

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on August 28, 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.

City Clerk Robert J. Golec facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.

Invocation by Councilwoman Alexander

ROLL CALL

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

ELECTRONICALLY PRESENT PER ZOOM: None

ABSENT: Torres

TOTAL: 8

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

STATEMENT BY CITY ENGINEER

City Engineer Dean Button - Norfolk Southern has started their rail replacement project. Basically started in earnest last week. Where they're working through the city of Hammond from the state line to the city of Gary. They started some work at Marble Street, Sohl, Maywood and Carroll Street, and even Columbia Avenue last week. So some of those roads have been reopened. Columbia should be open today. I haven't gotten word back from them. I regularly communicate with a representative from Norfolk Southern. We received this notification several weeks ago from Norfolk Southern, and one of the stipulations on these closures is that we ask that they put up some advance warning signs throughout the city to make sure that residents were prepared for this activity. Obviously, you can't prepare for this type of closure but we try to get the notice out through the railroad to warn the public of this eminent crossings and the crossings that were gonna be closed. This morning they started at 165th, closed Osborn, Kennedy, 169th, Arizona, Parrish and 173rd. Tomorrow we expect them to close Grand, it is the last crossing in Hammond. It's generally taken them about two days, although last weeks intense heat did cause some delay. So they held back continuing through 165th last week. We actually asked them to make sure that the road was open for the weekend. Really the good thing is that this is Monday, right, and they work four ten hour days to get their work completed. So they should be done this week. But for the next two to three days you're gonna see some very difficult traffic movement. Basically, there's not a lot we can do. It's their railroad right of way and they have the right to close these streets through the city of Hammond because we don't control their right of way. If there were other alternatives that we had available made to us then we'd certainly use those but Calumet Avenue and Indianapolis Blvd. are open. Those crossings were completed about three weeks ago, so I would ask that if you are trying to get from north to south that you would use those two streets. In fact, even going east, you may need to use Michigan and Kennedy, at least to 164th Place. Then you sort of have to meander through the neighborhood if you're on the north side of the tracks. ON the south side of the tracks, obviously, you can sort of stay through 173rd and Kennedy (unclear). We also have a number of other closings that have been ongoing currently, Downtown Hohman has been closed for most of the summer. We're working hard to get that reopened to two way traffic before winter. We've had a few set backs

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

STATEMENT BY CITY ENGINEER

City Engineer Dean Button cont. - related to the construction in downtown. Mostly related to basements that were found that extended underneath the sidewalk. So that's taken some time to sort of get arms around. Then lastly, this morning we, the city of Hammond, in cooperation with the Indiana Department of Transportation, closed Summer Street at Columbia Avenue, so that intersection is 100% closed. The reason is we're doing utility relocations. That work is gonna take about two months. We've given the contractor 60 days to complete that work. They've done some preliminary work up to this point to try to keep that project going as quickly as we can. That's a \$14 million project. Hammond's into it for about \$2.5 million and the rest comes from a Federal grant that comes through NIRPC, through their appropriation. I'll take any questions you might have regarding closures or hopefully any other matter or I'll let you carry on.

Councilman Woerpel - It's gonna come up in committee reports, under Capital Improvements, last meeting we approved a funding allocation to Rieth-Riley for \$171,521 to remove vaulted sidewalks. Can you explain what a vaulted sidewalk is?

City Engineer Dean Button - So that's my term. I sort of coined that term. I don't know if that's term that's widely used. But basically, the basement of two buildings on the east side of Hohman Avenue extend underneath the sidewalk. So the sidewalk is, basically, just the concrete walk with no support underneath it. It's supported by the foundation wall and the beam that supports right at the property line. So underneath that area is unsupported but it's concrete so it doesn't fall in. That sidewalk, the basement has to be removed in order to complete the project, which includes the new (unclear) that we had planned for Downtown Hohman. So, vaulted sidewalks basically means a sidewalk supported from the foundation with nothing underneath it.

Councilman Woerpel - And then one last question, because of the \$18,825 for right of way engineering on Chicago street, I noticed on here it says certain parcels purchased extend into the current roadway. Could you just explain it like you did at the meeting that night?

City Engineer Dean Button - So, the city of Hammond, through the course of our Chicago Street reconstruction project, which was a \$35 million project all told, we had to acquire certain parcels. So now we own parcels that extended into the right of way. Originally, like at the roundabout at Hohman Avenue and Chicago Street, that it's the southwest corner it, was formerly the Car Care building. I'm sorry I don't remember the address off the top of my head. But that property extended into what is now the roundabout. So we need to separate that portion that is contained within the right of way and leave the residual parcel for development purposes. So there are a few of those locations along Chicago Street that needs to be dedicated as right of way and we needed the engineer to help us with that.

Council President Rakos - Well, what we found again, we cannot control what Norfolk and Southern does in any way, shape or form. They'll do what they want. Initially we thought they were gonna do a couple streets at a time and they just cut off all of Hessville. They've been doing it with trains for years. Now they do it putting

MAYOR’S ADDRESS

STATEMENT BY CITY ENGINEER

Council President Rakos - new tracks down. Thank you for your help and I know we were under ... we had quite a bit of communications on Thursday and today and I appreciate all the help you gave us.

City Engineer Dean Button - You’re welcome. I hope it’s all completed ... I expect it all to be completed this week, and so thank you.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to approve the minutes from August 14, 2023 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to approve the claims from August 15, 2034 through August 23, 2023. Claim #5530 through #5977, inclusive. In the amount of \$6,020,600.22.

ROLL CALL VOTE (claims)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried 8/0/1 CLAIMS APPROVED

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Upcoming meetings:
Wed., Sept. 13; Community Watch at Mt. Zion Pleasantview Plaza; 1 p.m.
East Hammond Pullman Crime Watch; Tues., Sept. 18; 6 p.m.; Ophelia Steen Center
Edison Community Watch; Wed., Sept. 6; 6:30 p.m.; Edison School
Harrison Park Crime Watch; Tues., Oct. 3; 6 p.m.; VFW on Hohman
Hessville Crime Watch; Thur., Sept. 21; 6 p.n.; Jean Shepherd Center
Irving Community Watch; Fri., Sept. 8; 9:30 a.m.; Irving School
South Hammond Neighborhood Watch has yet to announce their October meeting date
Whiting-Robertsdale Crime Watch; Thur., Sept. 14; 6:30 p.m.; Calumet College

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

COMMITTEE REPORTS cont.

Capital Improvement Board - Councilman Woerpel - In addition to what Mr. Button explained we also had a funding allocation for Clark Field construction engineering to Beam Longest and Neff in the amount of \$162,300.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

None

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

None

RESOLUTIONS

None

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Woerpel - Again, this falls under old business, but I would like to wish our Council President a happy birthday on the 24th and out of respect for my elders I won't say how old you are.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Ken Rosek - Okay with the railroad doing maintenance on the tracks. I think we can deal with the two days that it's gonna be down. We know how to get around. We don't want to demonize the railroad, which is what I thought the president was doing. The trains have stopped parking in Hessville. I haven't seen one in five months. A lot of people got fired over this within the railroad. Be careful what kind of information is being spread around.

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

AYES: ALL

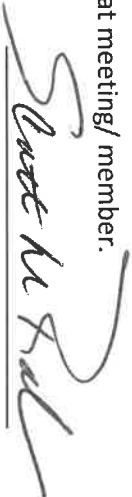
2023 HAMMOND COMMON COUNCIL ATTENDANCE RECORD OF
ELECTRONIC AND PHYSICAL PRESENCE

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec		
	9	23	13	27	13	27	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	P	P	P	P	P	P					
Dan Spitale	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
Janet Veneez	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
Mark Kalwinski	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	A					
Pete Torres	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P					
Barry Tyler	E	P	P	E	P	P	E	E	P	E	E	E	P	P	P	P	E					
Bill Emerson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
Dave Woerpel	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P					
Scott Rakos	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
Initials	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG					

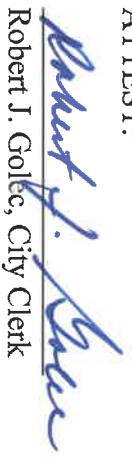
E=ELECTRONIC
P=PHYSICALLY
PRESENT
A=ABSENT

8
2

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: 6:20 p.m.
cb

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk