was being designated as a corporate mega-site, and that December 2023 emails revealed coordination to secure large power grid capacity in advance of any public disclosure. He claimed that when developers failed to obtain state or federal grants, the village pivoted to create a \$653 million TIF district to cover infrastructure costs. He raised concerns about land purchases in the area at prices he described as unusually high for farmland, the Hauschild annexation, and a solar farm pilot agreement that he said locked in a special tax structure ahead of the TIF proposal. He characterized the TIF as a mechanism to use public funds to benefit a small group of private developers.

Lori Cora, of Coal City, identified herself and her neighbor as both widows and business owners who operate agricultural businesses on properties adjacent to the proposed data center site. She stated that the appraisal offers they had received were based on residential valuations and did not account for the cost of relocating their businesses, replacing equipment, or recovering from a forced shutdown. She stated the offers were not fair, and asked the Board to reject the resolution, emphasizing that the Board's obligation was to the community and its residents, not to developers.

Jim Hazard, of Mazon, stated that FOIA documents suggested approximately 1,400 acres could ultimately be affected by the development. He expressed concern that multi-billion dollar companies were seeking village assistance to complete the project, describing this as "preposterous," particularly given that the ultimate end owner was BlackRock. He stated that from the community's perspective, the Village appeared to be laying out a red carpet for Aligned Data Center while residents were forced to dig through FOIA requests simply to obtain basic information.

Tina Johnson, of Diamond, focused her remarks on the financial risks associated with the TIF. She expressed concern that the AI sector — the anticipated end-user for the data centers — was facing revenue challenges, referencing recent news reports including a statement from the Anthropic CEO about the capital needs of AI companies. She questioned whether the projected revenue that would make the TIF viable would actually materialize, and warned that property tax increases associated with rising assessed values could further burden existing residents. She asked the Board to clearly explain, during future public hearings, how the anticipated financial benefits outweigh the risks.

Wallace Dick, of Coal City, urged the Board to consider that opposition to large-scale data center developments is widespread nationally, and that no community had been able to clearly explain why such projects are necessary or safe. He invoked the village's history with coal mining — and the community's eventual rejection of practices that endangered residents — as a parallel to the current situation, urging the Board to stand with residents in opposing the project.

Debra Walters, of Diamond, stated that she had reviewed the resolutions before the Board and characterized them as functioning like a "blank check," continuing a pattern of open-ended support for the developers that began with resolutions signed in November 2024. She noted that the village had recently taken out a \$7 million loan for water and sewer infrastructure improvements to be repaid by Coal City water system users, and expressed concern that a data center would then be able to connect to that system without bearing a proportionate share of the cost. She urged the Board not to finalize any agreements until the PUD was submitted and specific numbers were available for review.

Elizabeth Ashcraft, of Coal City, stated that she had attended multiple meetings and had not heard a single argument in favor of the data center. She asked the Board directly to explain what benefit the project would bring to the village that the public was not seeing.

Mike Larue, West Spring Road (Road Commissioner, Braceville Township), asked the Board, if nothing else, to table any vote on the data center-related items that evening and gather more information before proceeding.

Pam Hazzard, of Mazon, asked the Village on recommendation of their Attorney to table the TIF resolution so their Attorney could review the TIF documentation received through FOIA. She also made a mention of Sue Rezin's engagement with the Power Act come Fall session.

Donna Petty, of Diamond, submitted a letter via email for Public Comment.

Following the close of public comment, Mayor Spesia stated that the Village had not yet received the PUD submittal as of June 24, 2026, and expected it in July. He directed residents to the village website for publicly available information about the project, including materials from the February 17, 2026 public meeting and links to Aligned Data Centers' own website.

Visit www.coalcity-il.gov → Departments → Economic Development for information.

7. Re-Appointment of Leanne Vota, Treasurer; Kyle Harmon, Police Pension Board; Cody Krug, Planning & Zoning Board

Mayor Spesia presented three reappointments. All three individuals were unable to attend due to scheduling conflicts and were noted to have served their respective roles with distinction. Mayor Spesia noted that Leanne Vota would be beginning her fourth consecutive one-year term as Treasurer, that Kyle Harmon had served on the Police Pension Board since 2022, and that Cody Krug was initially appointed to the Planning and Zoning Board in 2023 and would serve a new five-year term. Each appointment was acted upon separately. All three appointees will be sworn in at a later date to be coordinated with the Village Clerk.

