

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on April 24, 2023 in the Hammond City Council Chambers and was available to be viewed at gohammond on Facebook, gohammond.tv live and per Zoom.

Council President Scott Rakos presided.

Council Coordinator Carmen I. Balboa facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.

A Moment of Silence was observed.

ROLL CALL

PHYSICALLY PRESENT: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos

ELECTRONICALLY PRESENT PER ZOOM: None

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor McDermott - Good to see you Council and good to see a packed Council Chambers as well. It's good to see everybody here. While everybody's here I want to remind everybody we have one week to go until Election Day and make sure everybody gets out and votes before election. Everybody watching at home, Municipal Elections sometimes have very low voter turnouts and we want a big voter turnout. So, I want to remind everybody, I voted in Crown Point because it was easier for me. I was down there and I walked by the voter booth, but everybody has the ability to vote anywhere in Lake County at any of the voting sites, except for on Election Day, on Election Day you have to go to your polling place. So, don't forget to vote. Municipal Elections one week from tomorrow. Thanks for the address, to summarize what we've been doing the last couple weeks. I did attend the Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce annual dinner at the Dynasty. I know a number of the Council people were there. It was sort of a going away party for Dave Ryan and for Jeff Williams, we're gonna miss them. We also celebrated teachers and firemen and police officers of the year. It was a great event. A lot of fun. Dane Cook played the Horseshoe Casino on Saturday. I would normally not put that in the Mayor's Report, but I haven't seen Horseshoe Casino that packed since before the pandemic. It was great that Dane Cook was there, he's been there before. More importantly, I walked through the Casino floor and saw a jam packed Horseshoe Casino and I haven't seen a jam packed Horseshoe Casino in a long time. So, if the Executives of Horseshoe are watching, thank you for competing. Again, it's good to see Horseshoe packed again. So, hopefully the numbers will reflect that. Economic Development-wise, we had a couple meetings in the past couple weeks. One real big proposal for Hessville. A big proposal, a \$100 million proposal that we're looking at right now. Another one near the Sportsplex and the new YMCA that's getting built there. Big proposals, exciting proposals, can't talk about them too much in detail right now but it's good to see so much interest from outside of our city investing into our city. It makes me optimistic. I attended the East Hammond Pullman Crime Watch meeting. A number of Council people were there that day also. It's great to be back on the Crime Watch circuit. At that meeting we talked about, at that time, how we had to delay the opening of the MLK basketball court press conference. We moved it back to this upcoming Saturday, which is also proving to be problematic.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - So I'm here to announce we're moving it back one more week and that will be the final move back. We're putting the MLK Press Conference on Saturday, May 6th at 10 a.m. I apologize to the kids that are waiting. I apologize to the neighborhood. We need to have this press conference before they're opened and Mother Nature is not cooperating. Plus the Saturday we were gonna do it is very complicated with a number of other grand openings that Council people are gonna be in attendance at. So, May 6th will be the day. The neighborhood is ready. Public Works-wise we've done all the work we need to do to get ready for the grand opening, so. Fire Station No. 2, I know is on the agenda today. The resolution is on your agenda regarding Hasse Construction is the BOT Contractor. I know we've been taking about Fire Station No. 2 for a while now. In fact, a year ago we thought we were gonna do this project. When the bids came back way too high. We bounced the bids a year ago, saved a million dollars, the bids are still higher than we anticipated. So we're trying to make it work. We did save a million dollars by waiting a year. We hope to save more than that. I don't know if it's worth it, at this point, waiting any longer. Right now we're at a final cost of \$8 million. We're gonna use a million from both Lake County Councilman Dave Hamm, Lake County Councilwoman Christine Cid. Please make sure you thank them when you see them. They donated ARP money from Lake County towards this project, \$2 million from Councilwoman Christine Cid from East Chicago and Councilman Dave Hamm, which is helping us finance this project. We're using \$2.5 million of ARP money and saving a million dollars of that ARP money so that we can get a project done in the 3rd District that we're working with Councilman Tyler on in regards to Memorial Park. And then the rest of the money we're gonna finance using the BOT process that you all are approving tonight. Once you guys get done approving this, hopefully it will be approved in the affirmative, we still have work to do with Redevelopment. But, basically, Fire Station No. 2, we hope to begin construction in July and it should last around a year. I'm very excited about this project. It's gonna be a similar look to the Pavilion because it's literally across the street. With a similar layout to the Fire Station #8 in Hessville. I think it's gonna be a huge addition. That Fire House is very old, so I know that the firefighters that work there are very happy. I was just there the other day talking to them. Last, but not least, the 2023 Festival of the lakes line up is officially set now. Wednesday, July 12th we have Ashanti and Ja Rule; Thursday, July 13th we have the brothers Osborne, country; Friday, July 14th, Stone Temple Pilots; Saturday, July 15th we have Lil Wayne; and Sunday, July 16th we have El Flaco. I say this every year, I think it's our best lineup. I say it every year though. So, when you say it every year, I don't know if it works. So, I don't know if anybody has any questions about anything but that's my report for the last couple of weeks. Good luck with your re-elections to all of you. I appreciate the great work you've done for the City of Hammond over the last four years. I just want to say thank you and congratulations and good luck with everything. Thanks, Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to approve the minutes of April 10, 2023 and place on file.

