

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL  
DECEMBER 14, 2015

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on December 14, 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 Councilwoman Venecz.

ROLL CALL

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

ABSENT: Uylaki

TOTAL: 8

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved that the minutes of November 17, 2015 and place on file.

AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Kalwinski, moved to approve claims from November 12, 2015 through December 9, 2015. Claim #6196 through claim #6870, inclusive.

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to amend claim #6800 to Thomas Fulk for \$115.55. It says Fire, Fire should be changed to Police Pension.

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to amend in claims:

#6871	Perseus Books Groups Common Council	\$	47.38
#6872	Hammond Moose #570 Common Council		1,000.00
#6873	Atlas Catering Mayor's Gaming		97.50
#6874	Atlas Catering Mayor's Gaming		657.00

ROLL CALL VOTE (amendments)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion carried

8/0/1

AMENDMENTS ADOPTED

MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL cont.

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APPROVAL OF CLAIMS cont.

ROLL CALL VOTE (as amended)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion carried 8/0/1 CLAIMS APPROVED  
(as amended)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

15-52 An Ordinance Appropriating the Proceeds of a Section 108 Guarantee Loan and Dealing with other Matters Pertaining to the Expenditure of Loan Proceeds for Program Year 2015  
No one spoke.

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Higgs read correspondence from gohammond.com web site contact asking what is taking so long with cameras on State Line Road.

Councilman Higgs read a meeting notice for Wednesday, December 16 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall Conference Room 113.

Councilman Higgs expressed his gratitude for Councilman Hinojosa's tenure as councilman.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council as a Whole - Councilwoman Venecz - Brought out 15-43, 15-52, 15-54, 15-55 and 15-56.

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Upcoming meetings:  
Tues., Dec. 15; E. Hammond Pullman C.W.; 6:30 pm; Ophelia Steen Center (Annual Christmas Party)  
Hessville C.W.; Thur., Dec. 17; Jean Shepherd Center; 7 pm  
S. Hammond C.W.; Thur., Dec. 17; Hammond Housing Authority

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

15-43 Appropriation - \$60,000 - Hammond City Court - From: Local Infraction Program  
To: Part Time Salaries

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for passage.

Councilwoman Venecz this is transferring money from the Local Infraction Deferral Program to the Part Time

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Councilwoman Venecz cont. - Salaries Line Item. A total of \$60 thousand. These funds were from those that came to court, chose not to have an infraction on their driver's license, they paid a fee for that. If they remain clean for a period of six months that infraction will not go on their driving record.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9324 PASSED

15-52 An Ordinance Appropriating the Proceeds of a Section 108 Guarantee Loan and Dealing with other Matters Pertaining to the Expenditure of Loan Proceeds for Program Year 2015

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved for passage.

Councilman Spitale - Section 108 provides communities with a source of financing for economic development, housing rehabilitation, public facilities and large scale (unclear) development projects. This flexibility makes it be one of the most potent and important public investment tools that HUD offers to the local governments.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9325 PASSED

15-54 2016 Elected Officials Salary Ordinance

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved for passage.

Councilman Higgs - I am so delighted and I don't care about how my other colleagues may feel about this but I am so delighted. I work 365 days a year for my constituents. I certainly deserve a raise. Thank you Lord.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9326 PASSED

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

15-55 An Ordinance Authorizing the City Controller to Transfer Funds from one Line Item to another within various City 2015 Budgets

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for passage.

Councilwoman Venecz - This is an ordinance that we have every year at this time and it basically cleans up our budget moving items from one line item to another.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion carried

8/0/1

ORDINANCE NO. 9327 PASSED

15-56 An Ordinance for Residential Parking Only on the 800 block of Becker Street

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved for passage.

Councilman Higgs - Discussion came up as to why this particular ordinance was placed on the agenda. The reason why, the residents on Becker Street are complaining that a number of people are parking there and giving them problems when they are trying to and from their property. But what needs to be understood in regards to this particular ordinance as well is that there are requirements when you ask for residential parking. So I hope they are prepared for what may potentially happen in regards to this particular ordinance. Because at some point if the police decide to enforce this, and I can't say that they will or they will not because I'm not an officer, but what will happen is they will be going to those property owners and they should have stickers on their vehicles in front of their homes and there may be a problem with that. So it's a two fold situation. I'm very careful when I present this particular ordinance but the residents have signed the petition that I have given to all my colleagues that you're aware of. So, that's all I have to say in regards to the residential parking on the 800 block of Becker.

Councilwoman Venecz - I will be voting against this ordinance for this reason. The proper procedure was not followed. To bring this before the Board of Works, allow the Street Department to put up temporary Residential Parking Only signs so the residents can acclimate themselves to the new rule. Just as the councilman said, sometimes there are repercussions with requests of this nature. My suggestion would be to table this until it's presented to the Board of Works and the signs be put up on a temporary basis for the residents to acclimate to the new rule.

Councilman Higgs - Seeing that this seems to be a topic of discussion at this point, in regards to Residential Parking Sign there's nothing that identifies and says that it necessarily has to go before the Board of Works when it comes to Residential Parking. This Council has the authority to approve or disapprove whether or not they want residential parking. It's an ordinance. It becomes law once the council signs off on it.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Councilman Higgs - Atty. Kantar would you like to expound on this particular residential parking issue?

Corporate Counsel Kantar - Well, actually what we normally do is we normally run it through the Board of Works. We put up 90 day trial signs just to let everyone in the neighborhood become accustomed to the idea and get their stickers. Once the ordinance passes the police officers can start writing tickets and if the residents decide they don't like it or it's an inconvenience for them, then it would take an ordinance to undo it. So normally what we do is we do run it through the Board of Works. We let Gary Gleason put up some signs, just for 90 days, if everybody is happy with it then we do the ordinance. But that's just the way we normally do it. That way it kind of gives everybody an out in case they've changed their minds. You know, some of their friends start coming over and getting tickets because they didn't put the visitor pass out. It becomes more of a burden than it is a blessing.

Councilman Higgs - Seeing that Atty. Kantar said that it's a two fold situation in regards to I don't want the residents to continuously call me on something of this matter. So if we want to table this we can. But in regards to a particular Residential Parking ordinance, it doesn't have to go before the Board of Works. As Atty. Kantar said, in the past they do a 90 day trial period but we have the authority to make laws in the city and if I so choose to want to present any law it's up to this council to decide whether they want to vote yes or no. But in that case since Atty. Kantar said they may start issuing tickets, and that was my concern, and I explained that to them as well. One of the residents that lives on that block is aware of it too and she's aware of the problems. But I'll make a motion to table it to next meeting and allow the Board of Works to move forward.

Atty. Kantar - I would just ask, we could still get it on for this Thursday's Board of Works if the council could just send over a communication or if somebody could just bring it up under citizen complaints Thursday morning. Because we're not having a council meeting next Thursday because it's Christmas Eve. There will be one on New Years Eve but not on Christmas Eve. We don't have a quorum.

Councilman Higgs - At the end of the meeting what I'll do is send a letter or I'll have Debbie send one. I normally do it anyway. So it's no problem. Thank you for your courtesy in regards to this residential parking.

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to table 15-55.

AYES: ALL

## INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

None

## RESOLUTIONS

15R-24          Appropriating Money from the Clerk's Perpetuation Fund

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for adoption.

Councilwoman Venecz - This is basically for record preservation. They're currently converting from the old system to the new system and I know that the estimate was not quite the \$50 thousand but you're kind of covering your bases with the \$50 thousand. Is that correct, Clerk?

## RESOLUTIONS cont.

City Clerk Golec - Yes, that is correct. Any money that is not spent it still stays in the non-reverting account and could not be used. Contract right now calls for \$40 thousand some odd dollars and that's just an estimate. If it goes beyond that it gives me the latitude to go ahead and make that payment without coming back to the council up to the amount of \$50 thousand.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion carried

8/0/1

RESOLUTION NO. R24 ADOPTED

15R-25 A Resolution of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana Determining and Approving the Plan Commission's Written Order Approving Redevelopment Commission Resolution No. 7-2015 as an Amending Declaratory Resolution that Modified the Boundaries of the Gateways Redevelopment Area to include the Kennedy Avenue Subarea Expansion Area and the Calumet Avenue Subarea Expansion area; Approved an Amendment to the Redevelopment Plan for the Gateways Redevelopment Area; and Approved an Allocation Provision to Expand the Gateways Allocation Area

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for adoption.

Councilwoman Venecz - As I understand this, this is to expand the allocation area for Oxbow and Gateway and if Phil Taillon is here, is he still here? If you would mind helping me out with a more detailed explanation I'd appreciate it.

