

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on March 25, 2013 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 was given by Anthony Higgs.

ROLL CALL

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

ABSENT: Salinas

TOTAL: 8

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Kalwinski, moved to accept the minutes of March 11, 2013 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to approve the claims from March 6, 2013 through March 20, 2013. Claim #1342 through claim #1609.

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved to amend in claim:

| | | | |
|-------|---|----------------|----------|
| #1610 | Fraternal Order of Eagles Auxiliary Woman | Common Council | \$200.00 |
|-------|---|----------------|----------|

ROLL CALL VOTE (amendment)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried 8/0/1 AMENDMENT ADOPTED

ROLL CALL VOTE (as amended)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Higgs read correspondence from Board of Commissioners of Lake County Indiana, dated March 20, 2013, regarding the Indiana Local Option Income Tax.

Councilman Higgs read invitation from the Mt. Zion Pleasant View Plaza regarding celebrating and honoring resident Ms. Lola Owens 103rd birthday on April 1, 2013 at 1pm.

Councilman Higgs read letter from North Lake Patriots Pop Warner Association thanking the Council for your donation to the football cheerleaders dance program.

Councilman Higgs read invitation from the East Chicago Public Library regarding the ribbon cutting ceremony for rededication of the William B. Passmore Service Center on April 4, 2013, from 5:30-7:00 pm.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee - Councilwoman Venez - Brought out 13-07.

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilman Emerson - Brought out 13-09 through 13-18.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

13-07 An Ordinance to amend Ordinance 9182, also known as the Salary Ordinance for the Hammond City Court as it relates to Probation Officers

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

Councilwoman Venecz - This ordinance is to correct some errors that were discovered in the 2013 Salary Ordinance. There are some positions that were vacated, there is movement, there are all sorts of things going on here. So, Judge Harkin explained everything in caucus and that's that.

Councilman Higgs - How many individuals in the Judge's office are going to get raises?

Councilwoman Venecz - I believe Judge Harkin said there was one. Is Judge Harkin here still?

Councilman Markovich - No, he left. He didn't think he would have to stay.

Councilwoman Venecz - Okay. I believe he said there was one.

Councilman Higgs - What is the total increase in the salary?

Councilwoman Venecz - \$4,000.

Councilman Markovich - That's correct.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried

8/0/1

ORDINANCE NO. 9196 PASSED

City Clerk Golec - The Clerk will read the titles for ordinances 13-09 through 13-18, and the chair will entertain the motion to adopt on final passage.

- 13-09 An Ordinance amending Ordinance 4304, 8383, 8552, 8602, and 8814, also known as section 150.025 of the Hammond Municipal Code, pertaining to building permit fees in the City of Hammond
- 13-10 An Ordinance amending Ordinance 3351 also known as section 151.35 of the Hammond Municipal Code, pertaining to electrical license transfer and renewal in the City of Hammond
- 13-11 An Ordinance amending Ordinance 3351 also known as section 151.36 of the Hammond Municipal Code, pertaining to the revocation of an electrical license in the City of Hammond
- 13-12 An Ordinance amending ordinance numbers 3351 and 4328, also known as section 151.37 of the Hammond Municipal Code, pertaining to electrical license fee schedule in the City of Hammond
- 13-13 An Ordinance amending ordinance 8888, also known as section 151.51 of the Hammond Municipal Code, pertaining to electrical permit fees in the City of Hammond
- 13-14 An Ordinance amending Ordinance 4880, also known as section 154.19 and section 154.28 of the Hammond Municipal Code, pertaining to HVAC examination criteria and fee schedules in the City of Hammond
- 13-15 An Ordinance amending Ordinance 4880, also known as section 154.23 of the Hammond Municipal Code, pertaining to HVAC reciprocal licenses
- 13-16 An Ordinance amending Ordinances 3456, 3851, 4588, 7658 and 8893, also known as section 150.024 of the Hammond Municipal Code, pertaining to contractor fee schedule in the City of Hammond
- 13-17 An Ordinance amending Ordinance 4880, also known as section 154.25 and section 154.26 of the Hammond Municipal Code, pertaining to the revocation of an HVAC license in the City of Hammond

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

13-18 An Ordinance amending Ordinances 4880, 8383, 8779 and 8887, also known as section 154.42 and 154.43 of the Hammond Municipal Code, pertaining to HVAC permit fees in the City of Hammond

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage of 13-09 through 13-18.

Councilman Higgs - There is one particular ordinance that reflects an increase of paying fees. Can that be explained to me? Maybe the gentleman from...

