

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on September 9, 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.

City Clerk Robert J. Golec facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.

Moment of silence was observed

ROLL CALL

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

ELECTRONICALLY PRESENT PER ZOOM: None

ABSENT: None

TOTAL:9

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor McDermott- Hello, Council President Rakos and the rest of the Council. It's good to see you all again. This is my report for September 9, 2024. I did something unusual today. We haven't met in staff meeting in actually a month and a half. This morning we had a meeting with all department heads in my office. It was all 3 groups. Usually I meet with them 1 at a time over the course of 3 weeks. So we had a big staff meeting this morning with, took about 3 hours for us to catch up on all the developments that are going on right now. So it's good to get back on track with my staff. It was a real good meeting and we got on base with a lot of issues. I'd say over the last couple weeks since the last time I met with you all, I also had a meeting with representatives at HAST. The Hammond Academy of Science and Technology regarding the new school year statistics, finances going on at HAST, as well as planning for their future. Obviously with what's going on in the School City right now, they're getting a lot more interest in their school. I want to be on the same page with HAST, so it's good that they came to City Hall and we had a nice meeting. Met with the Controller's office regarding misc. revenue, which obviously we're getting ready for budget season. We're in the middle of budget season on our side. Misc. revenue is becoming important to all of us with what's going on in our budget right now. We had a really good meeting with Tinisha from the Controller's office, Megan, Myself, and the Chief of Staff. I had dinner with a representative from an engineering firm. We're starting to get a lot of firms that are interested in helping us with lead line replacements in the Water Department. This is a problem that the City of Hammond is gonna have to deal with, well the Hammond Water Company, excuse me, not the City of Hammond, is gonna have to deal with in the coming years. It's directive is coming from Washington D.C.. It's estimated that Hammond's problem with lead lines is probably like a \$500 million dollar problem, or in that ballpark. It's estimated to be about 21,000 homes in Hammond with lead lines. It's estimated to cost about \$13,000 at each of these homes on the average to replace each lead line. Ultimately that cost will have to be born by the Hammond Water Department. If you do the calculation, it's a big number. It's like hundreds of millions of dollars. That's just Hammond. When you think about cities like Milwaukee, and Chicago and think about how much America is gonna have to come up with to fix this problem in the future. That's why I don't get too worried when people talk about lead lines, being honest with you. It's such a big money problem, that we can't do it ourselves. This is gonna have to come from Washington D.C., anything we do to fix it. The Hammond Water Company is doing