Phil Taillon, Executive Director of Planning & Development - As Councilwoman Venecz said, we currently have a redevelopment/allocation area already in place. It's called the Gateway Allocation Area. Their current boundaries are Oxbow Landing, which is also known as the old Riverpark Apartment site and also the old Kmart property which is now called Gateway Promenade. Which is on the east side of Indianapolis Blvd., which is right across from Cabela's. As these two developments are starting to fill up, obviously Oxbow has had a lot of activity over the past couple of years and the Gateway Promenade property has a lot of groups that are looking at the site and I think there's some leases in place that even haven't been shared with the city at this point. Because we're not the owner's of the property. But as it fills up we looked at an opportunity to expand the redevelopment allocation area into other sections of Hammond that are connected to these two developments so that we can use increment that has been generated from all these different projects which we've all worked on over the years to also help out the Kennedy Avenue corridor and the Calumet Avenue corridor. Part of the reason that we didn't go down Indianapolis Boulevard at this time is because there's other allocation areas that are tied to Indianapolis Boulevard, which is the Hammond Central Allocation area. So by doing this, as groups come in, developers come in, and they want to look at Kennedy Avenue and Calumet Avenue as sites for future restaurants, retail, etc., we now have the opportunity to use things such as tax increment financing to help bring

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Director Taillon cont. - them in. So that's the point of expanding the redevelopment area and the allocation area. It doesn't change any of the taxes that are being paid on these sites already. As you expand the allocation area the base is set, so all the groups that are paying, whatever taxes they're paying, will continue to do so. It just puts us in a better position in the future for different groups that might look at these corridors as areas that they want to locate in. I'd be happy to take any questions anybody has.

Councilman Higgs - I guess my question would be, Phil, as it relates to just not this project but throughout the entire city in that direframe of properties, how many other potential businesses are you trying to attract in that

area?

Director Taillon - If you look at the Kennedy Avenue and Calumet Avenue corridors basically starting at 80/94 heading north to 165th I would say there's several buildings that potentially could be redevelopment, repurposed, reused. For example, what we're doing at 165th and Kennedy, which is the old Brothers 2, or the Turner Mine building if you will, we're demolishing that property and opening up that corner for some new retail or restaurant or whatever it may be, at that site. So, that's one example obviously, if you're asking me how many I'd say many. There's many opportunities on Kennedy and Calumet Avenue.

Councilman Higgs - I guess, you know, I travel to Michigan City, different areas, recently I went to a fundraiser in Hobart, and I see all these restaurants moving into their cities or are already currently there and I'm like, when are we gonna start getting some of that type of excitement in our city. Because in order for people to move here you have to attract them. Give them something that attracts them. College Bound is fine, okay, how long are we gonna fund that? There are other things that could be done to attract people to our city, that's all I'm saying. So, my suggestion is to try to recruit some of these big name companies and try to get them to come to Hammond, restaurants especially. We need more restaurants. I shouldn't have to take my tax dollars and go shop at River Oaks and Merrillville. I mean, seriously, I mean.

Director Taillon - And I think we're saying the same thing. That's exactly what we're doing. By expanding these areas we're opening up the potential for these types of restaurants that you're speaking to. So I would agree.

Councilman Spitale - Is that were it ends, on 165th or is it going to exceed a little more north?

Director Taillon - The Kennedy map actually goes just a little further north, because it does take into that property, the Brothers 2 property which is obviously just a little further north than 165th Street. The Calumet Avenue property does end at right at 165th. And again, this is what we're doing right now. This is what, I guess we'd call it a phase 2 of this redevelopment area. That doesn't mean in the future that the boundaries can't change again as development continues to occur.

Councilman Higgs - Phil, what is the total amount of money that's given to those tax increment funding?

Director Taillon - Well, there's seven allocation areas in the city and they're all very different. So it's all based on the developments that are coming in. I don't have the numbers sitting in front of me right now. But, it's

## RESOLUTIONS cont.

Director Taillon cont. - based on the new development that you bring in. So as you see the additional development happen at Oxbow Landing and some of the things you're seeing at Gateway Promenade as well, that's just gonna be more increment that's gonna be able to be used for some of these projects that we are talking about.

## ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion carried

8/0/1

RESOLUTION NO. R25 ADOPTED

15R-26 Reappoint Miriam Soto-Pressley to the Hammond Redevelopment Commission

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

Councilman Kalwinski - Miriam Soto-Pressley is well known to most of the council members here. Has been on Redevelopment, I believe, six years and is a valuable asset in a number of ways especially being bilingual and sometimes helping to move the business along when otherwise it could get stalled.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion carried

8/0/1

RESOLUTION NO. R26 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Higgs read correspondence regarding 4524 Hohman Avenue and its demolition.