Council President Opinker - Commissioner Koch. Which ordinance did you have a question on Councilman Higgs?

Councilman Higgs - The one that increases the amount of the fees that are assessed.

Commissioner Koch - There is actually two parts to that ordinance, Councilman. One was increasing the minimum fees for a permit, from \$30 to \$50. That more accurately reflects the cost of what it takes to have an inspector go out. And we also with those ordinances increased the threshold for obtaining a permit from \$300 to \$500. So what we were trying to do is, when a homeowner wants to get a permit for doing repairs, maintenance alterations on his home. We didn't want them to go through any excessive red tape, have to come down and get a permit, so we raised that threshold. So I believe even though we increased the fee from \$30 to \$50, the net will be a decrease in what the average homeowner has to pay for permits.

Councilman Higgs - I guess my question would be as to, as it relates to other cities in the surrounding areas. Are the fees equal, in terms of assessments?

Commissioner Koch - Our permit fees are lower than most municipalities. Highland, Munster, Crown Point, Lake County, Gary all charge more for an average permit, than Hammond does. Again, I did not propose that we raise the cost of obtaining a permit, just the minimum charge. I think the only municipality that is slightly less than us, is East Chicago. And those are only on the smaller permits, when they get into larger permits they end up being more. So, to the answer to your question is, probably 80% of the cities are higher than us on permit fees and maybe 20% are lower. And that would remain the same, with the passage of these ordinances.

Councilman Emerson - I would just like to thank Mr. Koch for coming tonight. And also just to elaborate a little bit. You know, when some of these were passed, back in the 70's, we all, well a lot of us had VCR's and gas was .80 cents a gallon. Since there's 80,000 plus citizens in Hammond and a lot of rebuilding and re-habbing going on, I think we owe it to the City to come in tune with 2013's. That was my comment.

Councilman Higgs - Just for some clarity to Councilman Emerson, its not 80,000 residents in the City of Hammond and its more like, 70,000. And a lot of people are losing their homes too.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Council President Opinker - Clerk Golec, roll call vote on 13-09.

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage on 13-09.

ROLL CALL VOTE (13-09)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9197 PASSED

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage on 13-10.

ROLL CALL VOTE (13-10)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9198 PASSED

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage on 13-11.

ROLL CALL VOTE (13-11)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9199 PASSED

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage on 13-12.

ROLL CALL VOTE (13-12)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9200 PASSED

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage on 13-13.

ROLL CALL VOTE (13-13)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9201 PASSED

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage on 13-14.

ROLL CALL VOTE (13-14)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9202 PASSED

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage on 13-15.

ROLL CALL VOTE (13-15)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9203 PASSED

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage on 13-16.

ROLL CALL VOTE (13-16)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9204 PASSED

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage on 13-17.

ROLL CALL VOTE (13-17)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9205 PASSED

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage on 13-18.

ROLL CALL VOTE (13-18)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9206 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

13-19 Amending Ordinances 8880, 8942, 8091, 9016, 9072 and 9124, Creating a Voluntary Retirement Program in 2013 for Certain Eligible Employees of the City of Hammond

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved that the proposed ordinance go to 1st and 2nd reading by title and referred it to Council as a Whole. AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

13R-10 Resolution recognizing and honoring the contributions of Casimir Pulaski, father of The American Cavalry

City Clerk Golec read the proposed resolution in its entirety.

Council requests adding all Council members as sponsor of resolution 13R-10.

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

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried 8/0/1 RESOLUTION NO. R10 ADOPTED

13R-11 A Resolution of The Hammond Common Council Determining and Approving the Written Order of The Hammond Plan Commission as it pertains to Plan Commission Resolution No. 2013-01 and Approving Amending Declaratory Resolution No. 02-2013 of The Hammond Redevelopment Commission regarding the Establishment of the West Point Allocation Area in the North Hammond Redevelopment Area

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved for final adoption.

Councilman Higgs - The only discussion I have that relates to this, I see a lot of development being done in Robertsdale as it pertains to the parks. When are they going to consider doing some development at Harrison Park, as well as, MLK Park? I contributed dollars to put new rides in there from my casino funds, I would like to see some emphasis in some interest put in those parks as well.

Chief of Staff Dabertin - With all do respect Councilman, this has nothing to do with outdoor recreation. This petition has to do with Munster Steel, the development of Munster Steel, which the Administration as the Council have already approved the development agreement. This is simply another step in the process to secure and begin the construction of Munster Steel. It has nothing to do with outdoor recreation, what so ever. In Robertsdale or anywhere else. This is in North Hammond, this is not in Robertsdale, this is off Columbia Avenue near 141st. By

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Chief of Staff Dabertin cont. - the way also, the U.S. census reports the population of Hammond, Indiana, 2010, is 80,830. And President Obama in his release of the census report said it was the most accurate count possible that was ever done. So, it is 80,000.