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont- here and there projects, couple million dollars here, couple million dollars there. That's great, you know? If we do it at that pace, we'll be doing it for the next hundred years, before the problem is fixed. For us to do any real problems, we're gonna have to have grants from the federal government. These engineering firms are interested in trying to get the money for us. So I said, go get it! If you go get 5 million dollars, we got plenty of work. Interesting what's going on. I've been getting a lot of those meetings lately. We held Fire Department Battalion Chief interviews. We settled upon Engineer Casey McCluskey as Hammond Fire Department's new Battalion Chief. Engineer McCluskey, now Chief McCluskey did a great job in the interview. He's a great firefighter. We are super proud and happy that he is now a Chief in the department. Everyone that made the final cut, were great. It was a really tough decision, but McCluskey, we're really proud of him. So congratulations to Chief Casey McCluskey, our newest Battalion Chief. Had a meeting with the City Engineer on maintenance issues that the City Engineer did a report for me that showed how much maintenance work is being preformed on Hammond streets over the last 5 years. I'll make that report available to you. It's not a lovely report. The maintenance we're doing on our streets is a function of how well the casino boat is doing really when you think about it. The casino boat is not doing well. When the casino boat is not doing well, our road formula sort of fails us because there's not a lot of money there for road projects. Anyway, that wasn't a lovely meeting that I had. It's a real meeting. We're running a city with 300 miles of roads. That's gonna take maintenance to maintain them. Mayor's night out, 4th District, we held that. I wanna thank Councilman Emerson for hosting it. It was a great meeting. A lot of people in attendance. A long meeting. Councilman Emerson did a great job. It was at Edison School. I wanna thank them for making it available. Had a meeting with Vic Lopez who's a young man that I appointed to an open position on the Hammond Water Board. Actually, Vic Lopez is a resident of the 4th District. He went to HAST actually, he's a Hammond kid. He's got a really big job. He's a great guy, so he's gonna do a really great job on the Hammond Water Board for us. Held my monthly Captain's meeting with the Hammond Police Department. We have this meeting monthly. It was a great meeting. Met with the Port Authority staff and employees over a disciplinary issue. We handled it internally. I think everyone learned their lesson. Something went wrong. If you wanna talk about it, I'm willing to talk off the air about it. But, something went wrong with the Port Authority. I think we handled it well. It was a good employee that made a mistake. I hope that it never happens again. Anyway, attended Lear Corps 30 year anniversary. 30th year in the City of Hammond. They're at their second location. I attended in the plant. I was there with the Chief of Staff. All the employees came out. They're really proud to be from Hammond. That plant does really well. The Chief of Staff learned that his truck seats were made right in Hammond Indiana. Met with The Used Car Lot Task Force. I have 4 council members that are a part of this task force. I've noticed over the years, the number of used car lots in the City of Hammond has increased dramatically. These used car lots, some of them look fine, most of them do not. They look like crap. They have too many cars on them. It's a dangerous situation. If one of those cars, god forbid ever caught on fire, it'd be impossible to position our fire trucks on that lot to put that fire out. We are putting this task force together, along with Code Enforcement, along with the Fire Department, along with a lot of public safety people. We're gonna start battling this problem. I apologize that it's gotten to this point. It's unacceptable, and we will be following this up. Police and Fire negotiations haven't really proceeded much since we last spoke. We made a final offer to the Police. The Police accepted the final offer. They're gonna vote on it. I personally think it's a great offer. It's a generous offer. If they take it, I think it's gonna stop our problem with losing police officers. The cops don't love it, which means, I think it's a good offer. I mean, the best offer is the one where everyone is a little bit upset with it. I'm not thrilled with it. It's paying a lot more than I thought we were going to. They're not thrilled with it because they wanted more. Those

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.- are usually the right deals. The last deal we made to them was 100-0 and nobody likes that deal now. So I think that this deal is a better deal. I think it will probably pass 65-35 something like that. So if that goes, that leaves Fire and the Teamsters. Fire, I have a meeting with this week. So I'll have more to report the next time that we talk. Teamsters, we're in regular meetings with. It seems like with the Teamsters, we're all on the same page. I think Fire, we're not on the same page right now, so we're working on that. Haunted house, last time I talked to you guys, haunted house is on the same page with the City. In fact, I just saw them put up signage on the haunted house that talks about the last year that Reaper's Realm will be open. That's by agreement regardless who owns the haunted house property. They will have Reaper's Realm this year. Actual items before the Council tonight, Councilman Salinas, we can finally move forward. I know you know this, we can finally move forward with the resolution regarding the fill issue at the old hospital site. I know it was a lot. I appreciate your patience. If anybody has any questions, I'm available.

Councilman Emerson- I would like to be on the Used Car Lot Task Force.

Mayor McDermott- Ok, I would love that. The problem we have is, we start running into quorum issues. I'm willing to run into those quorum issues though if I'm being honest with you. We would just have to notice the meeting. Could I get back to you on that Councilman? Could you call my office tomorrow so I can follow this up with legal.

Councilman Emerson- Ok.

Mayor McDermott- I have no problem if all of you wanna be on it. If it was, we would just have to notice the meetings. If we notice the meetings, it's an open door. I don't care who comes to that meeting. If members of the public want to attend that meeting, it's a great meeting. I think they would be impressed with how we handle it. Let me follow that up, ok Councilman? I know we have, it's a quorum. We're right below quorum right now. If we brought you on, it would break the quorum. So, thank you.

Councilwoman Venecz- Mr. Mayor, if you do run into a quorum problem with the Car Lot Task Force, I would be willing to give my spot to the 4th District Councilman.

Mayor McDermott- That's sweet. Thank you. Let's follow this up tomorrow.

Councilman Emerson- Thank you, Councilwoman.

Mayor McDermott- This is beautiful, thank you. It's bringing tears to my eyes.

Councilwoman Venecz- Well, I've certainly said my piece about a couple of the car lots in my neighborhood and the Councilman may know of more in the district.

Mayor McDermott- This is not a lovely task force. I'm mad about it. We're looking at problem properties. People that are taking advantage of our neighborhood and taking advantage of our zoning codes. I'm sick of it. I know that's music to your ears to a lot of you. I promise we're staring down, and bringing them up on the big screen, and sending out Building Inspectors, Fire Department Inspectors. It's ridiculous. There's one that I'm

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.- responsible for as Mayor. Unfortunately there's hundreds, but I have one that's my fault. It looks like crap, and it's my fault that it even happened. I admit that, and I'm mad about that one. That's what we're doing on this task force. We're pulling up properties, putting it on the big screen. We're talking about it. We're being smart about it so that it doesn't result in litigation. We're gonna try to fix the problem. I know that they're all over. Every one of you District Councilmen have this problem. So, thank you. Let's follow this up tomorrow.

Councilman Kalwinski- Hi, Mayor.

Mayor McDermott- Hi, Councilman.

Councilman Kalwinski- At the West Point Industrial Complex at Columbia and 141st, that huge truck terminal has been shuttered for about a month. There's no activity there.

Mayor McDermott- Really?

Councilman Kalwinski- I wondered if you knew what was up with it?

Mayor McDermott- I don't off the top of my head Councilman, but that's news to me.

Councilman Kalwinski- There's no activity. Nothing going in or out.

Mayor McDermott- That's the one for Wal-mart, right?

Councilman Kalwinski- Yes.

Mayor McDermott- Ok, let me follow that up please. I'm sorry, I don't know off the top of my head. I go in your district regularly too. That one escaped my. I'm not doubting you. You know how you get used to things, and you don't stare at things like you should sometimes. Now I'm gonna stare at it, because I'm in your district everyday. Is that all? I'm sorry Councilman.

Councilman Kalwinski- That's it.

Mayor McDermott- Any other questions?

Councilman Tyler- Good Evening, Mayor.

Mayor McDermott- Hi Councilman, I like your suit. That's nice.

Councilman Tyler- Thank you. Just in terms of negotiations with Police and Fire, what's your time line for trying to complete those?

Mayor McDermott- Thank you for the question. End of the year is the deadline, but, we've had situations in the

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.- past where it went over January. In situations like that, nobody loves it, but what we usually do, Councilman, is honor the contract. If we're negotiating in good faith. Like if we were at a total impasse, at Christmas of this year, that's worrisome, right? But, sometimes what you find, is you've just got a few issues you're trying to work out, and it's Christmas, and you're like, listen, let's come back after the holidays, we'll wrap up all these final issues, you guys will vote on it. In that meantime, we would still hold that contract valid. It's not like January 1st, sorry we have no contract, ok? I hope that doesn't happen Councilman. I don't anticipate it. If it does, that's happened before. I don't wanna remind anyone what union it was, but it's happened before. We got through it. I hope that doesn't happen though Councilman, so our goal is to be done. I know the tough thing right now though is, Megan's doing budgets right now. Some of these unions are asking for the sky and the moon. So she's like what numbers do we use for next years budget? If they're gonna be up here, and that's what we approve, she's gotta be able to pay for it. So we're working through these. I appreciate the question.

Councilman Tyler- Thank you

Councilman Kalwinski- I know that we've had a smaller number of police last year due to them going other places. Do you know how much we've saved because of so many fewer police this year?