Councilman Higgs - A project that I've been extremely involved in and I received a correspondence from the school city of Hammond.

Councilman Higgs read correspondence from the School City of Hammond regarding Safari Brainware after school tutoring program.

Councilwoman Venecz - I would like to announce that the East Side Community Council is hosting it's 6th Annual Holiday Treats Giveaway. Wed., Dec. 16th at 6 pm at Hammond High. I have been honored to be involved with this organization for a while. Each year they host the toy giveaway at Hammond High and children up to the age of 17 will receive a gift. Times are difficult for some and if you know a family who is not in position to get Christmas gifts for their kids, this is just giving from the heart by the Eastside Community Council.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Markovich, moved to suspend the rules to consider 15-57 and 15-58.

15-57 Ordinance of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana, Authorizing and Approving a Pilot Agreement for the Sohl Avenue Residential Care Project

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading by title.

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved to amend in Section 2.6.

Councilman Higgs reads Section 2.6.

Council President Opinker - All those in favor? All opposed?

AYES: ALL



Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved to suspend the rules for passage of 15-57.

ROLL CALL VOTE (suspend rules)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion carried

8/0/1

RULES SUSPENDED

15-57 Ordinance of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana, Authorizing and Approving a Pilot Agreement for the Sohl Avenue Residential Care Project

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved for passage of 15-57.

Councilman Higgs - So that the public is aware, this is a assisting living project where currently there is a vacant lot in my district. It is going to be developed for assisting living. The total amount of the development is \$22 million. Payroll, \$1.3 million, vacation and benefits for employees. NFP owned tax partial will begin to generate revenue for the city of Hammond. Vacant overgrown property will be developed and act as a catalyst for the neighborhood in needs of investment. They'll be 125 seniors in need of daily assistance who have independent housing suitable to their needs rather than institutional nursing home care. The developers are here so if anyone has any questions feel free to ask.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion carried

8/0/1

ORDINANCE NO. 9328 PASSED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

15-58 An Ordinance to Create a New Section of Chapter 118 of the Hammond Municipal Code, to Prevent Cellular Phone Stores, Retail Stores, and Pawn Brokers located in the City of Hammond from Unlocking and Wiping Cellular Phones and Tablets Without Proper Authorization

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading by title.

Councilman Higgs - I think the problem, what Atty. Kantar said in regards to this particular ordinance and I know the Mayor is standing here I guess he wants to expound on that as well, but for whatever reason these cell phones are going to cell phone companies and before people can identify where their at they are actually taken all the network off of there and that way you can't identify where the cell phone is coming from. So this alleviates the problem by allowing them an opportunity, at least, to follow protocol when it comes to these particular company's, in terms of these cell phones if they're stolen then you have at least 24 hours, I think, according to the ordinance so they can have an opportunity to recover them.

Mayor McDermott - I agree with Councilman Higgs. This situation is brewing. I know of probably about a half a dozen instances within the last, probably, few months of kids, in particular, having their cell phones stolen and taken to a market like this. The story came about last week, the final straw, my daughter is a teacher at Morton

High School and she had a cell phone stolen while she was teaching and there was literally only 12 or 13 kids in class at the time. So it was obviously one of them. Nobody fessed up to it so Lindsey pulled up, she did some detective work, pulled up "Find your iphone", which is a easy way to find, and the student typed in their particulars and the iphone went right across the street at Morton High School to a cell phone company literally right across the street from the school. This cell phone company had two 14 year old kids run in with a iphone and try to sell it, and they were in the process of wiping it out when the police officer got there. If Lindsey didn't pull it up that quickly the phone would have been off the market and we would have never seen it again. It just proves that we have these stores that let two 14 year old kids come walking in with an iphone and they'll give them \$100 bucks for it and the person who's iphone was stolen from is out \$500 or \$600. There's a market for stolen iphones. There's a market for stolen cell phones and even some of these bad guys are willing to beat kids up to get it. So, I think the best thing we could do is crack down on these stores and ask questions. If two 14 year old come in three times a week with an iphone there's probably something going on and they're just facilitating crime. So, I got together with Atty. Kantar, you know, and said Kris, you know, we're pretty tough on the pawn brokers for the very same exact situation. We slapped down a couple years ago and said if you're gonna take goods to a pawn market you have to show them i.d so that there's a record that you brought this in. This is the person that brought it in, but we're allowing the cell phone to circumvent these laws. So I want to thank Kris Kantar, Corporate Counsel, for writing this up and I hope that we can get the support of the council and get this enacted and drive these unscrupulous cell phone companies out of business.