Councilman Higgs - What year was that?

Chief of Staff Dabertin - 2010.

Councilman Higgs - This is 2013.

Councilman Emerson - So, 10,000 people have left Hammond since 2010?

Councilman Kalwinski - Just for clarification, that West Point is actually in North Hammond, but in the 2nd District. Thank you.

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried

8/0/1

RESOLUTION NO. R11
ADOPTED

13R-12 A Resolution of The Hammond Common Council Determining and Approving the Written Order of The Hammond Plan Commission as it pertains to Plan Commission Resolution No. 2013-02 and Approving Amending Declaratory Resolution No. 03-2013 of The Hammond Redevelopment Commission regarding the Expansion of the Marina Redevelopment Area and Establishment of the Roby Allocation Area

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

Councilman Higgs - Can I have Mr. Dabertin explain this particular ordinance for me?

Chief of Staff Dabertin - Sure. This is the development area along Indianapolis Blvd, where the new Walmart was built. The developers are seeking, basically a TIF Allocation area. So that they can expand the development up there. As you all know, Super Walmart built there about two (2) years ago. This is a allocation area from the State Line along Indianapolis Blvd to five (5) points. The developers has secured most of the property up there and has proposed a two (2) faze development. Which should result in about \$35 million in new construction, over the next three (3) years.

Councilman Higgs - Has it relates to Mr. Dabertin, has it relates to the TIF District, are there funds going to be given to this particular...

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Chief of Staff Dabertin - The commitment from the City is for, \$3.5 million for traffic enhancements on Indianapolis Blvd. Indianapolis Blvd has now become one of the busiest service streets in the State of Indiana. There is about anywhere from 45,000 to 60,000 cars, depending on the day of the week coming through that area. Right now there are two (2) stop lights that sits within a block of each other, that back of traffic all the way into Illinois. So, those intersections have to be redone. These funds will, the TIF will allow us to make improvements along Indianapolis Blvd. Indianapolis Blvd is a State Highway, State of Indiana will not pay for those improvements because they relate to developments, so the City has to ?

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Salinas

Motion carried

8/0/1

RESOLUTION R12 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Higgs - Just last week I want to emphasize to my fellow colleagues in regards to the library issue. There was a meeting held and there was discussion brought up in regards to the library. And a number of those individuals are present and they will speak at public expression. But I just want to reemphasis the importance of maintaining and keeping our library here in the City of Hammond. And doing what's necessary to make sure that it remains a part of our resources that are available to the residence of this great City.

Councilwoman Venecz - As usual, I have some crime watch meetings to announce for those who wish to do good in your community and be involved in you neighborhood. On Wednesday, March 27th, Columbia Crime Watch will meet 6:30 pm at Columbia School. Wednesday, March 27th as well, Jefferson Crime Watch will meet at Jefferson School 6:30 pm. Also on Wednesday, March 27th, it seems to be a busy night, Edison Community Watch will meet at Edison School, because Edison School is closed for the spring break, the school was not available the first Wednesday of the month, so that's why Edison had to move there's up a week. And that is how change happens, one gesture, one person, one moment at a time. Thank you.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Edwardo Banda - Spoke about recognizing and learning about Cesar Chavez. Read from a composed letter, telling about the life of Cesar Chavez and how he became known as the Latino American Civil Right Activist.

Rebecca Brown - Spoke about the closing of the Hammond Library. Is against the closing and wants the money to be released.

Andre Brown - Spoke about his life and his families life and how important the library is to his family. He is against the closing. Wants the Council to reconsider their choice in closing the library.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

Camellia Robinson - Spoke about the closing of the library and how its going to hurt our children not to have a library for education and a safe place to go. Is against the closing of the library and wants the money released to the library.

Janet Blanco - Spoke regarding the money of the library. Said the library has the money, she has seen the bank statement and the money is in the bank. Wants the Council to say, go ahead and spend it. The money isn't coming from the city, it came from the taxes from last year.

Allan Zlatarich - Is a volunteer at the library. Talks about what the library offers. It's a public service here in Hammond. Asks that the money be released.

Ola Smith - Talks about the library. States that the Council-at-Large was elected to do a job for the citizens. Feels that you should release the money, so that the library can go about their business, educating of children. The library is the future of our children. Hammond is losing resources for the community.

Johnnie McNeil - All her children went to Hammond Schools, got an education and received a diploma. The library was a big reason for her children educating. The library is needed for the children, save them from the streets. All the services in Hammond are being taken away. The buses and the Health Department has already been taken away. Don't want the library to close. Needs the Council's vote to keep the library, release the money to the library.

Rene Greenleaf - Director of the Hammond Public Library - Invites the Council to come to the library so they can show you actually what the situation is. Asks if they can come before the Council, again, and ask for the additional appropriation so they can fund the library, they can improve the computer systems, they can provide the service that the Council said they would provide to Hammond community. Is a Chicago resident, but loves Hammond, is here all the time. Spends her money here in Hammond. In their rainy day fund, right now, as of March 31st, they currently have \$1,336,186.83. Between 2008 to 2012 they saved \$747,000.00. States something has to be done.

Carolyn Jackson - Asks the Council to release the money, so the library can go on about their business. States Hammond needs their library. Is tired of all the benefits of the City of Hammond being cut and taken away.

Tony Harris - Was born and raised here in the City of Hammond. Went to the Hammond Schools, went to college at Purdue in Hammond. Received his degrees from college, in Hammond, Indiana. The Hammond Public Library has always been apart of his life, for 42 ½ yrs. Asks the Council to set time, on a future agenda, to revisit the question of releasing additional funds for use by the Hammond Public Library.

Cornell White - Financial analyst for the Hammond Public Library - Comes before the Council to state the money is in the bank. The money is being sandbagged, and they need to be using the money. No money is going to be coming from you, the Council, it's the libraries money. States, if they have the funds, let them use the funds.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

Kitten Gray - Has been a resident of Hammond for over twenty (20) years, is a taxpayer and has two (2) beautiful children that have utilized the library since she moved to Hammond, Indiana. Expects the Council to have this matter on the agenda in April, first thing in April. Will not settle for anything less than that. Wants the Council to do the right thing. Heard a rumor, heard someone say that they overheard that the Mayor of our City say that libraries are obsolete. Hopes he didn't say anything like that and would like him to prove that. Please, we need that library in our downtown area. We don't have much in the downtown area, please don't take that away from us. Please do the right thing, and release the money. Her son is in college now, but they used the library three (3) to four (4) times a week. Her daughter who is a sophomore now, use the library now for resources and material for school. Please, we need our library.

Maria Reyes - Comes with her husband and son. Her family would really like the money released. We need our library. It is a disgrace to the city, to the children, if the library is closed. The library is more than just a place to look at books, they have made many friends. The library staff, bless you. The staff do magic there. You, the Council, are going to let the children down. The children are our future. The library is our second home. It is a meeting place, it is a warming shelter and a cooling shelter. We have homeless people in Hammond, please open your eyes.

Rita Jackson - In the community where her boys grow up in Hammond, there was a lot of fighting, that's what boys do, they fight. So how she resolved that problem was, she gathered up all the boys he was fighting with and took them to the library and taught them history. Taught them their African heritage. Showed them through books, where their heritage started in this country as black free men. Things that are not taught in school, the library made that possible. Please revisit this, use your influence, use your vote, and keep this going for the next generation. This is a great city, please keep it that way.

Sonia Morales - Please don't take our future away, we can never become better if there is nothing to better us. When you walk into the Hammond Public Library, they are like your family, they greet you, they love you. They will give you the opportunity to know that you have a better life. The people that work at the library, believe in every person that walks through their door. I had reading dyslexia my whole life, and to this day people say you will never be able to read. But every lady at that library, if I can not read that book, they will find it on audio, if they don't find it on audio, they will find it on video, if they don't find it on video, they will read the book to me. You can't find that nowhere else.

Derrick Durr - Grew up in Hammond. Back in the 60's when they had Brooks House, he learned how to read at Brooks House. Learned how to get along with one another at the Brooks House Library. The library is just not a place for books and for kids to go. It's a place for people to meet and share things about their community. Brooks House wasn't just a library, it was a gathering place. I think we need to stop making these bad decisions. It's okay to make a mistake, that's one thing about being an adult, is when you make a mistake, you do something about correcting it. Let this library do what it needs to do, and you guys need to get in the business of trying to heal this city.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

Dale Parrish - So many people here tonight have said eloquent things about the library. The ball is now in your court to do the right thing. Our children are the most important thing. People will take this into account when considering moving into this city. It seems to me that everything that takes place in the city is taking place on the ends of the city. When is some effort going to be made to Central Hammond?

George Stoya - Regarding a letter that Councilman Higgs read earlier, back in the day we could have had an income tax at ½%, ¾%, now the minimum we could have is 1%. He isn't doing us any favors. In fact his obstinance has lead us here to a 1% at the very least, or nothing.

Alvin Cheeks - Took part in Economic Development in this city. Clayton Potter recruited me to work for Indiana's Last Real Estate and Indiana's Last Consortium. He told me they hate North Hammond, they hate gasoline, but they'll grow to love us, Walmart will come in. We used the library to get the documents we used to sue the city of Hammond back in 1992. There are treasures in the library you can not find anywhere else in the world. My son uses these treasures. I've been coming here for 25 years. I'd like to ask this council to take a hard look at the budget and save our library.

Councilman Hinojosa - There are a lot of people who spoke about the library and would like to know what the councilmen have to say.

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to suspend the rules to allow the council members to respond.

ROLL CALL VOTE (suspend rules)

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

NAYS: Kalwinski

ABSENT: Spitale, Salinas

Motion carried

6/1/2

RULES SUSPENDED

Councilman Hinojosa - I'm in the 6th District and I have two libraries that were closed. One was over on Alabama and Martha, I almost cried. The one by Morton High School, I almost cried again. We're supposed to be here for our children and I know within your own Board of Directors you had to close these places down. But now we're down to one library. Just so I can refresh everybody's memory. We passed a budget in the City Council and this council voted not to let you spend \$3.7 million. I voted, Chico Hinojosa voted, for you to spend your \$3.7 million. We only passed a \$2.8 million budget, meaning that now any money that you have accumulated in the bank, you have to come before the city council and ask for permission, "May I". This councilman, like a lot of councilmen here, went to the library, talked to all those professionals with all those

Councilman Hinojosa cont. - degrees, financial analyst, the Board of Directors, the Library Director, very smart people, and I spoke to them. I took a tour of the library. I seen computers that are ready to go down that need to be replaced. I seen a smoke stack that is rusting that's eventually gonna have to be replaced real quick. I seen stained carpets downstairs that have to stay stained in the basement because there's no money to do it. Now, like I said, I voted for you to spend your \$3.7. The rest of this council, I think they made like Derrick Durr said,

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

Councilman Hinojosa cont. - sometimes there's bad decisions made on this council. I mean we learn from our mistakes. I done my homework. I went to go talk to the professionals. The professionals said we're gonna get \$3.7 million from the state, and look what you got. If we passed a budget of \$2.8 million and you have \$1.3 million in the bank, that's \$4.1 million. All you needed was \$3.7. This council could have passed \$3.7 million and we wouldn't have to worry about anything. You know it's a shame that we have a city like ... no it's not a shame, I think it's good that we have a city like East Chicago that still has a Health Department. They can have their health shots there in their own city. They don't have to go to the county. They have busses in their own city. They don't have to go to the county. But yet, what's gonna happen, I mean, we already lost the Health Department, we already lost our busses, we sure don't need to lose the library. And we sure don't need the library to be taken over by the state. That's the worst thing that can happen. If the state takes over the library, you know what's gonna happen? They're gonna cut this, they're gonna cut that, they're gonna cut this. You know what, if we lose our library we owe money. We have bonds that we have to pay. Who's gonna pay the bonds? It's time for this council, again, to revisit the experts, and they're right there in the front row, you're gonna see this councilman, like I hope a lot of these councilmen, come see you. Because whatever we need to do, we're gonna do it. I'm gonna do it. I hope the rest of the council follows. I'm off Thursday. I'm gonna make an appointment for Thursday. We're gonna come see you. Whatever needs to be done, we're gonna do it. Because this city belongs to our children. The future of the city is our children.

Councilman Higgs - I applaud Councilman Hinojosa's efforts in trying to utilize and get the funding that's necessary to maintain our library. Of course, you know I'm 100% behind this endeavor and it is my hope and my prayer that my colleagues will certainly do what's necessary to keep the library remaining in our great city. Secondly, I spoke to our attorney, who sits behind me, Attorney Berger, and he's currently working to see what's necessary to bring this issue back before this City Council, my colleagues. However, as you look to my left, we don't see him. But, when it's an issue that's pertaining something that's gonna benefit Robertsdale they're here. The reality of it is, you all need to not just pay attention today, but from now on stay in tune to what's going on in you city. Get actively involved and stand up for what's right and if they ain't doing they job, guess what, vote them out.

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

AYES: ALL

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

AYES: ALL

ATTEST:

Michael Opinker, President
Hammond Common Council

Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Minutes accepted and approved at the meeting of April 8, 2013
Time: 7:50 pm

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

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