Mayor McDermott- No, but I'm sure there's some money saved. If you remember Councilman, last year we budgeted a lot more into the budget, knowing that there'd be this huge flux of people that transferred. Ok? But, I don't know off the top of my head obviously. I imagine there's savings in there. The budget we're turning into you next year though, even if we approve these raises for P.D., should be less. So the budget you approved for 2024, for the P.D., I anticipate the budget that you approve for 2025 for P.D. will be less than what you approved for 2024. And that's our most costly item. You know? Now Fire will be a different story. But, P.D. we were ready for this huge flux that we went through. I think in a good way, we're caught lower than we thought we'd be. So I imagine that there's some savings there. But I don't know what that is off the top of my head Councilman. I'm sure Megan does, or we can get you a report.

Councilman Kalwinski- Sure, that'd be great.

Mayor McDermott- I know recently you asked about retirements. And I know that report, if you don't have it right now, that it's coming to you, on the way about the number of retirees taking place in the Hammond Police Department. I'm sorry, I know I saw it just today, so I imagine it's coming to you. Thank you.

Councilwoman Alexander- Hey Mayor, question for you. Speaking of budgets, I know we'll be getting those soon. With the changes to Police and Fire, we know that everyone is looking for those raises, those things will probably be happening even more in the future. What is your anticipation on where we're looking, and how we're going to maintain those dollars. And we can talk off record.

Mayor McDermott- No, No. I'm trying to figure.

Councilwoman Alexander- Like to maintain, continuing to have to give those raises, what are you looking at?

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott- That's my job every day of my life, Councilwoman.

Councilwoman Alexander- or how we're going to continue, because we know casino dollars are going down and those things, so just wondering where your head at on those things.

Mayor McDermott- Thankfully, Councilwoman, thank you for the question, we've been anticipating the casino revenue one day dropping, hoping that it would never happen, and it's happened. I did a report a few months ago, with the help of the Controller, to try to like determine, are we in good shape? Are we in bad shape? Overall, like total revenue sources, including misc. revenue, including our assessed value, including the local option income tax. All sources of revenue, including gaming, where are we? Are we up or are we down, right? The good thing is, now I'm not thrilled obviously with what's happened to the Horseshoe. I think there's a lot of people at fault for what's going on, ok? But, we've done our job thankfully where the other revenue sources are sort of saving us. Everything is sort of picking us up. While revenue for the gaming books has dropped, Water Department is doing really well, thankfully. Our assessed values, did really well this year, thankfully. You know? So like all these other revenue sources. We increase the assessed value of our city over a billion dollars over 20 years and that's saving us right now. So thankfully Councilwoman. And if you ask me Councilwoman Katrina, I think it's bleak about the casino revenue. I think it's bleak. I think that we're at 22 million a year right now. Councilman Mark, when we got here, it was at 35, 36 almost every single year, right? We're at 22 now. I don't think it's gonna stay here, I think it's gonna go down. If it goes down, where does it go down to? Does it go down to 15? 16? That's when the one on Halstead opens. What happens when the one downtown opens? Where does it go then? And they're not investing in this boat. When's the last time you saw a Horshoe Casino commercial? So, if they're not gonna invest in the boat, and if people are just gonna go to the new boat, I think we have to be realistic here. I agree with you Councilwoman. That's why I did that report and after I did that report, I felt better about my life, about our lives, because it seems like, even though we're losing on the casino game right now, it seems like we're winning on other games. It's helping us a lot and it's encouraging. Thank you. I appreciate the question. Believe me, I'm signing contracts and I wanna make sure we can pay for them. Right? So I appreciate the question. I'm willing to sit down with you and show you what I went through, it's interesting. Thank you.

Councilwoman Alexander- Will do.

Mayor McDermott- I'm not used to talking this much at a council meeting. I apologize. I had a coffee right before I got here. I appreciate all of you very much. I know sometimes that we scrap with each other but if we made a billion dollar s over 20 years it's because the Council and the Mayor worked well together. That's why we did it. If we were fighting with each other, we wouldn't have done what we did. So thank you guys, appreciate you.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Salinas, supported by Councilman Tyler, moved to approve the minutes of August 26, 2024 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved to approve the claims from August 21,2024 through September 4, 2024. Claim #7511 through #7787, inclusive. In the amount of \$5,749,131.32.