Council President Opinker - All those in favor on 1st and 2nd? All opposed?

AYES: ALL

#### NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Hinojosa - I think it's important to pass this tonight going into the new year. Therefore I'd like to suspend the rules so we can pass 15-58 for final passage.

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to suspend the rules to consider 15-58 for passage.

ROLL CALL VOTE (suspend rules)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion carried

8/0/1

RULES SUSPENDED

Councilman Hinojosa - I think it's a very good ordinance. After this is passed and signed I hope the city attorney would look into the other cities, Gary, East Chicago, I think it's a good ordinance where there's pawn shops and cell phone shops that all cities should have this throughout the state.

Mayor McDermott - Thank you very much, Councilman Hinojosa. We are the first, I believe, Chicago has one, we're the first in Northwest Indiana to pass this and I totally agree with you. If there's one in Gary it's just as bad for us as if there's one in Hessville. So I plan to forward this ordinance out to other communities around Northwest Indiana but we are the first to pass this and I want to thank the council for doing this tonight. I promise you the police department will start enforcing it ASAP, so thank you.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion carried

8/0/1

ORDINANCE NO. 9329 PASSED

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to return to the regular order of business.

AYES: ALL

Councilman Hinojosa - I would like to take this opportunity today, December 14, 2015 is my last council meeting. I'll be the councilman until the end of the year, but I would like to thank the residents of the 6th District in the Hessville area and the whole city of Hammond for electing me for the past twelve years. It's been a pleasure working with for the past twelve years working with all our elected officials, Mayor McDermott, all our councilmen, Clerk Golec, Judge Harkin, all the city employees, department heads. It's been a challenge in these past twelve years and it's been a pleasure working with everybody. Also especially to two city employees, Debbie our secretary, thank you for everything that you've done for me and everybody else here and our former secretary Linda. Just thinking on the way over here. I've been the councilman for twelve years, I started thinking, well, I'm gonna be sixty in a couple months, that wound up being 1/5 of my life as an elected official and I enjoyed every bit of it.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Hinojosa introduced his wife, daughter, and grandchildren.

Councilman Hinojosa - Besides being married for 40 years, I, our family, enjoy 8 grandkids and two greatgrandkids. I'll be going into my destination as a steel worker. I've been with the United Steelworkers of America Local 1010 with Inland Steel Co., now Arcelor Mittal, I've been there for 41½ years, where I'll continue for at least 2 to 3 years. With that I'd like to say good luck to my successor, Councilman Elect Scott Rakos. He'll be sitting in this chair here and I wish him luck. Any way I can help you out, with a phone call I'm there to help you out with any questions or any advise I can give. With that I'd like to wish everybody from the city of Hammond a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2016.

Mayor McDermott - Councilman Hinojosa, congratulations, good luck on your career. I want to thank you on behalf of the city of Hammond for twelve great years of service to the city. We got elected at the same time. You had a great career. I just want to say congratulations from the city of Hammond. Thank you very much.

Councilwoman Venecz - Although Councilman Uylaki is not here, I would like to extend the same well wishes to him. Although his tenure was short, it was a privilege to work with him and I wish him the best as well.

Councilman Opinker - Again, I'd like to thank Councilman Hinojosa for his service and also Councilman Uylaki for the couple years he was with us as 2nd District councilman. On behalf of myself and all my colleagues I wish everybody a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year, and also Happy Birthday to Clerk Golec, which is coming up.

Councilman Markovich - I'd like to echo the same things that all my predecessors said about Chico and Christmas and so forth. But I remember one time being at midnight mass being at Christmastime on Christmas Eve and my former pastor, he was there for so long, and I'll never forget the one thing he said, and it comes about every time at Christmas, we all talk about it. Christmas is a time of joyous and it's also a time of sadness. The reason being is a lot of us go through this, that you have that Christmas dinner and there's gonna be people

that used to be at that Christmas dinner that aren't there no more. Because if they passed away during the year. It's funny how, well, it's not funny, but sometimes when you have meetings like this or whatever and you remember certain dates. Yesterday would have been 32 years that my mom passed away and she died on Friday the 13th. So, I just, I'm a very emotional person and I'm sorry about that but I'd just like to wish everybody a Merry Christmas and everything to yous and to your all and remember your passed loved ones. If you still have your friends and family that are still alive don't treat them mean or anything, life is too short. You know, sometimes you have to say to bury the hatchet or whatever but I know all families go through that. You have some good ones and bad ones and you know some don't even get invited to Christmas dinner or special occasions and it's sad that it is but it's not until you go through it that you realize it, and again. Life is too short.