A motion to reappoint Leanne Vota as Treasurer for a one-year term was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Mincey. Motion carried with all Trustees voting yes.

A motion to reappoint Kyle Harmon to the Police Pension Board for a two-year term was made by Trustee Greggain and seconded by Trustee Togliatti. Motion carried with all Trustees voting yes.

A motion to reappoint Cody Krug to the Planning and Zoning Board for a five-year term was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Bradley. Motion carried with all Trustees voting yes.

8. Resolution 26-09 — TIF Redevelopment Project Inducement, Reed Group

Village financial consultant Nic Nelson presented Resolution 26-09. He explained that the Village had previously adopted inducement resolutions for both the Reed Group and Aligned Data Centers in November 2024. The resolutions before the Board this evening update those prior resolutions to reflect a newly considered pathway: rather than establishing an entirely new TIF district (TIF II), the village may instead pursue a 4th Amendment to the existing TIF District I with a 12-year legislative extension. The amendment would extend TIF I's life to 22 years, compared to a 23-year life for a new district — an otherwise similar impact. Village Attorney Heinle added that the primary practical difference in this updated resolution is the explicit acknowledgment that the village may either create a new TIF district or amend TIF District I.

Nelson emphasized that the inducement resolution does not constitute a guarantee of any reimbursement or TIF agreement, carries no specific dollar amounts, and explicitly states it cannot be relied upon to any party's detriment. Any actual TIF reimbursement arrangement would require a separately negotiated and board-approved redevelopment agreement. A trustee confirmed this understanding on the record.

A motion to adopt Resolution No. 26-09, Proposed Tax Increment Financing for a Project Involving the Reed Group, was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Bradley. Motion carried with all Trustees voting yes.

9. Resolution 26-10 — TIF Redevelopment Project Inducement, Aligned Data Centers Propco, LLC

Nic Nelson confirmed that Resolution 26-10 contains identical language to Resolution 26-09, applied to Aligned Data Centers Propco, LLC as the developer. Village Attorney Heinle reiterated that the resolution preserves eligibility and options for the Board to consider in future economic development deliberations and makes no binding commitments.

A motion to adopt Resolution No. 26-10, Proposed Tax Increment Financing for a Project Involving Aligned Data Centers Propco, LLC, was made by Trustee Bradley and seconded by Trustee Togliatti. Motion carried with all Trustees voting yes.

10. Authorize Mayor Spesia to enter into Fulton Siren Services Annual Contract

Village Administrator Fritz presented the Fulton Siren Services annual maintenance contract for the village's outdoor warning siren system, covering three siren locations. The annual cost for the fiscal year May 1, 2026 through April 30, 2027 is \$1,145.31. Fritz noted that Fulton Technologies has historically maintained the village's sirens and that this contract is budgeted within the Police Department's contractual budget.

A motion to authorize Mayor Spesia to enter into a contract with Fulton Technologies to maintain the Village's sirens was made by Trustee Greggain and seconded by Trustee Togliatti. Motion carried with all Trustees voting yes.

11. Report of the Mayor

Mayor Spesia delivered an extended report on the America250: A Coal City Salute, which he described as the only event in Grundy County dedicated entirely to commemorating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

He expressed appreciation to the planning committee led by Tammy Moran, the numerous volunteers, village staff, Public Works, the Coal City Fire and Police Departments, and the community at large for making the event a success.

He specifically acknowledged Trustee C.J. Lauterbur and his wife Lacey for portraying Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd, Trustee Pam Noffsinger, retired village employee Jacque Allen, Trustee Dan Greggain, Village Clerk Kayla Melvin and her husband Matt, Grundy County Board Members James K. Riley, Grundy County Treasurer Todd Koehn, John Adler of Aflac and Trustee Bill Mincey and others. Mayor Spesia also acknowledges the Flyover Pilots Brandon Elliott, Tom Ellis, and Bill Shane, Matt Trofimchuck and comm's operator Morgan Picht.

Mayor Spesia also thanked the numerous sponsors, businesses and volunteers who continually contribute and support community events.

Lastly, He thanked the residents for their attendance, patience, enthusiasm and participation.

Given the overwhelmingly positive community response, Mayor Spesia stated he was considering making the celebration an annual tradition, noting that while the name may change, the patriotic theme would remain.

12. Report of the Trustees

Trustee Lauterbur echoed the Mayor's remarks, praising the level of detail and organization of the America 250 event. He noted the personal enjoyment of portraying Abraham Lincoln and humorously mentioned the regret of having to shave his beard, and proudly noted that his street took first, second, and third place in the 5-7 age popsicle contest category.

Trustee Mincey expressed appreciation to Tammy Moran, Linda Sula, and their committees for the exceptional work that went into the event.

Trustee Noffsinger reflected on the months of advance planning that had gone into the event, beginning as early as the previous Fall. She credited the good weather as a significant factor in the high attendance and expressed gratitude to Sula, whom she described as her "right hand" throughout the planning process.

Trustee Greggain thanked the Coal City, Coalier DRIVE Committee and expressed appreciation for the celebration.

Trustee Togliatti commented on the impressive turnout and expressed hope that the tradition would continue.

13. Report of the Village Clerk

Village Clerk Kayla Melvin echoed the Board's praise for the America 250 event, noting that the beer tent where she was stationed sold out of approximately ten kegs, 250 High Noons and required resupply of ice, water, and cups. Thank you to Tara and Nate Kruger owners of Babe's Tap for their support. She expressed enthusiasm for repeating the event the following year.

14. Report of the Village Attorney

Village Attorney mark Heinle briefly reported that the village's event contracts and legal preparations for the America 250 celebration had been thorough, and he was pleased that none of the contingencies they had prepared for came to pass. He offered no other substantive reports.

15. Report of the Village Engineer

Village Engineer Ryan Hansen reported the following project updates:

Regarding the water treatment plant, exterior concrete and asphalt work was nearing completion and expected to be finished by the end of the following week. Skylights had been installed, making the building substantially complete. The treatment plant generator had been set, with electrical conduit and gas service scheduled for that week, and startup coordination with the generator manufacturer was underway.

Regarding street improvements, a bid opening for Valerio Road was scheduled for July 15th at 10:00 AM, with Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) and Non-MFT road projects to be bid shortly thereafter.

16. Report of the Chief of Police

The Chief of Police reported that the America 250 event had been logistically complex, with planning underway for at least eight months. From a law enforcement perspective, there were no significant incidents during the event, with only a couple of minor matters arising later in the evening. He expressed particular thanks to the Grundy County Sheriff's Department for loaning two camera towers and pro-act units, the Police Explorer Program for providing uniformed personnel at parade intersections, BNSF, and emergency management personnel from Braceville, Wilmington, and the county. He credited the collaboration among agencies for its success.

17. Report of the Village Administrator

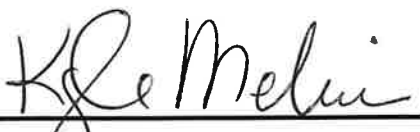
Village Administrator Matt Fritz provided two operational updates. First, he reported that during a recent storm event, Public Works executed its emergency plan, securing and deploying a backup generator to the water system by 6:00 AM to ensure uninterrupted water service to residents. A permanent generator installation was in progress, with a concrete pad nearing completion.

Second, Administrator Fritz reported that a coalition of Grundy County municipalities has been developing a regional transportation legislative initiative, intended to create a pooled funding mechanism for projects of regional significance. This effort follows the Advancing Grundy and the Grundy Master Transportation Plan. Fritz indicated the Board would likely hear more about this initiative within the next two to three meetings, with the eventual goal of retaining professional services to advance the legislative effort in the next legislative session.

Fritz also introduced the village's new intern, Reagan Robson, a Coal City community member, who was welcomed by the Board.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 8:11pm was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Mincey. The motion carried with all trustees voting yes.

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Kayla Melvin, Village Clerk