

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on May 28, 2024 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: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Salinas, Tyler, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos

ELECTRONICALLY PRESENT PER ZOOM: Alexander

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 8

Councilwoman Alexander is now present in chambers

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor McDermott - Welcome back everybody. Tuesday, 4:30 p.m. meeting. First time in twenty years this has happened. So, it's good to see that nobody forgot, like I almost did this morning. I want to remind you all that my Chief of Staff, Phil Taillon was hired by the South Shore Convention and Visitor's Bureau. Phil's last day at work is at the end of the month. So, this is his last day as my Chief of Staff. Obviously, we're all happy for Phil and we're sad at the same time because I've been working with Phil for thirteen-fourteen years, he's been my Chief of Staff for a long time. So, we're going through a lot of change in the Mayor's Office right now. As you all know, we recently promoted Alex Stahura to Constituent Services, Christy is running the office, so now we're gonna have a new Chief of Staff. I'm trying to figure out the process I'm gonna use to fill this position. It's not really a typical job. It's a Chief of Staff's position, works directly for the Mayor. Probably gonna post it. Technically we have to post it, but I'm not in a big hurry to fill it to be honest with you. I'm in a hurry to fill it with the right person. Because this is a great job. The three previous people that held this position went on to bigger and better things. So I think it's a good job for somebody's future. My first Chief of Staff went on to run other government agencies. My second Chief of Staff is now running, he's the Vice President at NIPSCO. My third Chief of Staff, well he was Deputy Chief of Staff, is CEO at NIRA, this Chief of Staff left to run a vacancy at the South Shore Convention and Visitor's Bureau as CEO, so I think it's a good job. I've been approached by a number of people. I appreciate them. I'm considering everybody. I'm waiting for the perfect person and I'll go through a formal process. So, um, anyway, in the meantime I'm gonna be busy. So, you'll be hearing from me until further notice, okay? But we will formally post it probably soon. But it may not get filled right away. But, congratulations to Phil. I'm looking forward to a lot of partnerships between the Convention and Visitor's Bureau and the City of Hammond. Obviously, he's a life long Hammond resident and it's great to see him moving on to bigger and better things and it's great to have partnerships with the Convention and Visitor's Bureau that could do a lot for us here in the city. So, congrats to Phil. Looking forward to working with him. My activity log over the last couple of weeks, started off with promotion ceremony at the Hammond Police

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - Department. We promoted a lot of new Captains, two new Captains, a couple lieutenants, Master Sergeants and Sergeants. It was a nice ceremony we held in the Police Department with a lot of family and a lot of police officers there as well. Mayor's Night Out was held in the 3rd District. I want to say thank you to Councilman Barry for hosting us at the Hammond Sportsplex. I wanted to acknowledge this, I wasn't there, because I was at a conference in Las Vegas, International Conference of Shopping Centers. But while I was gone, I had a meeting with Councilman Kalwinski, my staff had a meeting with Councilman Kalwinski, Jim Taillon, the head of the Park Department met with Councilman Mark in Pulaski Park, talking with Councilman Mark about if it's feasible to locate pickleball at Pulaski Park. I think that's a great idea. We're following that up, Councilman Mark. I wanted to acknowledge I wasn't there. I want to apologize for not being there. I calendared it and then I realized that I was the problem in that. So we let the meeting happen, but I think this is a good idea and we're moving forward with that and we'll be in touch. I met with the developer in Las Vegas. I had dinner with that person. This is a person that's done developments across Northwest Indiana and the Chicagoland area and is interested in a development in our city. So I think it was a fruitful meeting. I met with my Fire Chief, my Deputy Fire Chief, my Chief of Staff to go over all the Deputy Fire Chief applications. Anthem Church located on Hohman Avenue in our 4th District hosted an event at City Hall, Pastor Sam came out and hosted a cook out for all city servants. So, Pastor Sam and Anthem Church did a good job. Met with all First Responders, cooked us lunch. Had lunch with the Mayor of Hobart also. Had a discussion with the Sportsplex Supervisor and Community Development Coordinator about Sportsplex's expansion and how it relates to the old Walmart. I presented a CLD with Corporate Council Kevin Smith to attorneys across Northwest Indiana about the trials and tribulations of practicing municipal law in the City of Hammond. I attended Northern Indiana Mayor's Round Table in Michigan City for Mayor Angie Nelson Deutch. We made an announcement at the Hammond Fire Department, I'm sure you've heard by now, first off, it was a couple weeks we promoted our Bernie Grisolia, he's gonna be Hammond's next Fire Chief. The announcement was made formally a couple weeks ago and then we followed it up with the press release this week. We names Dave Weisz, who is our assistant Chief Drill Master in Hammond Fire Department become the new Deputy Fire Chief. Congratulations to Deputy Chief Weisz and Chief Grisolia. We have an open Drill Master position we're gonna work, in the future, to fill. Which is where Chief Weisz came from. So congratulations to Bernie and to Dave on their promotions. I attended Hammond Mohawk's Annual Memorial Day Parade in North Hammond. There was a really good crowd yesterday, a lot of candy getting thrown, a lot of volunteers, a lot of parade walkers. I thought it was a really good day. Thanks to Councilman Kalwinski for hosting and thanks to the Hammond Mohawk for all the hard work they put in to that event. I had a update today, I know Councilman Mark has a meeting today on the Pulaski Park neighborhood in regards to 3 141st Street which has a stop work order placed on it by Inspection Department. We have a developer that is interested in developing this property. This property comes with a legacy of environmental issues that we're concerned with. Councilman Kalwinski caught this group doing something that was not agreed upon that they were doing. I appreciate Councilman Kalwinski'd diligence on this issue. My administration followed it up with a stop work order and we are in the process of making them sort through the mess. They have to tell us what they plan to do. How they plan to protect the neighborhood. If they plan on going forward with that. I know Councilman Mark has a meeting today at 6:30, Pulaski Park Neighborhood Association where IDEM is coming down. IDEM's involved in this cleanup as well. So, I appreciate him doing that. I just want everybody to know this developer has to follow the rules if they're gonna develop that property. Everybody's on the same page in that regard. And last , but not

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - least, we've got an update from the Hammond Sanitary District today regarding possible upcoming litigation and how that litigation, if it happens, it impacts the long term control plan as well as the CMDF facility being urged Hammond bill by the Department of Justice. This is something that I've talked to a couple of you about. This is something that is bubbling up right now. It could turn into a big thing. It could turn into nothing but we're monitoring that situation and we are looping in the Department of Justice on this as well just to ramp up the pressure on the people that are causing problems because Hammond is doing everything we're supposed to be doing. It's other bad actors, in my opinion. Last meeting we talked about a resolution in regards to Franciscan Hospital. We ask that you hold that back. I know Councilman Salinas has been briefed already on this. But that resolution, we're waiting for paperwork from the Franciscan. If we get the paperwork that satisfies us, we're willing to go forward and relax some standards on the demolition of that property. Only if everything comes together. We don't want to present it to you all until we get the paperwork back from the hospital that we expect to get. So, I'll ask you all to hold off on that resolution again for another meeting, if you don't mind. That's my report, unless you have any questions.

Councilman Kalwinski - Thank you for being at the parade yesterday.

Mayor McDermott - It was great.

Councilman Kalwinski - D.J. was outstanding.

Mayor McDermott - Yeah, I didn't know if it was appropriate to have a D.J. on Memorial Day but it added an element to the event.

Councilman Kalwinski - So, I don't know if you could say, who is suing the Hammond Sanitary District?

Mayor McDermott - Nobody right now. It's possible. If we do an executive session with the Council I'm willing to brief you. I don't want to jinx us by talking about it publically. It's potentially a problem. Potentially. But, we're getting ready just in case. It's been a while since we've held Executive Session, talk about litigation. I'm willing to get together. Ans we have budgets coming up. I got negotiations with Police and Fire I haven't updated you all on. So, if you all want to call an Executive Session, I'd be more than happy to show up and talk about things like litigation off the record. So, if you all are willing to do that, I'm willing to show up and we could talk about the District and things like that, okay?

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Salinas, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to approve the minutes of May 13, 2024 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to approve claims from May 4, 2024 through May 17, 2024. Claim #4303 through Claim #4684, inclusive. In the amount of \$4,119,327.04.

ROLL CALL VOTE (claims)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

CLAIMS APPROVED

COMMON COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP DRAWING

Councilwoman Alexander - So, I have all our scholarship applications here and I'm gonna go district by district. Each District will pull two. Then each at large will pull one. Then each at large will pull an additional two for the Alternates.

WINNERS

Camila Perez	Hammond Central	District 1
Marc A. Rodriguez	Morton	District 1
Camila Salgado	Hammond Central	District 2
Kalesha Chavez	Hammond Central	District 2
Brianne Mattox	Hammond Central	District 3
Angela Villegas	Morton	District 3
Marilyn Schuller	Morton	District 4
Ja'Kyra Nunn	Morton	District 4
Ava Meadows	Morton	District 5
Kalib Kimbrough	Hammond Central	District 5
Thomas Haack	Morton	District 6
Benjamin Adanekan	Morton	District 6
Adrian Flores	Hammond Central	District 6
Skylar Pollard	Hammond Central	District 2
Camila Ruby Vargas	Hammond Central	District 1

ALTERNATES

Ulises Martinez	Morton	District 2
Fatima Lopez	Hammond Central	District 1
Tyrell Frieson	Hammond Central	District 3
Gina Trombetta	Morton	District 3
Jared Espinoza	Hammond Central	District 1
Jolinn Tapia	Hammond Central	District 1

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Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Kalwinski - I just want to let people know that Pulaski Park Neighborhood Association meeting is at 6:30 at the Hammond Mohawks. Primary presenters will be the Indiana Department of Environmental Management to discuss their oversight of the contaminated property at 23 141st Street, across from Hermits Park, formerly Taylor Chain, formerly ProLiquids, etc. I hope everybody can join us as well as the Council.

Councilman Rakos - Live in the Ville will be this weekend, Friday, May 31st and Saturday, June 1st. Fourteen food trucks, twenty vendors. It goes from 5 p.m. til 11 p.m. on Friday and Noon til 11 p.m. on Saturday. There are lots of thing coming out, inflatable costume parade, puppy parade, booths, tents, food tents, a cornhole tournament, beer garden, food trucks, local vendors, live music. We got Crawluppies on Friday night and Lyn Skynyrd on Saturday Night.

Councilman Kalwinski - The Hammond Mohawks will again be hosing Polkmania on their grounds at Calumet and 141st Street on June 9th. I believe 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Everybody's welcome.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Capital Improvement Board - Councilman Emerson - No meeting

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Upcoming meetings:

Community Watch at Mt. Zion Pleasantview Plaza; Wed., June 12; 1 p.m.

East Hammond Pullman Crime Watch; Ophelia Steen Center; Tues., June 18; 6 p.m.

Edison Community Watch is off for the summer

Harrison Park Crime Watch; VFW on Hohman; June 4; 6 p.m.

Hessville Crime Watch; Thur., June 20; 6 p.m.; Jean Shepherd Center

Irving Community Watch is off for the summer

South Hohman Avenue Neighborhood Watch only meets twice a year, October some time

Whiting-Robertsdale Crime Watch; Thur., June 13; 6:30 p.m.; Calumet College

Hammond Community Watch, thanks to the generosity of Mayor McDermott this year is offering a free Ring Doorbell Program. Applications will be taken on the 3rd Floor of City Hall in Room 314 between June 24 and June 28. Applications must be presented in person. You must own and reside in your Hammond home. You must provide proof of home ownership and provide a valid Driver's License or State I.D. We have 100 to give away, so it will be on a first come, first serve basis and the reason that we require the application is to, No. 1, verify the fact that you are a homeowner, and No. 2, try to avoid anyone trying to take advantage of the program and getting two Ring doorbells for their home.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

None

*Prepared by
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Hammond City Clerk*

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

24-12 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 1424 Field St., Hammond in 46320

Councilman Tyler, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading by title and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a meeting on June 10, 2024 at 5:00 p.m and a Notice of Intent set for June 10, 2024.

ROLL CALL VOTE (24-12)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MOTION CARRIED

RESOLUTIONS

None

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilwoman Alexander - I just would like to congratulate all of the 2024 graduates as they get ready to embark on their new chapters in their lives. I know that H.A.S.T. had their graduation on last week Friday and all the other schools will be coming up shortly, as soon as this weekend and even during the week. So, just want to congratulate them and wish them good luck in their future endeavors and everything and congratulate the teachers on a great and successful school year this year.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Ken Rosek - Governors Parkway Bridge is a road and a bridge that adds over half a mile detour that will add significant time to emergency responses in Hessville. Parrish Avenue keeps open the fastest emergency route. Most intersections in the report are unaffected by this project. 177th Street crossing does not exist but it's in the grant application. The numbers are being pumped up in the report.

T.J. Gaertig - Was looking into Federal funding for landscape and wildlife restoration to get gauge of what's going on there. The Biden administration announced that they were investing \$2 billion to fund Environmental Justice Community Change Grants as part of investing in America agenda. The Governors Parkway does not help emergency response times, it does not help children hopping trains to get to school. We are not stuck with this plan because the FRA said it sees Hammond as a priority and is eager to give us new funding when we get together a better plan, which would be a overpass on Grand Avenue.

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

AYES: ALL

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Hammond City Clerk*

2024 HAMMOND COMMON COUNCIL ATTENDANCE RECORD OF
ELECTRONIC AND PHYSICAL PRESENCE

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	8	22	12	26	11	25	8	22	13	28							
Katrina Alexander	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Dan Spitale	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Janet Venecz	E	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P						
Mark Kalwinski	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Alfonso Salinas III	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Barry Tyler	P	P	P	E	P	E	P	P	P	P	P						
Bill Emerson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Dave Woerpel	A	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							

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

Scott Rakos, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTES *RJG*

Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 5:15 p.m.
cb

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Hammond City Clerk