Councilman Higgs - As well I'd like to say extend Happy Holidays to all my constituents. I certainly agree and understand what Councilman Markovich is saying. My dad has been gone for quite some time and he didn't have an opportunity to see a number of things that transpired in my life as I got older but I thank God for family and I can't always understand the circumstances but as Pastor Campbell would say, "God has his hand on your

#### NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Higgs cont. - life so just allow him to direct you and guide you." In saying that I would hope that next year is a better year. Not just for me but for my colleagues and my entire city. I hope that all the hatchet and the nastiness and the disrespect cease and concentration should be placed on the city as a whole and the people we represent. I experienced a very, very, nasty election but to God be the glory. So in saying that, I know there is a God.

Councilman Spitalo - (unclear) and I'm looking forward for you to give me a call when you retire from Inland Steel, you deserve it.

Councilman Emerson - Good luck Chico, I only worked with you for one term but good luck to you in your future endeavors and Happy Holidays from the Emerson family. We wish you a prosperous 2016, colleagues, Clerk, audience members, Mayor, and everyone listening on gohammond.

#### PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Dave Ryan, Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce - Would like to move city hall downtown to Hohman Avenue. 1st Midwest Bank just closed. It's a 93000 sq. foot building. This is not an easy topic, it's an expensive topic, but would like to open the doors to it. This area is a key to the revival of the downtown area. We can't have restaurants if we don't have people. There has been some growth in that area. He would like to make a presentation to the council or a committee as to what the plans would be.

Councilman Higgs stated the constituents of the 3rd District would not be happy about that. He is passionate about his district. The police department has already been moved and now they want to move City Hall.

Mayor McDermott stated that it would cost about \$10 million to update and restore the building and relocate City Hall but if we decide not to move City Hall then we have to repair this building. The back wall is falling and there's a river underneath the building. Either way it is going to cost us but we need some direction on this. He would like to move to Downtown Hammond.

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Markovich, moved to Suspend the Rules and return to New and Unfinished Business.

ROLL CALL VOTE (suspend rules)

AYES: Markovich, Venecz, Higgs

NAYS: Spitale, Kalwinski, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

ABSENT: Uylaki

Motion failed

5/3/1

MOTION FAILED

Anne Herbert - Has been with the Red Cross for 10 years. They currently have a program where they are partnering with the Hammond Fire Department and is offering free smoke detectors to any resident within Northwest Indiana. They will come in and install those smoke detectors.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

Ola Smith - Elaborated on the residential parking on the 800 block of Becker Street. The reason that was brought forth was because of the garage on the corner. On one corner they do windshields and on the other they built a garage and are using it as a repair shop. The customers are parking in the residents parking spaces and the garage is also parking its cars on the street.

Tommie Dorsey - Came to thank the Mayor, the city officials and especially the Police Department because they've been a very important part of their organization with building a bridge between young people and the Police Department and that's with the open gym program. The kids are learning they can talk to the police. The policew helped with the toy giveaway. First they gave us a check for \$5,000. Then they said that they had another \$1,000 they gave out of their pockets. Then they gave us a check for \$16 thousand that the boys and girls should have a Merry Christmas. A lot of our children that were failing are now on the A-B Honor Roll. Some worked the election polls just to see how the election worked. I want you all to have a Merry Christmas because a lot of boys and girls are thanks to the Police Department.

Councilman Robert Markovich - Mayor wanted to move City Hall three or four years ago but it wasn't feasible because we didn't have the funds. We still don't have the funds. It would be cheaper to build a new building. Even if they give it to us free it will still be coming off of the tax rolls and we'll be losing money. What does the Hammond Development Corporation and the Redevelopment Corporation do for this area. This is a historic building, even if we walk away from it we'll have to spend taxpayers money to fix it and maintain it. I'm disappointed by being blind sighted with this tonight. Would like a copy of the feasibility report.

Alvin Cheeks - If anybody thinks that me and Councilman Markovich have a beef they're wrong. Would like City Hall to stay where it is. Much love and respect to Councilman Hinojosa.

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

AYES: ALL

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Michael Opinker, President  
Hammond Common Council  
ATTEST:

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Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Minutes approved at the Common Council meeting on January 11, 2016.

Time: 7:25 pm

CB