AYES: ALL

COMMON COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP DRAWING

HAST

Winner- Elizabeth Guzman
Alt- Aaron Campbell

HAMMOND CENTRAL

Winner- Carolina Barragan
Winner- Janeea Cole
Winner- Israel Diaz
Winner- America Guerrero
Winner- Kaylee Jackson
Winner- Camila Marquez
Winner- Braelynn Norwood
Alt- Jessica Magallanes
Alt- Egypt Rettew

BISHOP NOLL

Winner- Jacqueline Orozco
Alt- Jacob Cardena
Alt- Aleni Vasquez

MORTON

Winner- Jasmin Avila
Winner- Trinity Belford
Winner- Madison Fleming
Winner- Angel Nevarez
Winner- Megan Whitford
Winner- Cristian Zarco
Alt- Lania Fleming

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved to approve the claims from April 05, 2023 through April 19, 2023. Claim #2323 through #2624, inclusive. In the amount of \$4,752,833.74.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

23R-03 Awarding Build - Operate Transfer Agreement and taking Certain other Related Actions

Dave Matura- I appreciate you allowing me to speak tonight. I fear my comments are too late, but I don't know that I had an opportunity to talk before this time for or against the fire house. I was at a re-zoning meeting the other week just recently about Clark Field being re-zoned from institutional to residential, and there was an interesting remark in one documents from the planning department. Uh, I think Mr. Poland may have written it and it said the "existing firehouse's operational and in good condition." and I thought to myself it's in good condition. Yet I hear the Mayor say we're going to spend \$8 million on replacing a building that the City of Hammond says is in good condition and I couldn't agree more. It is in good condition. I see fire trucks go in and out every day and I don't see any problems with it. They may say that there are problems pulling out on Calumet Avenue, but where the new firehouse is going to be, we will pull out on Calumet Avenue. I hear the fire chief say, well, the trucks are much bigger these days than in the old days. The existing firehouse is too small, and I thought about that and I thought, how can the trucks be any bigger? They're not making the roads wider. The lane is a lane. So, I think the truck is as wide as a truck can be because if they made it any wider, it couldn't go down the street. So, I thought, maybe it's longer, maybe it's taller, but it's not any wider, and would that justify \$8 million? I don't think so. My house is in that neighborhood in Robertsdale. It's older than the firehouse. We just spent some money on reconditioning it, new electricity, new wires, a new kitchen and I think, well, everybody says the firemen will be thrilled with this new firehouse. Well, why don't we put an addition next to the firehouse with new bedding and a new kitchen, and a new weight room? I'm sure that will not cost \$8

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC HEARINGS cont.

Dave Matura cont. - million and why am I driving towards this? Because I thought, what a shame that the Environmental Center was closed. What a shame that they evicted those people. That there couldn't have been a better location in Lake County to educate our children about environmental needs. You're there and you say, hey, there's Wolf Lake. Fantastic. Hey, there's George Lake. Fantastic. Hey, there's this big green field. Clark Field is behind me. What is a better location for the Environmental Center? Oh, that's just for kids. Kick them out. Put them in Merrillville somewhere on some Main Street. So when they open the door, they can see cars driving by, and when the lady says hey kids, let's go take a hike on the trail here and go to the Lakes. Oh, we don't have that anymore. Why? Because we're going to put that new fire station there. Of all the places, you're going to put it where the Environmental Center was. Yeah, that's the decision. We get to comment on it? No, I'm afraid not. So, when... it just boggles my mind that we're replacing a building rather than reconditioning it, and then not only are we replacing it, we are putting it in the worst location possible. Well, now we got this pavilion across the street from it and the mayor and the city want to bring all these shows there and make it a showplace and bring all these people and I think, is there where you'd want to locate an emergency facility where your fire trucks and ambulance are going to be going in and out. I thought. I don't think so, but I didn't have time to speak about it. Sounds like the deal was already done. And I just can't, for the life of me, figure it out. I don't see any advantage of putting it in that location, knowing the cost that we already paid, that our children who are supposed to be, as we know, the world is kind of going down the wrong road as far as the environment's concerned. And I can't think of anything more important than to educate them to take care of the world, take care of the environment. And we took them out of that location. We're going to put this firehouse there. So, those are my thoughts. I appreciate your time Thank you.

Carolyn Marsh- First, I saw the agenda for the first time today and I would never recognize the resolution or what you're voting on the firehouse is about Clark Field. And that area because it's all under 2201 Calumet Avenue. As a wildlife activist, and a 30-year bird watcher. I'm very concerned about George Lake. The firehouse is going to be a butt. George Lake is a federally protected wetland. It's unheard of. I think in the country in this day and age, for a city to put a new firehouse which has plenty of vacant land near it. That's not across from Wolf Lake and about George Lake. It's unheard of to put a firehouse 24/7 activity that's a budding wetland, a wetland that money is spent to restore right on that edge. On that edge will be the backyard of the firehouse. This is just unconscionable about what the city is doing. We really need to respect the areas, the wetlands, and the lakes that we have. Wolf Lake is not swimmable. George Lake is polluted. Legacy pollution from Federated Metals also from Poly John. And now you're adding to the pollution with 24/7 activity from a firehouse. This is just unbelievably rolling back environmental standards. And it fits in kind of with the state. The state is rolling back environmental wetlands regulations so they can fill in wetlands for development, real estate, homebuilders, and the building industry. I really object to this and I don't understand it and I think it's a step backwards. When I fought for the Hammond Bird Sanctuary on the lakefront when I fought for the mitigation of the golf course at George Lake. Now, I... had won there without a lawyer, without legal help and now we are going backwards. Now, here I am again fighting for George Lake to save a wetland. From a what? A firehouse? I just don't understand that at all. So, I think Hammond has financial problems. You're needing help too, you know, for this \$8 million. I think there are so many better ways to make Hammond livable. We're all one community Whiting & Robertsdale. We all share the lakefront. We share George Lake and Wolf Lake and I think that what Hammond is doing, what the mayor is doing in particular, is a real setback. You know, I'm going to say this because Mayor McDermott has ridiculed me for speaking in Hammond because I live in Whiting. But the thing is, I'm coming here to speak about Hammond because it's one community Whiting &

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC HEARINGS cont.

Carolyn Marsh cont. - Robertsdale is one community. We depend on each other economically. And I appeal to all residents in this area to really be concerned about the area because we will not have any green space. When I look at Clark Field and the subdivision, the amount of green space is so pathetic. It's so minimal it's really sad that the Mayor of Hammond wants to take out the woods. Briar Woods in Hessville. This is a rollback. This is not progress. Thank you.

Fire Chief Jeff Smith- A couple of things that the gentleman said, we have outgrown the station. The fire trucks are a lot bigger than they used to be. Longer, higher. The ambulance when I first got hired. Uh, we had looked like a van that you could buy at a dealership. Now, they're six feet longer. They're a lot taller. They're boxier. There's more equipment that we carry on them, so we have to have bigger vehicles. Um, we have outgrown it as far as the guys, 30 years ago when I go hired we didn't have any workout equipment. Now, we have a dedicated workout room at all the stations. At station two, it's cramped into the bedroom. The beds are all pushed together a little tighter now. Um, as far as backing it off of Calumet, pulling out on Calumet. Yeah, we're going to have to pull out. With this new station, it's going to be about 150 feet back, farther off of Calumet Avenue, to where we can turn onto the property without backing in off of the street. Um, that's our biggest concern up there is because anybody's driven up there if you are seeing the fire trucks back in. People go around as people don't stop. They just don't stop, they don't pay attention to the lights and sirens. Um, a couple of other things as far as adding on to the station, I don't even know if that's possible. Um, you know, so that's it.

Corporation Counsel Kevin Smith- I just wanted to kind of, from a legal perspective, introduce the resolution. I also want to make sure that the council knew that both Greg Martz and Bill Hasse from Hasse Construction are on Zoom. Uh, Greg, we worked substantially with him on station eight and the BOT process. Um, this resolution is one that will allow the financing and selection of the developer for the project. As the mayor pointed out, the timeline for construction is July this year through approximately late summer, and early fall next year. So about a 12 to 14-month process. Um, the financing of it is being paid through the council's dedication of ARP money, the county council's dedication of ARP money, and other fees from the city. So, you know, tax dollars involved. Um, also, I guess the one thing I wanted to just mention and point out and you know; I heard some earlier speakers talk about green space. I just wanted to remind the council and thank the council and the mayor for the dedication that they've had to making Wolf Lake accessible and increasing the green space over the last fifteen to eighteen years. I know that when Councilman Kalwinski took office, as well as the mayor, there were a lot of trucking concerns and environmental concerns around Wolf Lake. Now that's all green space accessible by the public. There's a six-mile loop for recreation. Um, and that's a substantial increase in green space and accessibility to Wolf Lake and the surrounding area. So, as far as the fire station goes, though, I just wanted to encourage the approval of the resolution and, of course, if there are any questions for Greg or Mr. Hasse, they're on Zoom. Thank you.

Greg Martz-If the council moves forward, that would allow us to move forward. And so there will be further steps. Uh, for the public to speak. And so we will get right on (unclear).

William Hasse- And to the council. This is Bill Hasse. We also have (unclear) in the audience if you have questions.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC HEARINGS cont.

Council President Rakos- We can have questions when we vote on the resolution. We can do that at that time. This is for public expression, not for us to ask questions. Any other public expression?

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Tyler- Uh, the mayor mentioned this, but I just want to make sure that the public is aware that we have pushed the reopening of MLK Park Basketball Courts back another week because of the weather. Um, so, those basketball courts will reopen on Saturday, May 6 at 10 am. And then, for everyone, there's also the YMCA groundbreaking this Friday, April 28 at 11 am. Thank you.

Councilwoman Alexander- Um, I know that Miss Kaminsky already said it but I just want to remind those scholarship recipients that we will have a meeting for them to receive their awards on May 22 at our second meeting of that month of May. I just want to remind them to be picture ready because we will take a ton of pictures that day as well. Thank you.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Capital Improvement Board - Councilman Woerpel- We met on April 17. Um, matters that were discussed was a \$50,000 share of the Capital Improvement Board in conjunction with Councilman Tyler that's contributing \$50,000 to for the reconstruction of Rhode Street. We also approved \$3,615 for the redesign of Hohman Avenue North approach at Sibley through First Group Engineering. We also approved \$11,850 for a new traffic signal at the Sportsplex through Geotechnical Services & Advanced Engineering Services. We also approved \$33,857.43 for the Hohman Avenue reconstruction phase 1 for change orders 8 & 9 through Rieth Riley Construction.

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Upcoming meetings:
East Ham'd Pullman Crime Watch; Tues., May. 16th ; 6 p.m.; Ophelia Steen Center
Edison Community Watch; Wed., May 3rd ; Edison School; 6:30 p.m.
Hessville C.W.; Thur. May. 18th ; 6 p.m.; Jean Shepherd Center
Irving Community Watch; Fri., May. 5th ; Irving School; 9:15 a.m.
Whiting-Robertsdale C.W.; Thur., May. 11th ; 6:30 p.m.; Calumet College

ORDINANCE 3RD READING-FINAL PASSAGE

None

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

23-11 An Ordinance Creating a New Fund (Fund #2476) and to Appropriate Funds within the City of Hammond for the Regional Economic Acceleration & Development Initiative (READI) Grant

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Tyler, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading, referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a meeting at 5:00 p.m. on May 8, 2023 and a Public Hearing on May 8, 2023.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES cont.

Councilwoman Venecz- The State of Indiana developed this grant. Uh, they launched a Regional Economic Acceleration & Development Initiative with \$500 million that was left from the ARP money. They divided the \$500 million among sixty municipalities, for which we will receive \$3,820,000. According to the State Board of Accounts, we need to have two new line items for those funds.

ROLL CALL VOTE (1st & 2nd reading)

AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos,

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MOTION CARRIED

23-12 An Ordinance Reclassifying Certain Lands in the City of Hammond for Zoning Purposes and Amending Ordinance No. 8514 (An Ordinance Establishing a Zoning Plan for the City of Hammond including the Regulations and Maps to Administer the Zoning Plan in Order to Provide for Orderly Growth and Development Within the City, all in Accordance with the Comprehensive/Land Use Plan, as Amended) for Property commonly known as: 2201 Calumet Avenue

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a Committee Meeting on May 08th, 2023 at 5:00p.m. With an Intent to Consider on May 08th, 2023.

Councilman Kalwinski- This ordinance has to do with changing the classification of the property known as the Clark Football Field from a S2 to an R1 family residential district single family residential subdivisions.

ROLL CALL VOTE (1st & 2nd reading)

AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos,

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MOTION CARRIED

RESOLUTIONS

23R-03 Awarding Build-Operate-Transfer Agreement and taking Certain other Related Actions

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for adoption.

Councilman Kalwinski- As discussed earlier in the Caucus, this Build Operate Transfer Agreement (BOT) This will clear the way to pursue a loan to develop this property. The contractor will be Hasse Construction.

Councilman Woerpel- It's my understanding that as part of this agreement, there are no cost overruns or change orders that will be this is the final price. And I would just like to know like the question was asked in the

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilman Woerpel cont. - caucus. What guarantees do the city have that if the building materials or labor cost go up, what guarantees will there be as far as not having cost overruns?

Greg Martz- I can answer that if you'd like. Yes, you are exactly right unclear... if the city would add on a request that's going to be added then that would be over budget.

Councilman Kalwinski- So, that begs the question if construction costs are higher than the \$8.1 million will anybody either Hasse or any other outfit try to reduce the kinds of materials and the quality of materials that might be in that project if it's over budget? Unclear

Greg Martz- Yes, it's the second one you said there. The reason Hasse is able to do that is that for the past 14 months, this project has been going through a scooping process we have been working with the architect to make sure that the project is completely understood UNCLEAR, and it's because of that that we can offer that price and that the design won't be changed.

Councilman Kalwinski- I did want to mention that the advantage of the fulfilled, operated, and this a bond of agreement the cost should remain at the \$8.1 million with some change. ARP money will be used and some of the ARP money from county would be used as well.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos,

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R03 ADOPTED

23R-04 A Resolution Establishing April 28th as "Annie Burns Hicks Day" Within the City of Hammond

Councilman Tyler, supported by Councilwoman Alexander, moved for adoption.

Council Coordinator reads Resolution in it's entirety.

Councilwoman Alexander- I ask to be a co-sponsor on this resolution.

Councilman Tyler- In conjunction with this resolution, I also have a proclamation from our Honorable Mayor Thomas M McDermott Jr. Establishing April 28th as Annie Burns Hicks Day in the City of Hammond as well. I just wanted to put that on record. Um, on Friday, we'll be reading the proclamation in its entirety at Annie Burns Hicks Elementary School at 10 am.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos,

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R04 ADOPTED

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilman Tyler- There are several members of the Burns Hicks family as well as representatives from the School City of Hammond here tonight.

Councilman Tyler, supported by Councilwoman Alexander, moved to suspend the rules. AYES: ALL

SUSPENSION OF RULES

Superintendent of Schools Scott Miller- I serve as your Superintendent of the School City of Hammond. Um, let me first real quick thank you again for supporting our seniors, 15 of them through the scholarship program. Um, that is a difference-maker for our kids. But to honor and establish that April 28th is going to be Annie Burns Hicks Day. Um, is really just another fitting tribute to also go along with us renaming Maywood Elementary in her honor. As far as the school city, what we've done the past year though we have worked with the family and with some of our educators to establish lesson plans around her legacy from all the different grades, and so on the 28th, we'll be implementing these lesson plans in all our schools, not just Annie Burns Hicks. But across all our schools. So, they can learn her story and legacy. That's not just going to be a one-time thing. It's going to be a forever thing in our schools. So, again, thank you. I'd like to also thank you. I have 2 of my Board of Trustees who voted on that here tonight. Our current Board President, Lisa Miller, and our Vice President Cindy Murphy. So, thank you. And we also have... I'd like to call up Mrs. LeTerra Smith, she's the principal of Annie Burns Hicks. She didn't know I was going to call her, but I'd like for her to speak.

Principal of Annie Burns Hicks LeTerra Smith-Good evening, everyone. I wasn't expecting to come up this evening, but thank you for having me. Um, so, we started this journey last year on April 28, when we rebranded our school and renamed it after Ms Annie Burns Hicks. Um, as Mr. Miller said, we have joined multiple communities within our school. Out students from Columbia, Lafayette, as well as former Maywood students as well. Um, so, rebranding our school, renaming our school after Annie Burns Hicks was an opportunity to mesh all those communities together. We could work as a team and work as a teams work as a school to work on a new logo for the school, new school colors, and a new mission for our school. The students got an opportunity to meet Ms. Annie Burns Hicks in person. So, that was a great opportunity for them. But it's been a way to motivate our students and our staff. Her story and her legacy is so powerful and it's so inspiring to them. Um, to see our students, the pride that they have to say that they go to Annie Burns Hicks is just phenomenal

Principal of Annie Burns Hicks- and they always ask, is she coming back? Is she coming back? Um, we have our annual Annie Burn Hicks Day scheduled for this Friday and the kids hope that she arrives we've already talked to them she probably would not be in person but we're going to do what we can to keep her legacy alive at Annie Burns Hicks Elementary. So, thank you.

Maxine Simmons- I should call myself Maxine Burns Simmons. This family just has embraced me to all their speaking for them. Um, again, to Mr. Miller and the School Board of Trustees, we appreciate what they have done thus far and we are expecting more things as the years go on for Ms. Hicks but you know, in 1957 or 58. I probably wasn't even born close to it but maybe not but you know, Sam Cook made a song about a Change Is Going To Come and you know, I've seen this change with Mrs. Hicks and the school district, and now with the

*Prepared by
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Hammond City Clerk*

SUSPENSION OF RULES cont.

Maxine Simmons cont. - Civil City and making her special and a day and that the fact that she's alive to see all these accolades that she's getting now and there are three sisters in the audience can they stand up. They have gone on this journey with me and the school board for over a year, and one of the sisters actually volunteers at the school faithfully. She is a faithful volunteer. So again, I want to say thank you to the city council for doing this for her and we hope that on Friday, you wear your powder blue and white because those are the school colors.

Councilwoman Venecz- Now that we have voted, I too would like to be added to this resolution and I encourage the rest of our council members to be added as well.

Councilman Woerpel- I remember Ms. Hicks from 100 years ago when I used to deliver the mail over there and I never had a hat on my head. And she'd always tell me to put a hat on my head or she'd crack me over the fingers with a ruler and I'm like, don't tempt me because I like pain. And she would laugh, but I want to be added on as a sponsor as well.

Council President Rakos- Asked to add the entire council as sponsors to the resolution.

Councilman Tyler- I would like to also welcome any family, school city representatives to come up here to take a picture with us as well.

Council President Rakos- You want to do that after the meeting?

Councilman Tyler- We can do it now.

Councilwoman Alexander, supported by Councilman Woerpel to return to regular business.

ROLL CALL VOTE (return to regular business)

AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos,

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RETURN TO REGULAR BUSINESS

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Alberto Ochoa-I wanted to come up and give my thoughts and prayers to the families of the unfortunate accident that occurred. You guys already said it earlier. And also give my thoughts and prayers to the responders as the weather is going to start getting nicer. As you guys stated earlier, we are the eyes out there to let the police know if any crime to keep our kids safe out there.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

Dave Matura- I wanted to talk about you've passed the third reading and final passage of redistricting or re-zoning Clark Field. Um, as we all know, Clark Field was a piece of public property. It was used by the high school and the community. When the high school was closed, the community still actively used Clark Field. I can see people playing there. I could see seniors walking the track. I could see people. It should be a park being built there instead of a subdivision. It's supposed to be community property. It's supposed to be used for the community. The community actively used it even when the school city didn't. So I thought, can we do anything about it? And of course, the mayor had a meeting it was decided no four-story buildings. Great, great. Making it green wasn't an option.

Carolyn Marsh-I heard comments from the city lawyer that McDermott and Mark Kalwinski boy they made a lot of green space by taking out those trucking companies. Well, you know what? A lot of that bike trail is mitigation. Hammond continually allows an industry to pollute Wolf Lake. The City of Hammond is going to be fined big time by the Army Corps of Engineers or the US EPA for polluting. They say well, well, we will settle and build this bike path. So, there are a lot of things that just aren't known or said. Cargill is a big polluter of Wolf Lake and they still violate their permit. Also, Hammond has big problems with flooding. You are borrowing money from the Little Calumet River Basin, I don't think you are borrowing. They are giving you money which taxes homeowners taxes my house so that Hammond can build another station. So, you're not in compliance with the laws and the rules. You are overdeveloped, and you cannot handle what is right now being built. So, there should be no new building permits.

Ken Rosek- Just to alert everyone. There have been no parked trains in Hessville for 5 days. And I was wondering what causes this. Is it the commotion that we're giving them, the harassment, you know, calling them up, writing letters? Just 5 hours ago, Pete Buttigieg posted a nice little post on Facebook and it says it's about this very issue that we're dealing with in Hessville. And he says. "It's unconscionable that kids need to crawl under parked trains to get to school, or that it blocked first responders from getting to those in need." He is now aware of our particular situation in Hessville. This bridge does not solve your number 1 problem, which is the kids. We are going to destroy as collateral damage for this project 35 acres of natural habitat. It will level the highest natural point in Hammond. We are leveling 4700-year-old dunes. Now, keep in mind this is for a project that doesn't solve the number 1 problem they claim it's going to solve and the mayor admitted it. He said, if there's a weakness in this project, it doesn't solve that problem. Well, I found that kind of ironic since that was the number one problem listed in the State of Indiana in their application. The danger of kids hopping trains will still be the case after spending \$14 million and counting. This is a boondoggle of a project. And we should shut it down. Thank you.

Carl Wolf- Nice to see everybody tonight. So, I've learned, and the number of times that I've been up here speaking now, that I think it's good to start with some kudos. Um, and to, you know, point out the good work that's been done by the council and administration because there has been good work. Um, Wolf Lake and the park is a wonderful family destination. There has been work to build trails, the preservation to whatever degree. But as you all know, more must be done and while the golf course is nice. Developing Clark Field would be good, but it would be to the detriment of the environment in that area. So, I urge the mayor at the Mayor's Night Out and I urge the council. It is of our best interest to listen to the canaries in the coal mine who are raising the alarm about the need for environmentally sustainable development. You have an army of citizens expert who

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

Carl Wolf cont. - cares deeply at your disposal. Instead of relying on being aware of weekday committee meetings and hearings where these projects are put in motion, seek their consultation, and ask for their opinions. Take their consideration seriously from the beginning to the end of the process.

Tj Gaertig- Hi, everyone. Um, before I speak, I'd like to congratulate the city and the schools for achieving this holiday and for honoring such an outstanding woman. That's awesome. Congrats, guys. We're destroying a dune for the bridge. You know, allegedly and we're building a brand new firehouse even though the guy just said, we don't know if we can expand it. But we have approved it now. The city has pointed out two major safety concerns for the kids crossing Grand Avenue. That was the number one issue when you applied for the grant. I've often heard why don't you build a pedestrian bridge and I wonder the same thing. Well, the other public safety concern is emergency response time. And so, you know, it's a public safety concern of emergency vehicles, have to navigate around a parked train. And that's true. Um, but the proposed bridge project is dubious as an effective solution because it closes two existing train crossings. Your proposed project is going to be slowing down emergency response time because there are going to be closed crossings and that's a public safety concern. That's created by this project. And an underpass solution solves both problems. So, I don't know why the city is hell-bent on, you know, destroying the environment for new development.

George Stoya- I've been following this controversy on the building of the bridge and a couple of other environmental issues. And there is a price to progress, and that's what we're talking about here. Now, it may not be the way you define progress, the way I define progress, or the way Ken and his group define progress, but progress is at stake. It's been politicized too. The mayor decided he was going to run. Things are changing and there is a price. I'm sure you guys are aware of this. I'm not saying anything new. The world doesn't work that way. We've got demands being made on our infrastructure that have to be met and the mayor and I guess you people on the council have decided to go one way and that's the way it is. And I guess you know, you have to answer for it one way or another. We all have to adjust. As you all know, there's a lot of things you guys do up here that I don't really like and you know. There is give and take and then comprise. But there has to be some progress if we're going to meet the demands. It's just a price of progress. I keep seeing this right and wrong analysis. It's not like there are choices and you guys have made your choice. The mayor has chosen this route, he has the votes. He has the position.

Councilwoman Alexander, supported by Councilman Tyler, moved to adjourn.

AYES: ALL

2023 HAMMOND COMMON COUNCIL ATTENDANCE RECORD OF
ELECTRONIC AND PHYSICAL PRESENCE

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec	
	9	23	13	27	13	27	13	27	10	24	8	22	12	26	10	24	14	28	11	25	23	13	27	4
Katrina Alexander	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P													
Dan Spitale	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P													
Janet Venecz	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P													
Mark Kalwinski	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P													
Pete Torres	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P													
Barry Tyler	E	P	P	E	P	P	P	E	P	E	P													
Bill Emerson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P													
Dave Woerpel	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P													
Scott Rakos	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P													
Initials	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG													

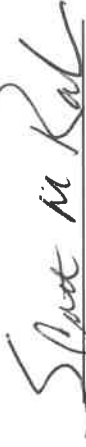
E=ELECTRONIC

P=PHYSICALLY

PRESENT

A=ABSENT

If the member qualifies for an exemption from the "Consecutive - 50" requirements, draw a circle around the E for that meeting/ member.



Scott Rakos, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:



Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 7:30

cb/dw

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk