

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL  
JULY 27, 2015

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on July 27, 2015 in the Hammond City Council Chambers.

Council President Michael Opinker presided.

City Clerk Robert J. Golec facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.  
Invocation by Councilman Higgs.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Markovich, Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Higgs, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

ABSENT: Kalwinski

TOTAL: 8

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to approve the minutes of July 13, 2015 and place on file.

AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved to approve the claims from July 8, 2015 through July 23, 2015. Claim #3956 through claim #4195, inclusive.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Higgs, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried

8/0/1

CLAIMS APPROVED

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Higgs announced that there is a new hair salon in the 1st District in which the grand opening will be August 9, 2015 from 2 to 5 p.m. She will be giving out school supplies.

Councilman Higgs announced the Hammond Open 5th Annual Chess Tournament sponsored by Mayor Thomas McDermott, Jr. and Commissioner Repay. It will be held at the Jean Shepherd Center on Saturday,

August 29th, 2015 starting at 9:00 a.m.

MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL cont.

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilman Spitale - Brought out 15-28.

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - I have one Community and Crime Watch Meeting to announce:

Pulaski Park Neighborhood Assoc; July 28; 6:30 p.m.; American Legion on Gostlin

Coming up next Tuesday, the Community and Crime Watch Groups in partnership with Mayor McDermott and the city of Hammond are hosting the 32nd National Night Out Crime and Drug Prevention event. The purpose of this event is to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, generate support for and participation in local anti-crime efforts, strengthen neighborhood spirit and police community partnerships and send a message to criminals letting them know our neighborhoods are organized and they are fighting back. In the city of Hammond we choose to make National Night Out a celebration. It's our opinion that because of the work of the community and crime watch groups and their vigilance in the neighborhoods and how the message of being the eyes and ears of our community and our neighborhood is getting out into our neighborhoods. That every year that we hear that the crime statistics in Hammond are going down. That is due in large part to the communication that's generated at the community and crime watch groups. So, to celebrate National Night Out we're going to have finger printing, drunk driving simulator, police and fire department vehicles, Hammond Canine Officers, the Lake County Sheriff will be there with his helicopter, weather permitting, and as of right now it looks pretty good. We will also have face painting, balloon animals for the children, vendors, door prizes for adults and children alike and we will have a DJ. You will receive a free hot dog, chips and pop if you bring a donation of a canned good that will be donated to Greater Hammond Community Services on Hoffman Street. So please come out and join us. The grand prize for the evening will be a lap top computer, so we've put a lot of effort into this event. Also, I did want to talk about a community meeting that was held last Tuesday, July 21st at the Gate Church on Sohl. That's in the Jacob's Square neighborhood. Most people affectionately call the church the golf ball church. The meeting was not about criticism because everybody knows what the challenges in the neighborhood are. It was a meeting of information and solutions. I've heard a lot of positive feed back about the meeting and I feel that the neighborhood is beginning to heal and they're ready to take their neighborhood back. So, this is just one of the outreaches that the community and crime watch groups do in an effort to make our neighborhoods safe and improve our quality of life in our neighborhoods. Of course that is how change happens, one person, one gesture, one moment at a time.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

None

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE

None

## RESOLUTIONS

None

## NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

15-28 INTENT TO CONSIDER - CP-15-09: To reclassify property at 828 114th Street from R1-U Urban Single Family Residential to C-4 General Commercial  
Petitioned by Gateway Triangle Corp.

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved for final passage.

Councilman Spitale - I'd like to bring up Dan Tursman who is a representative for Luke Builds.

Dan Tursman - Luke Builds - Representing Gateway Triangle - I'm here to request final approval of this rezoning. The projects consists of the three adjoining properties currently at the southeasterly intersection of Indpls. Blvd. and 114th Street. The current business that is located there, we're proposing to demolish that and through the process of subdivision joining those three lots together and rebuilding a new building. A new facility in it's place in an effort to improve the aesthetics of the property allow for more green space and improved traffic flow and I think to really enhance the overall marketability for Hammond's business community in that area. So this particular ordinance is to re-zone one of the lots that's currently R1-U to become commercial business, C-4, to join with the other two parcels.

Councilman Higgs - I just have one question. What's the total investment of redoing that property?

Mr. Tursman - Well we're, obviously, at the preliminary stages so we don't have a budget in place but I would estimate the cost of the new facility and site improvements to be around \$800 thousand.

Councilman Higgs - Good luck.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Higgs, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried

8/0/1

ORDINANCE NO. 9307 PASSED

Councilman Higgs - I would be remiss if I didn't send condolences out to the Gerard Ward Family who recently passed away. He had an asthma attack on Eaton Street who was a very close friend of mine and passed away this past week. It was really all of a sudden, so it really caught us by surprise. But certainly my condolences goes out to his family.