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved to amend Claims to include Claim #7788 to the Joe B Memorial Fundraiser in the amount of \$300.00.

ROLL CALL VOTE (Amendment)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion Carried 9/0/0 AMENDMENT APPROVED

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

24-18 An Ordinance of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana upon Recommendation of the Hammond Economic Development Target Area Pursuant to Indiana Code 6-1.1-12.1 Sponsored by Mark Kalwinski

George Stoya- I must have missed the memo. What area are we talking about here? We got a certain area? Can you get more Orwellian? Good God.

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilwoman Venecz- I would like to announce that The Hammond Historical Society and The United Steel Workers invite you to join them for the unveiling of a monument to honor the memory of 4 Standard Steel car workers that were killed and 62 that were injured on September 9, 1919 at the corner of Columbia and Highland. That will be this Saturday, September 14th, 11 A.M. at the Ophelia Steen Center. The 4 gentleman who died were from Hammond and this was just the beginning of the sacrifices that men and women have made over the years for our union. Please come out and acknowledge their sacrifice. Thank you.

Councilman Rakos- Hessville Halloween Movie Night, movies at the park, will be on September 27th, at 7 P.M. at Hessville Park. We're going to have Halloween movies which includes, The Great Pumpkin Charlie Brown, and Hocus Pocus. It's free admission. Bring your own chairs and snacks. Be at Hessville Park, right off Kennedy Avenue. On September 27th.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

- East Hammond Pullman Crime Watch: Tue., Sept 17; 6pm: Ophelia Steen Center
- Edison Community Watch; Wed., Oct 2; 6:30 pm; Edison School
- Harrison Park Crime Watch; Tue., Oct. 1; 6 pm; VFW on Hohman Ave.
- Hessville Crime Watch; Thurs., Sept 19; 6pm; Hansen Community Center at Martha and Alabama
- Irving Community Watch; Tues., Sept 10; 9:30am; Irving School in the Art Room
- Whiting/Robertsdale; Thurs., Sept 12; 6:30pm; Calumet College
- Pulaski Park Neighborhood Association; Tues., Sept 24; 6:30pm; Hammond Mohawks Club
- South Hohman Avenue neighborhood Watch will have a meeting sometime in October.

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilman Salinas - Brought out 24-16 and 24-17

Council as a Whole Committee- Councilman Kalwinski- Brought out 24-18

ORDINANCE 3RD READING- FINAL PASSAGE

24-16 An Ordinance Amending Title VII of the Hammond Municipal Code Traffic Schedule III and Setting a Speed Zone Limit on Hohman Avenue from Sibley to Douglas Street to 20 MPH

Councilman Salinas, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage and adoption of 24- 16

ROLL CALL VOTE (PASSAGE)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion Carried 9/0/0 ORDINANCE NO. 9639 PASSED

24-17 An Ordinance Amending Title VII of the Hammond Municipal Code Traffic Schedule III and Setting a Speed Zone Limit on Kennedy Avenue from 165th to 169th Street to 20 MPH

Councilman Salinas, supported by Councilwoman Alexander, moved for final passage and adoption of

ROLL CALL VOTE (PASSAGE)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion Carried 9/0/0 ORDINANCE NO. 9640 PASSED

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

ORDINANCE 3RD READING- FINAL PASSAGE cont.

24-18 An Ordinance of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana upon Recommendation of the Hammond Economic Development Commission Designating a Certain Area Within the City as an Economic Development Target Area Pursuant to Indiana Code 6-1.1-12.1

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage and adoption of 24- 18

ROLL CALL VOTE (PASSAGE)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion Carried 9/0/0 ORDINANCE NO. 9641 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

None

RESOLUTIONS

24R-14 A Resolution Authorizing the Use of Recycled Materials for Certain Demolition Activity Within the City of Hammond

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

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion Carried 9/0/0 RESOLUTION NO. R14 ADOPTED

24R-15 A Resolution of the Hammond City Council Confirming Resolution No. 24R-13 that Designated and Established a Certain Area of the City of Hammond,, Indiana as the Townplace Suites Economic Revitalization Area to Which Deductions of Assessed Value May be Requested by an Applicant to the Common Council of the City of Hammond Pursuant to Indiana Code 6-1.1-12.1

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

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion Carried 9/0/0 RESOLUTION NO. R15 ADOPTED

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS cont

24R-16 A Resolution of the Hammond City Council Granting Ascent Hospitality an Assessed Valuation Deduction (Tax Abatement) for Qualified Tangible Real Property Pursuant to Indiana Code 6-1.1-12.1

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

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion Carried 9/0/0 RESOLUTION NO. R16 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Gary Droischorf- Good Evening Everybody. I just want to thank Dave Woerpel again for doing our street and sidewalks and curbs. Our neighbors are thankful as well. We all love it and everyone is using it. And we are just thankful to everyone that had a part in it.

Ken Rosek- Greetings Council. At Mayors Night Out, last week, another horrible example of misdirection was on full display. Mayor McDermott spoke about how he does not like the pedestrian bridge that he now claims is an INDOT design. Let’s remind people that it was his design of Governor’s Parkway Bridge in Hessville that failed to address the public safety hazards in the first place that lead to the pedestrian bridge. The pedestrian bridge designed by the City of Hammond was a desperate effort to address the colossal failure that will destroy Hessville as we know it. The Mayor’s bridge completely ignored Hammond School children who attend 3 public schools. By locating the bridge too far away, it was proven that it will not service the children or the parents, teachers, and emergency vehicles that use Grand Avenue. The Mayor has blocked the promise made by INDOT given to us an estimate of an underpass on Grand Avenue. Lets also remind everybody that the Federal Railway Administration recommended a Grand Avenue solution. That solution was rejected by Mayor McDermott and our Councilman Scott Rakos with no reason given to the residents. Mayor McDermott and the City Engineer are now separating themselves. They did it the other night, from the proposed bridge, claiming it was an INDOT design. Why? Because it has lost favor with the public and is now seen as a political liability for him in light of his recent National Media attention. Downstate Republicans in Indianapolis, are more than happy to let this Democratic Administration dangle incoherently by agreeing to the City’s project. The Federal Government still has this project on hold counter to what the City Engineer claimed. Let’s hope these professional experts can see through this charade and stop this project. It is time for the Common Council to give us the underpass estimate promised to us, to the residents, and stop the misinformation and obstruction. We deserve it.

Jana A.- Good evening everyone. We were at the most recent Mayor’s Night Out. A question came up about the cost and analysis studies for an underpass on Grand Avenue that was promised to the community. As you all

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont

Jana A. cont- know, the Mayor and his team came up with an idea t build an overpass bridge to solve the safety issues regarding trains. We all know this bridge is not and will not solve this problem. The more the Mayor received criticism for this project, the more he defended it. It was clear to the community that the City Officials lacked transparency when they could hardly get a word in about the project. At Mayor's Night Out, the Mayor completely dodged the underpass question, and said that's INDOT's project, as if he had nothing to do with the design. It doesn't take a genius mind to see that this is an attempt to take the negative attention off of himself. Along this journey, I have met lots of different people. Many people are aware of the lies, fear, and manipulation tactics that the Mayor and his team employs. This alone gives me hope for the future of this city. The more people that are aware, the less power the officials have through manipulation. People will not stop standing up for what's best for this city, regardless of how the officials continue to abuse their power.

Councilwoman Alexander, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved to Adjourn

AYES: ALL

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	10	24	8	22	12	26	9							
Katrina Alexander	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	<u>E</u>						
Dan Spitale	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Janet Veneez	E	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Mark Kalwinski	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Alfonso Salinas III	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P						
Barry Tyler	P	P	P	E	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	E	P	P	P	P						
Bill Emerson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Dave Woerpel	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Scott Rakos	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	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

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: 6:54 p.m.
mg/cb

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk