



## **Town of Cortland Board of Trustees Town Board Meeting**

Town Hall, 59 S. Somonauk Road Cortland, IL 60112

February 23, 2026

### **MINUTES**

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#### **CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / ROLL CALL**

Mayor Pietrowski called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll was called showing as present Trustees Corson, Fioretto, Haier, Siewierski, Stone and Olson. Quorum was present. Also present were Town Clerk Cheryl Aldis, Attorney Kevin Buick, Zoning Administrator Brandy Williams, Director of Public Works Joel Summerhill, Police Chief Lin Dargis, and Deputy Clerk Catherine Koks.

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Trustee Corson moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Trustee Haier. A unanimous voice vote to carry the motion.

#### **PUBLIC WISHING TO SPEAK**

Rick Porter addressed the board on behalf of SolarStone/Cortland 1 Illinois Dynamics and Cortland 2 Illinois Dynamics (CID), the applicant for a special use permit that failed at the February 9, 2026, board meeting. Porter thanked the board for reconsidering the vote for the special use permit and annexation. He stated reasons he felt that the special use permit should be granted and cited parts of the Town Code as well as the unanimous recommendation from the Planning Commission. He commented on the lack of proper evidence presented to deny the request.

Linda Wagner addressed the board objecting to solar farm construction in Cortland citing wildlife displacement, concerns that energy generated would not be consumed locally, soil contamination, and low amounts of sunshine days affecting profitability. She stated that installation of the solar farm would not lower local rates and would not benefit Cortland residents.

Brandon Wagner addressed the board with concerns about solar companies that construct and then abandon solar arrays before the lease end date.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Approval of Town Board Minutes of February 9, 2026; Accept Treasurer Report and Approve Expenditures of January 2026

Clerk Aldis read the consent agenda into the record; Approval of Town Board Minutes of February 9, 2026; Accept Treasurer Report and Approve Expenditures of January 2026

Trustee Stone moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Trustee Siewierski.

Roll Call vote

Yea: Trustees Stone, Siewierski, Corson, Fioretto, Olson, Haier

Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

2. Possible Motion to Reconsider last meeting's vote on Ordinance 2026-XX, An Ordinance Granting A Special Use Permit to SolarStone Partners To Operate A Solar Garden On 80.33 Acres Of Land Located North Of Illinois Route 38 And South Of The Union Pacific Railroad, Pins 09-27-100-002 And 09-27-300-004, in the Town Of Cortland, DeKalb County, Illinois. *At the February 9, 2026, meeting of the Town Board, this ordinance was presented and failed to pass by a 1-3 vote of Trustees present at that meeting. A motion to reconsider this determination may be made by a member of the prevailing side which, if passed, would allow the Board to specifically address necessary findings either in favor of, or against, the granting of the Special Use and otherwise allow full discussion regarding this ordinance.*

**If the motion to reconsider passes, the Town Board may choose to take final action on its chosen alternative version of Ordinance 2026-XX, An Ordinance Granting A Special Use Permit to SolarStone Partners To Operate A Solar Garden On 80.33 Acres Of Land Located North Of Illinois Route 38 And South Of The Union Pacific Railroad, Pins 09-27-100-002 And 09-27-300-004, in the Town Of Cortland, DeKalb County, Illinois, which would either grant or deny the Special Use permit request.**

Mayor Pietrowski introduced the agenda item to reconsider the vote on Ordinance 2026-XX, An Ordinance Granting A Special Use Permit to SolarStone Partners To Operate A Solar Garden On 80.33 Acres Of Land Located North Of Illinois Route 38 And South Of The Union Pacific Railroad, Pins 09-27-100-002 And 09-27-300-004, in the Town Of Cortland, DeKalb County, Illinois. Pietrowski explained the need for the board to reconsider this vote. Attorney Buick explained the procedural issues with the votes taken at the February 9, 2026, meeting.

Trustee Corson made the motion to reconsider the vote on Ordinance 2026-XX, An Ordinance Granting A Special Use Permit to SolarStone Partners To Operate A Solar Garden On 80.33 Acres Of Land Located North Of Illinois Route 38 And South Of The Union Pacific Railroad, Pins 09-27-100-002 And 09-27-300-004, in the Town Of Cortland, DeKalb County, Illinois. Trustee Fioretto seconded the motion.

Trustee Corson commented on the location and use of the area.

Roll Call vote

Yea: Trustees Stone, Siewierski, Corson, Fioretto, Olson, Haier

Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

Mayor Pietrowski asked if the board would send the topic back to the Planning Commission for further clarification on their recommendation to approve the special use permit.

Trustee Siewierski made a motion to send Ordinance 2026-XX, An Ordinance Granting A Special Use Permit to SolarStone Partners To Operate A Solar Garden On 80.33 Acres Of Land Located North Of Illinois Route 38 And South Of The Union Pacific Railroad, Pins 09-27-100-002 And 09-27-300-004, in the Town Of Cortland, DeKalb County, Illinois back to the Planning Commission for reconsideration at the April 2, 2026, Planning Commission meeting. Trustee Corson seconded the motion.

The board stated that they would like more information about why the Planning Commission felt approval of this special use permit would benefit the Town and how it fits into the Comprehensive Plan from 2023. They felt this would give the Planning Commission an opportunity to address concepts brought forward by Mr. Porter and examine additional testimony as presented.

Roll Call vote

Yea: Trustees Stone, Siewierski, Corson, Fioretto, Olson, Haier

Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

3. Possible Motion to Reconsider last meeting's vote on Ordinance 2026-02, An Ordinance Annexing 80.33 Acres Owned by John E. Walter as Trustee of the John E. Walter Trust Dated November 13, 2024, and John R. Walter To The Town of Cortland, DeKalb County, Illinois. *At the February 9, 2026, meeting of the Town Board, this ordinance was passed by a vote of 3-1 prior to consideration of the above referenced Special Use ordinance. However, in the event that the Special Use ordinance is denied, the Petitioner should be afforded the opportunity to withdraw their request to annex this territory if it cannot be used for the purposes desired. A motion to reconsider this vote may be made by a member of the prevailing side at the last meeting.*

Trustee Corson made a motion to Reconsider last meeting's vote on Ordinance 2026-02, An Ordinance Annexing 80.33 Acres Owned by John E. Walter as Trustee of the John E. Walter Trust Dated November 13, 2024, and John R. Walter To The Town of Cortland, DeKalb County, Illinois and hold in abeyance. Trustee Haier seconded the motion.

Given the action on the previous agenda item, reconsideration of the passage of the ordinance annexing the subject property would mean that the Town has not annexed the territory at this time, subject to possible future action on the request.

Roll Call vote

Yea: Trustees Stone, Siewierski, Corson, Fioretto, Olson, Haier

Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

## **NEW BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

4. Consider a motion to approve the 2026 Cortland Lions Club Special Events as presented.

Mayor Pietrowski introduced the list of special events put on by the Cortland Lions Club.

- Easter Egg Hunt Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> 3-9 p.m.
- Annual Town Garage Sales Thursday, April 30 through Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Craft & Vendor Fair Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> 7 am to 6 pm each day
- Touch-a-Truck Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup> 1 to 3 pm
- SummerFest Friday, August 7<sup>th</sup> & Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 4pm to midnight & Noon to midnight respectively
- Car Show Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup> 9 am to 6 pm
- Annual Town Parade Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup> 10 am to 4 pm
- Trunk-or-Treat Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup> 10 am to 7 pm

Trustee Corson made a motion to approve the 2026 Cortland Lions Club Special Events as presented. Trustee Stone seconded the motion. A unanimous voice vote carried the motion.

5. Consider a motion to approve the 2026 National MS Society Event on June 27, 2026, and the Request to Waive the required deposit.

Mayor Pietrowski introduced the request from the National MS Society to host an event at Cortland Community Park on June 27, 2026. Public Works Director Summerhill had also requested to have the \$250.00 deposit fee waived.

Trustee Fioretto made a motion to approve the 2026 National MS Society Event on June 27, 2026; and waive the required \$250.00 security deposit. Trustee Corson seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Yea: Trustees Stone, Siewierski, Corson, Fioretto, Olson, Haier

Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

6. Consider a motion to approve the Application for Variance of Town Code (Noise) for Summerfest on August 7 and August 8, 2026

Mayor Pietrowski introduced request from the Cortland Lions Club for a Variance of Town Code (Noise) for Summerfest.

Trustee Corson made a motion to approve the Variance of Town Code (Noise) for Summerfest on August 7 and August 8, 2026. Trustee Stone seconded the motion. A unanimous voice vote carried the motion.

**Misc. No. 2026-01**

7. Consideration of Ordinance 2026-XX, An Ordinance Amending Title 9, "Zoning Regulations," Chapter 4, "Supplementary Regulations For Specific Use", Section 34 "Solar Energy Systems" A. "Permitted Accessory Use" In The Town Of Cortland. *This ordinance, if passed, would approve a local amendment to the Town Code to allow for ground-mounted solar energy systems as a permitted accessory use.*

Mayor Pietrowski introduced Ordinance 2026-XX, An Ordinance Amending Title 9, "Zoning Regulations," Chapter 4, "Supplementary Regulations For Specific Use", Section 34 "Solar Energy Systems" A. "Permitted Accessory Use" In The Town Of Cortland.

Trustee Stone made a motion to Approve Ordinance 2026-XX, An Ordinance Amending Title 9, "Zoning Regulations," Chapter 4, "Supplementary Regulations For Specific Use", Section 34 "Solar Energy Systems" A. "Permitted Accessory Use" In The Town Of Cortland. Trustee Olson seconded the motion.

Town Engineer Williams explained the difference between the language of the text amendment and the proposed special use permit for construction of a solar farm. The DeKalb School District is considering installing an array to power the school on the east end of the Cortland Elementary School property which necessitates an amendment to allow this type of use. Board members asked questions about why the school would not integrate building-mounted panels instead of a ground-mounted solar array.

The board discussed the unsightliness of an array at another school site. Williams responded with facts from the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act, namely, the Solar Bill of Rights, effective June 1, 2026. PA 104-0458

Roll Call vote

Yea: Trustees Stone, Siewierski, Corson, Olson

Nay: Trustee Fioretto, Haier

Absent: None

Motion Carried

**Ord. No. 2026-04**

8. Consideration of approval to Extend Excess Vacation Hours until 2027 Seniority Date for Robert Harris, Joel Summerhill, and Travys Lanning

Mayor Pietrowski introduced the request from the Finance Department to extend excess vacation hours for Robert Harris (260 hours), Joel Summerhill (45 hours), and Travys Lanning (8 hours) until their 2027 seniority date. Town policy dictates that annually accrued vacation time be used within 18 months after the employee's anniversary date.

Trustee Corson made a motion to approve the Excess Vacation Hours Extension for Robert Harris (260 hours), Joel Summerhill (45 hours), and Travys Lanning (8 hours) until their 2027 Seniority Dates. Trustee Stone seconded the motion.

Roll Call vote

Yea: Trustees Stone, Siewierski, Corson, Fioretto, Olson, Haier

Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

9. Presentation of the 2025 Cortland Zoning Map. Information Only.

Town Engineer Brandy Williams presented the 2025 Cortland Zoning Map.

10. Presentation of change to the Planning Commission Meeting Time from 7:00pm to 6:30pm beginning April 2, 2026. Information Only.

Mayor Pietrowski notated a change to the start time of the Planning Commission Meetings from 7:00pm to 6:30pm beginning on April 2, 2026. The dates of the meetings will not change from what was approved.

### **PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Trustee Fioretto reported that the Parks Advisory Committee met and are working on wrapping up unfinished items from 2025. There is a design proposal for a new sign for Legacy Park, which will be brought to the board for approval at a later date. Other signs for un-named parts are also in the works.

### **DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

11. Police and Permit Reports for January 2026

Public Works Report for January 2026

The board reviewed the reports submitted. There were no questions.

### **COMMENTS**

Trustee Siewierski extended a "great job" to the water department for their actions during the water main break at the beginning of the month.

Public Work Director Summerhill noted that the pump in Well #1 has died and he is exploring options for fixing the pump versus abandoning the well. He also noted that production at Well #4 has decreased and may also need to be tuned up.

### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Pietrowski reported that 51 banners for the America 250 Celebration were delivered. Public Works Director Summerhill stated that they should be able to put them up within the week. Pietrowski is looking into a 250th Flagpole project with different military flags. Trustee Siewierski mentioned an idea for commemorative veteran banners and flags.

There has been continued work and research into a community notification system. There may be a way to send notifications through the existing financial software for an additional cost, but he is still gathering other quotes.

Lastly, the Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for Friday, April 3rd.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Siewierski moved to adjourn, seconded by Trustee Haier. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:03pm

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Aldis  
Town Clerk