Councilman Higgs - The 14th Annual Back to School Supply Giveaway will be held August 15, 2015 from 12 to 2 at MLK Park Pavilion located on Highland and Columbia Avenue. Sponsored by Councilman Higgs. Supplies will be given away first come, first serve and I'm glad to say it's the 14th Annual and I look forward to seeing the kids walk away with a smile and with school supplies. And of course thanks Clerk Golec for your participation as well as yours Councilman Markovich.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to have a letter sent to Rich Powers, the District Deputy Commissioner of INDOT. I would like to thank him for the repairs that were made on Calumet Avenue between 165th and Sibley. However, I would like to now direct their attention to Indpls. Blvd. between Cabela Drive and 173rd. That stretch of road is also in desperate need of attention. Also, while we appreciate the beautiful flowers that were placed in the median on Calumet Avenue at the expressway, the grass there has grown very tall and that needs attention. So, I would appreciate their efforts on both of the matters as well.

AYES: ALL

LETTER SENT: JULY 28, 2015

Councilwoman Venecz - I also have several events that are coming up in the city of Hammond that I'd like to announce so everyone can mark their calendars. On Saturday, August 22nd the East Side Community Council and Mayor McDermott will host Melvin Clay's Urban Cowboys, Inc. at Memorial Park. This is going to be a rodeo. They had it a couple of years ago and it was wildly successful. The kids had a great time and it's going to be back again on August 22nd. I don't have the specific details but please look in the paper for more details. Also coming up this Friday, July 31st at the Wolf Lake Pavilion, the Northwest Indiana Symphony will be playing from 7 to 10 pm. It's a free event. Bring a blanket or a lawn chair. You can bring your picnic basket just the way you do at Ravinia and relax and listen to the music of the Symphony. It's always a wonderful evening. Also on Saturday, August 1st at the Jean Shepherd Center is the indoor garage sale from 10 am to 3 pm. Also coming up on Saturday, August 8th is Beatle fest. That is in Downtown Hammond. It's always a really cool event listening to the music of the Beatles takes you back a little bit. Well, it does me anyway because I was there when they were a hit. The event is from 2 to 11 pm. That is in Downtown Hammond on Hohman Avenue and Russell Street. Also on August 8th is the 4th Annual WHAM bike ride. It's the Whiting, Hammond, Highland and Munster after midnight bike ride. Registration begins at 9 pm and the cost to register is \$25. That's always a fun event. Councilman Spitale and I have a watering station on 173rd and Lyman and it's always fun for all of the people who come out. Councilman Emerson comes out and we pass out water to the cyclists as they go by. It's usually a pretty late night, about 3 o'clock in the morning but it's always fun. And also on August 1st is Venetian Night at the Hammond Marina. This is a free event. It goes from 10 am to 10 pm. They'll have a custom car show at 10 am, kids beach games from 12 to 3, adult bean bag games sponsored by the Yacht Club at 3 o'clock, a concert by Wolf Pack and fireworks at 9:00 pm. One more announcement. I ran into Cindy Rivera who works for the North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan and there was an article in the paper recently, about a week ago that unemployment is falling throughout Northwest Indiana. Although the numbers in Hammond were not quite as good as some of our surrounding communities, the fact is that unemployment is dropping. But I would like to point out that the Trustees Office is going to now have in their employee, Elite Staffing, this is at the Circle of Services Building at 2835 165th Street, beginning in August. You can contact Cindy Rivera at 803-0659 to set up an appointment. You must be able to pass a drug test and have a driver's license. If you don't have a driver's license they will help you get one.

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Markovich, moved to send a letter to Donna Muta requesting who is responsible for cutting the lot at Memorial Park. The last correspondence I received from her stating that the church owned the property, so she said it was under advisement and that they were reviewing it. So, I'd like to know what the status is on that.

AYES: ALL

LETTER SENT: JULY 28, 2015

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Higgs - Spoke to Kris Kantar in regards to the property at 838 Carroll. She gave me the impression that it's been on the demo list and it should have been demo'd quite some time ago. So I'm requesting that a letter be cc'd to the Mayor as well as to Board of Works and to the Law Department in regards to the property at 838 Carroll Street. Recently I had to clean up the property and they keep dumping mattresses and all kinds of debris over there. So I'm requesting that that be demo'd as quickly as possible. I so move. AYES: ALL

LETTER SENT: JULY 28, 2015

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Mary Ellen Slazyk - The Festival of the Lakes Fishing Tournament needs to be more handicapped accessible. It was close to a mile walk back to our vehicles and people had equipment to carry and children with them. There are also many senior citizens who attend. Even if we had a wheelchair we wouldn't have been able to use it because it was so muddy.

Alvin Cheeks - Announced Mrs. Clay Potter passed away. Oasis was a great project that hired minority contractors and sought them out. I appreciate Luke finishing that up. Thanked the council people that agreed to come out at night in our neighborhood and try to make it a better place.

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to adjourn.

AYES: ALL

Michael Opinker, President  
ATTEST:

Hammond Common Council

Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 6:25 pm  
cb

Minutes approved at the Common Council meeting of August 10, 2015.