



Meeting minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mayor David Spesia called the Coal City Village Board Meeting to order on Tuesday, August 25, 2026 at 7:00 PM. A roll call was conducted with Trustee Dave Togliatti, Trustee Dan Greggain, Trustee Ross Bradley, Trustee Bill Mincey and Trustee CJ Lauterbur present. Absent: Trustee Pam Noffsinger. Also in attendance were Village Attorney Mark Heinle, Chief Mike Imhof and Matt Fritz, Village Administrator.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Spesia.

3. Approval of Minutes – August 12, 2026

Mayor Spesia noted one correction to the minutes: under the appointment of Nick Doerfler to the Fire and Police Board, the name "Stephanie Enerson" required a spelling correction. No additional corrections were raised.

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 12, 2026, as corrected, was made by Trustee Togliatti and seconded by Trustee Mincey. The motion carried 5-0.

4. Approval of Warrant List

Village Administrator Fritz clarified a question that had been raised prior to the meeting regarding an RTD line item. He explained the cost was related to storm water installation work around AT&T boxes on the south side of Maple Street and would be reimbursed by the developer. Mayor Spesia also inquired about a telephone and fax service line item, noting that the Village still maintains two fax lines. Staff confirmed they are used occasionally.

Motion to approve the warrant list was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Bradley. The motion carried 5-0.

5. Public Comment

Mayor Spesia read the public comment rules into the record, including the three-minute per speaker limit, the thirty-minute aggregate cap, and requirements for civil and respectful discourse. He also noted that public comment is not a question-and-answer period and that neither the Board nor staff is required to respond during the session.

Four residents addressed the Board, all speaking in opposition to the proposed data center project. A written comment submitted by Donna Petty was also received and entered into the record.

Michelle Bourell, resident of Coal City, expressed frustration that community members had been unable to get answers regarding the proposed data center. She raised concerns about potential water supply impacts, noise, fire protection capacity, home values, electricity costs, and public safety in severe weather scenarios. She questioned whether the Board had fully examined the implications of the project before bringing it forward.

Elizabeth Ashcraft, resident of Coal City, stated that all of the information she had researched on data centers was negative and asked the Board to provide residents with concrete benefits. She requested that future meetings on the subject be scheduled in the evening to allow broader public participation, rather than during daytime hours when working residents cannot attend. She characterized the afternoon community meeting with the developer as a poor format for productive public dialogue.

Winter Wills, resident of Coal City, spoke in complete opposition to the data center. She raised concerns about water quality after it passes through a data center's cooling systems, noise emissions from cooling fans, and the facility's proximity to the Early Childhood Center. She also questioned whether the project would create genuine local economic opportunities, noting that workers would likely come from out of town. She cited concerns about severe weather vulnerability and expressed embarrassment at the lack of local business development along Broadway.

Brittany Lenzie, a resident of Braidwood living approximately two miles from the proposed site, stated she has a seven-month-old child and expressed deep concern about health impacts. She referenced a February 2026 study from George Mason University finding evidence of respiratory disease, cardiovascular disease, adverse reproductive outcomes, and other serious health impacts linked to data center operations. She cited noise levels from diesel backup generators, noting that a similarly-sized proposed data center in Adamstown, Maryland called for approximately 168 backup generators. She also argued that data centers prioritize power for their operations and that rural communities should not be viewed as easy targets for such developments.

Katherine Crabb, a prospective new resident in the process of purchasing a home in Coal City, submitted printed research and presented findings from studies on data center impacts in Northern Virginia's "data center alley." She cited projected increases in air pollution, water consumption increases of up to 250 percent in affected communities, groundwater contamination risks, and noise pollution exceeding recommended daily exposure limits. She expressed concern about whether she could reverse her home purchase given the new information and urged the Board to conduct deeper, independent research before proceeding.

Following public comment, Mayor Spesia noted that the PUD Review Committee has held one meeting and is reviewing the project in depth. He advised that meeting minutes from the committee would be posted to the Village website, accessible through the Economic Development section under a dedicated data center tab.

After all present had been given an opportunity to speak, public comment was closed.

6. Ordinance 26-24 — Variance for Roof Extension, 315 N. 3rd Avenue

Village Administrator Fritz presented this item. The property at 315 N. 3rd Avenue contains an existing metal building that predates the current zoning code. The property owner, Randy Alderson, requested a variance to allow a 14-foot lean-to roof extension on the east side of the building, covering a portion of

the rear yard for the storage of one recreational vehicle or trailer. The extension constitutes an expansion of a nonconformity under Village code, requiring a variance. The only neighboring property to the rear is the railroad tracks. No one other than the petitioner appeared at the Zoning Board of Appeals public hearing, and the ZBA unanimously recommended approval. The Board confirmed that no change in use is proposed.

Motion to adopt Ordinance Number 26-24, granting a variance to allow the expansion of a nonconformity at 315 N. 3rd Avenue, was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Bradley. The motion carried 5-0.

7. Ordinance 26-25 — Expansion of Existing CUP, 2860 S. Broadway

Village Administrator Fritz presented this item. The Airgas facility at 2860 S. Broadway currently operates ten liquid argon storage tanks under a previously approved Conditional Use Permit. Airgas is requesting to add three additional tanks of the same type — inert argon gas — received via Union Pacific rail. The expansion was reviewed with the fire district regarding tank contents and safety, and no concerns were identified. The petitioner indicated this would likely be the final expansion request for the foreseeable future. No one other than the petitioner appeared at the public hearing, and the Zoning Board of Appeals unanimously recommended approval.

Motion to adopt Ordinance Number 26-25, granting the expansion of the Conditional Use at 2860 S. Broadway allowing the installation of three new tanks at the Airgas facility, was made by Trustee Mincey and seconded by Trustee Togliatti. The motion carried 5-0.

8. Ordinance 26-26 — Execution of Purchase, Sale and Redevelopment Agreements concerning PINs 06-35-429-002, 06-35-431-003, and 06-35-431-004 located near 5th Avenue

Village Administrator Fritz and Village Attorney Heinle presented this item. The Village owns three irregularly shaped parcels totaling approximately 0.77 acres, located between two railroad tracks on the west side of 5th Avenue. In May 2026, the Board declared the parcels surplus and initiated a competitive bid process under TIF statute. A redevelopment agreement and purchase price of \$51,035 — submitted by Big Storage Solutions LLC, which previously purchased adjacent acreage from the Village for outdoor vehicle storage — was made publicly available, and the process was advertised on three occasions in the Coal City Courant. No competing bids were received.

Attorney Heinle clarified that the redevelopment agreement requires the property to be developed in accordance with all applicable laws, including Village zoning regulations. The property is zoned C-5 and no special use or variance is being granted as part of this action. He further noted that upon conveyance, the Village would vacate certain adjacent rights-of-way as part of the transaction, with the acreage factored into the purchase price. A question about an existing drainage box culvert and storm water infrastructure on or near the site was discussed. Attorney Heinle confirmed that when the Village vacates public property, it routinely reserves easements for publicly owned utilities and drainage facilities, and that any future development would be subject to the Will County Stormwater Ordinance.

Motion to adopt Ordinance Number 26-26, authorizing the sale of Village property and execution of the Purchase and Sale and Redevelopment Agreement for property along the west side of 5th Avenue, was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Bradley. The motion carried 5-0.

9. Authorize Mayor to enter into Master Agreement with Gordon Flesch

Village Administrator Fritz presented this item. The Building Department's existing large-format printer/scanner lease has expired. A replacement unit has been identified through Gordon Flesch Company under a five-year lease agreement totaling approximately \$16,475, which is below the budgeted amount. Attorney Heinle confirmed that equipment leases in Illinois fall under a statutory exception allowing multi-year terms beyond the standard one-year limitation, and that the agreement was legally sound.

Motion to authorize the Mayor to enter into a Master Agreement with Gordon Flesch Company for the lease of a printer/scanner for the Building Department was made by Trustee Greggain and seconded by Trustee Togliatti. The motion carried 5-0.

10. Approval of Contract with Band for Fall Fest — Who Dat Dere Band

Village Administrator Fritz presented the performance contract for the Who Dat Dere Band, a country and rock cover band performing Saturday evening at Fall Fest on September 19, 2026. The performance is scheduled from 7:00 PM to 11:00 PM, with a break at 9:30 PM for a laser show. The contract fee is \$1,500. Attorney Heinle reviewed the cancellation terms: cancellation more than two hours prior to the performance results in a 50 percent fee; cancellation after the performance has begun results in full payment. These terms were deemed reasonable.

Motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the Who Dat Dere Band contract for music entertainment at Fall Fest was made by Trustee Greggain and seconded by Trustee Lauterbur. The motion carried 5-0.

11. Report of the Mayor

a. Consideration of Annual Elected Official Pay

Mayor Spesia noted that it has been approximately nine years since the last adjustment to elected official salaries for the Mayor, Clerk, and Trustees, and that prior to that, the interval was even longer. He recommended that the Finance Committee take up the discussion at an upcoming meeting. He clarified that any pay adjustment approved by the current Board would not take effect until after the April 2027 election, meaning no currently seated official would receive an immediate benefit. The Board expressed general support for having the discussion at the committee level.

Mayor Spesia also noted, as a general administrative matter, that businesses seeking to hold events or road closures should submit permit applications a minimum of two weeks in advance to allow the proper review process — including involvement from the Police Chief and the Village Board — to be completed without delays.

12. Report of Trustees

Trustee Lauterbur reported that the OSLAD grant review for the Hunter's Run Park project had reached the 95 percent design stage. The discussion with the grant program went well, and the project is

expected to reach 100 percent construction documents shortly, with the bidding process anticipated to conclude by the December Board meeting.

Trustee Greggain echoed Trustee Lauterbur's update on the park project.

Trustee Mincey, Trustee Bradley, and Trustee Togliatti had no additional reports.

13. Report of Village Clerk

a. Election

Village Clerk Kayla Melvin provided an update on the upcoming 2027 Consolidated Election. She noted that as of August 25, 2026, the petition circulation period has officially begun for candidates seeking election in the April 6, 2027 Consolidated Election. Nomination petition filing will be conducted through the Village rather than the County Clerk's office. The filing period runs from Monday, November 16, 2026 through Monday, November 23, 2026, with office hours of 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, and until 5:00 PM on the final day. Clerk Melvin reminded prospective candidates that filed petition papers cannot be amended and may be subject to legal challenge. Additional information is available through the Illinois State Board of Elections website at elections.il.gov, the Grundy County Clerk's office, or the Village office.

14. Report of Village Attorney

Village Attorney Heinle advised the Board that should it decide to proceed with an elected official pay increase, action would need to be taken by the last meeting in October 2026 to comply with the statutory requirement of 180 days' notice prior to a new term of office. He further explained that any increase would take effect only upon the commencement of a new term, meaning officials currently mid-term would not receive the adjustment until the beginning of their next term in 2029.

15. Report of Village Engineer

No report.

16. Report of Chief of Police

Chief of Police Mike Imhof reported that the first two weeks of the school year have proceeded smoothly, and commended the community for observing traffic regulations near schools during arrival and dismissal times. He noted that the Police Department appreciates the ongoing support from both the Board and the community. He also offered a brief mention of the Coal City football team's upcoming game against Morris.

17. Report of Village Administrator

Village Administrator Fritz provided two updates. First, he reminded the Board and community that the Citizen of the Year application deadline is September 4, 2026, with the award to be presented at Fall Fest. Second, he announced that the IEPA lead service line replacement project has been formally closed

out. The project totaled approximately \$2.5 million in infrastructure improvements for Coal City residents, funded at 100 percent principal forgiveness — at no cost to the Village or its residents.

18. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 8:01pm was made by Trustee Lauterbur and seconded by Trustee Mincey.
The motion carried 5-0.

X

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "K. Melvin", written over a horizontal line.

Kayla Melvin
Village Clerk