

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on June 9, 2014 in the Hammond City Council Chambers.

Council President Michael Opinker presided.

City Clerk Robert J. Golec facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.

ROLL CALL

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

ABSENT: Kalwinski

TOTAL: 8

DISTRIBUTION OF COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Mrs. Theresa A. Mayerik, Chief Administrator for Academic Affairs of the School City of Hammond, IN introduced each school's representative.

BISHOP NOLL INSTITUTE

Marquis Tarver

H.A.S.T. - Dr. Egan

Paige Rybicki

CLARK HIGH SCHOOL - Mr. Wilson

Anais Picazzo

Jacob Villalpondo

Laura Moreno

GAVIT HIGH SCHOOL - Mr. Pintor

Lawrenzo Howell

Luis Ruiz

Kaela Cousins

HAMMOND HIGH SCHOOL - Mr. Schreiber

Shenetha Shepherd

Osiris Morales

Eric Schreiber, Jr.

MORTON HIGH SCHOOL - Greg Easton

Jamila Musa

Shelby Rodriguez

Celina Torres

Christian Torres

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PRESENTATION BY HAMMOND OPEN

Alvin Cheeks introduced Germaine Rodriguez, Ambassador to the City of Hammond.

Germaine Rodriguez thanked and presented Mayor Thomas M. McDermott, Jr. and Alvin Cheeks with awards for their support.

Alvin Cheeks presented Germaine Rodriguez with an award for his efforts from the City of Hammond.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to accept the minutes of May 12, 2014 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to accept the claims from May 7, 2014 through June 4, 2014. Claim #2706 through claim #3062, inclusive.

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to amend claims #2725 & #2726 on the claims list to reflect that they are both for the 6th District.

ROLL CALL VOTE (amendment)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried 8/0/1 CLAIMS LIST AMENDED

ROLL CALL VOTE (as amended)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried 8/0/1 CLAIMS APPROVED

PUBLIC HEARINGS

14-16 Designating a Certain Area within the City as an Economic Development Target Area for purposes of Real Property (10) Year Tax Abatement at 2842 Carlson Drive, Oxbow Landing, Lot 1

14R-12 Preliminary Economic Development Target Area Resolution for Ten (10) Year Tax Abatement at 2842 Carlson Drive, Oxbow Landing, Lot 1

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC HEARINGS cont.

- 14R-13 Final Economic Development Target Area Resolution for Ten (10) Year Tax Abatement at 2842 Carlson Drive, Oxbow Landing, Lot 1
- 14-17 Designating Certain Area Within the City as Economic Revitalization Areas for Purposes of Real Property Tax Abatement - 3520 Calumet Avenue, Hammond, IN
- 14R-14 Hammond Common Council Confirmatory Economic Revitalization Area Resolution 3520 Calumet Avenue, Hammond, IN

No one spoke.

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Higgs read correspondence from constituent thanking him for putting in ornamental lighting.

Councilman Higgs read correspondence regarding an after school program using Brainware Safari Computer Software in memory of Arnold Ridgell, Sr.

Councilman Higgs read correspondence from Dr. Thomas Joel regarding a couch and mattress he is trying to get removed from his alley.

Councilman Higgs announced the fact that we did get recycling bins but the public needs more information as to what they are supposed to be used for.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilman Spitale - Called out 14-16.

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Called out 14-19.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

- 14-16 An Ordinance of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana Designating a Certain Area within the City as an Economic Development Target Area for purposes of Real Property (10) Year Tax Abatement at 2842 Carlson Drive, Oxbow Landing, Lot 1

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

Councilman Spitale - This is a ten year incremented abatement for the new Hampton Inn that's gonna be built. A \$12.5 million project. I have a question for Phil Taillon. Phil, is this work being done by Union workers?

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Phil Taillon - It is. The developer, whose name is Nash Patel, met with the union and they came to terms last week. So it will be a union project. The property itself was purchased in 2009. It was right around the time the economy started struggling. It became very difficult to get a loan through a bank for financing. Anyhow, fast forward to today, and the bank has approved financing for the project with the approved tax abatement as part of the financing package. It is 120 room Hampton Inn. It will be their newest concept in this area. It will have approximately 20-25 employees and we think it will be a good development for that area and fit in very well with the other development that should follow.

Councilman Spitale - When is it starting?

Mr. Taillon - Construction should begin, probably in August of this year. As long as everything goes according to plan.

Councilman Higgs - I understand, and I'm all for economic development, and I know you run that department, but in as my tenure as being councilman, I've sent a number of letters and Africa was helpful with trying to give me some direction on some of the properties within my district, but certainly if you can do anything on Columbia Avenue to make it feasible and productive it would be greatly appreciated. Because that lot has been vacant for a number of years. I know it needs to be cleaned up. There are grants available that can be utilized to get it clean and try to get someone to develop it. That's been my goal since I've been on this council and I've sent letter after letter. Some of them, I haven't got a response. Africa has been helpful with responding. But I've sent letters directly to you as the director. So in the future if you could please send me correspondence back. I understand you are busy and you have things going on but I would appreciate that sir.

Mr. Taillon - Sure. And on Columbia let me say, we've tried different things to spur development at that site. We started with putting up a sign giving our name and phone number to try and draw some interest. We didn't receive very many phone calls so we tried hiring a national real estate broker, that was Commercial Advantage, they currently are listing the property. I know they've had a few bites here and there but nothing has come to fruition just yet. But, obviously it's just as important to us as I believe it is to you to see a good development happen at that site.

Councilman Higgs - Not to mention the other two. You got KFC been vacant for a number of years, they're dumping garbage in the back and you got the Burger King building where people are staying there or whatever. Cars are there at night. I don't know if they are trying to open up a business or they just want to leave it vacant. I don't know. Try to give them an incentive to reopen or something because something needs to be done with the properties.

Mr. Taillon - I agree. I promise you we are working very hard to fill every lot that's available in the city, or every empty building. So we will continue to work hard in trying to do that.

Councilman Higgs - I appreciate your efforts.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried

8/0/1

ORDINANCE NO. 9253 PASSED

14-19 An Ordinance Creating a New Section of Chapter 121 to Require Motor Vehicle
Repossession Agents who Operate in Hammond to have a City of Hammond License
and Follow Approved Procedure

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

Councilwoman Venecz - Currently the state statute does not require repossession agents to notify local law enforcement of their activities in their community. They are only required to, in our case, notify the Lake County Sheriff's Department. This ordinance will require repossession agents to not only have a business license at the cost of \$100, they must also notify the Hammond Police Department within two hours of repossession with the identity of the repossession agent, their company, the name and address of the person in possession of the property, the name and address of where they believe the property will be found, and a copy of the repossession order, to the Hammond Police Department.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried

8/0/1

ORDINANCE NO. 9254 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

14-20 An Ordinance for Council Meetings to Begin with Prayer

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading by title and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a Committee Meeting on July 14, 2014.

AYES: ALL

14-21 Amending Ord. No. 9249 relating to Weeds, Debris and other Matter at Properties
Subject to Demolition

Councilman Higgs - Could Clerk Golec read that in its entirety, please.

City Clerk Golec read 14-21 in its entirety.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES cont.

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading by title and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a Committee Meeting on July 14, 2014.

AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

14R-18 To Ensure that POW-MIA Flags are Flown from all Municipal Flag Poles in the City of Hammond

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

Councilman Emerson - There's a long storied history, an honorable history, of this flag. Among other things, it's the only flag that can fly at the White House underneath the American flag. No other flag can do that. In regards to as it affects the city, the crux of the resolution is to have some consistency in that, obviously, in front of our building the P.O.W. flag is there. It's not everywhere in the city. Not at the Civic Center. It is at Streets and Recycling, for now. It's just sporadic. It's not at any Fire Department. So one of the underlining things of the resolution is to be consistent with the P.O.W. flag throughout the city.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried 8/0/1 RESOLUTION NO. R18 ADOPTED

14R-19 To Approve an Equipment Lease-Purchase Agreement for Emergency Responder Radios

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

Councilwoman Venecz - This will give approval for the purchase of Motorola radio equipment for our police and fire. As the result of the state law requiring that we must now take part in the E-911 program, we are having to purchase new radio equipment in the amount of \$1,613,024.68. These radios will be compatible with the county and the old radios that we are currently using, the ones that can be recycled will be recycled to our Streets and Park Department.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried 8/0/1 RESOLUTION NO. R19 ADOPTED

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

14-15 INTENT TO CONSIDER - Reclassifying Certain Lands in the City of Hammond for Zoning Purposes for Thirteen Properties Commonly known as All Parcels from Approx. 2450 to 2720 Sheffield Avenue and 2410 to 2640 Calumet Avenue in and around Wolf Lake Memorial Park

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

Councilman Spitale - It's work that's being done on Sheffield Avenue

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried

8/0/1

ORDINANCE NO. 9255 PASSED

Councilman Higgs - I just want to reiterate on Who's Got Game, the 10th Annual 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament, sponsored by yours truly, Councilman Higgs, on June 22nd. It starts at 8:00 a.m. All the kids play for free and t-shirts, and we'll be giving away bikes. So bring your kids, your grand kids, your great grand kids, and your kids kids. A fun filled day. There'll be vendors out there, food, and just a fun filled day and I'm just extremely proud that this is ten years in the making. A lot of hard work but thanks to Councilman Markovich he's been there. So I appreciate your efforts, Councilman.

Councilman Hinojosa - I have a couple things. One is on the last rainfall that we had we had a lot of floodings. I believe we had like ninety-eight sewage back ups, sixteen with water. In the Hessville area alone there was flooding from Tennessee all the way to Nebraska. Every 6300 block flooded about a whole block. Every 6500 block flooded for a whole block area. The worst area was the corner of Kenwood and Kentucky which flooded all the way to the houses. Then we had flooding over on Maryland Avenue, 6600 and 6700 flooded.

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to send a letter to Engineering on the flooding of the Hessville area as to their findings and solutions to prevent in the future. AYES: ALL

LETTER SENT: JUNE 10, 2014

Councilman Hinojosa - As you know in the past couple meetings for the April 28th meeting and the May 12th meeting, and here today is June 9th, this is the third time and I still have not received any finance reports on the Festival of the Lakes that we requested for 2011, 2012 and 2013.

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to subpoena pat Moore, and also Milan Kruszinski for the July 14th meeting. Because I won't be here on the next meeting. To subpoena them for the July 14th meeting. So, I think that gives them adequate time to bring those finance reports.

Council President Opinker - Atty. Berger, can we do that?

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Council Atty. Berger - The council does have the authority to investigate.

ROLL CALL VOTE (subpoena)

AYES: Markovich, Higgs, Hinojosa

NAYS: Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Emerson, Opinker

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion failed

3/5/1

MOTION FAILED

Councilman Hinojosa - I also sent two other requests for information. We did get a response from the City Controller's Office that the Henry Units that we paid for the security at the Festival of the Lakes with Henry Unit money. I don't know the exact figure. All these years we've been putting up about \$75 thousand per 10% per councilman, the 6 districts, the mayor times 3. We were informed at the last meeting that the City Controller said that the Festival of the Lakes security was paid for by Henry Unit money. I'm gonna estimate that around a half million is for the Henry Units money. If you know what the Henry Unit money is for, we have our regular police, you know, that is paid for out of the budget and then we have Henry Units that it's for putting extra police in all the districts so we have extra patrols in our district to maybe prevent something like what happened in Hessville where we had a murder, where there was a car and a apartment building shot up with about forty bullets. I know Councilman Higgs off of Calumet Avenue he's had a couple areas where there's been shootings and shots fires. So we need these extra police from the Henry Units in our districts. So, I found out that if it's around a half a million dollars I'm gonna estimate that the security of the Festival of the Lakes is probably a quarter million dollars, \$250 thousand, and that it should be paid for out of the festival. If the festival makes money then you take it out of the festival. If the festival lost money, then the Mayor puts up the other \$250 thousand from his 30% from the casino. So we're losing police officers in our streets because we're paying for the Henry Units for the Festival of the Lakes.

Councilman Hinojosa moved to subpoena Chief John Doughty and the City Controller. I'd like to subpoena them to get information as to why we're using Henry Unit money to pay for the festival security. This is for July 14th.

Motion dies for lack of second.

Councilman Higgs - I'm gon say this and I'm gon be plain and clear as I possibly can. I am a councilman. I respect all my colleagues on the council. I expect the same courtesy as I give it. For anyone to tell me to shut-up like the Mayor has done previously, and for my Councilwoman at Large to bluntly tell me to shut up and disrespect me is unacceptable. I beg you to please if you can not say something in regards to the city, or something that is positive to me to refrain from saying anything else to me, and that is my request.

Councilwoman Venecz - First of all, had the councilman been exercising common courtesy I would not have had to ask him to hush. I did not say shut up. I said hush because he was talking over someone. If we all exercise common courtesy and respect amongst each other we will not have these little quibbles.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Higgs - It's not the first time it happened and it won't be the last. I'll see you on the campaign trail.

Councilwoman Venecz - Oh, Councilman, I so much look forward to that. I do have a statement that I kind of prepared simply because I didn't want to omit anyone's name. The Ophelia Steen Center is a building of pride and accomplishment in the 3rd District. Some residents of the 3rd District recognized the need for dome sprucing up of the grounds at the center and they contacted me. So on Saturday, May 24th, a group of volunteers gathered for a clean up. Home Depot donated mulch, bags and gloves to the project. I want to thank and acknowledge everyone who participated. Thank you to Simon McGuckin from Home Depot for always supporting projects in the City of Hammond. Mr. Leroy Howard from the Eastside Community Council and the young people between the ages of sixteen and 18 who always volunteer for whatever projects I request them to help on. Asia Wade, Jada Harkin, Precinct Committeeman Paul Buck, Devontae Mitchell, Dominique Howard, Dwayne McClendon, Stephan Washington, Marquis Wade, Deshaun Scott, Sheldon Stokes, Deveon Thorin, Paul Walker, Phil Venecz, Tanashee Benson, Councilman Spitale, Councilman Markovich, and myself were all there. Also Ms. Anne Herbert for the East Hammond Pullman Crime Watch. Thank you all for caring about your community and your efforts to clean up your neighborhood. And that you for bringing the project to my attention. Another clean up project will begin tomorrow morning at the Boys and Girls Club in Hammond, across the street from Hammond High. Again, Home Depot is donating materials and we will be maybe laying sod, trimming bushes, laying mulch, and planting flowers from the City of Hammond Flower Giveaway. Many of the same volunteers will be at the Boys and Girls Club but we can always use more help. If you're interested bring your yard tools and meet us at the Boys and Girls Club at 9:00 a.m. which is in the 3rd District. And that is how change happens, one gesture, one person, one moment at a time. I usually use that phrase at the end of the announcement of the Crime Watch meetings but I felt it was so appropriate for those who volunteer throughout the city.

Councilman Higgs - Isn't it amazing that my colleagues would be in the 3rd District seeing that Councilman Higgs wasn't informed. As I stated, I was not even informed that this was taking place but I do applaud the efforts of anyone who takes the initiative to clean up my district. In fact, I have a number of properties that need to be cleaned up. There are trees have fell down and they're so adamant about everything else but I didn't see anyone step up when it came to Bethany. No one spoke a word in regards to Bethany. How valuable it was to the community. But all of a sudden we're want to clean up. Congratulations. Thank you so much.

Councilwoman Venecz - I do want to point out that it is often pointed out when there are problems in different districts that I am Councilwoman at Large. That means I represent the whole city. As I do at every meeting, I would like to announce a list of the Community and Crime Watch meetings coming up. The Columbia and Lafayette Crime Watch are going to join forces for the summer.

Columbia & Lafayette C.W.	Mon., June 16	6:30 pm	World Made Flesh Ministries Church
Hessville C.W.	Thur., June 19	7:00 pm	Jean Shepherd Center
S. Ham'd C.W.	Thur., June 19	7:00 pm	Hammond Housing
Whiting-Roberts C.W.	Thur. June 12	6:30 pm	Calumet College
Woodmar C.W.	Wed., June 11	6:00 pm	National Guard Armory

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilwoman Venecz - We had students here today from the City of Hammond who were awarded scholarships. So often we only hear of the trouble that kids get into and it was just such a proud moment to see all of these young people continuing at their education and striving for a better way. I have the privilege of serving on the school board of the Hammond Academy of Science and Technology. Through much perseverance the school finally came to fruition in 2010. This past Thursday was a very historic day at H.A.S.T. As you heard Dr. Eagon say earlier, that was the very first graduating class of the H.A.S.T. I just wanted to share with you some stats from that school. H.A.S.T. had a graduation rate of over 90%. They have a 92% college admission rate. Not including College Bound or the 21st Century Scholarships, they have been awarded \$1,131,000 in scholarships. That is phenomenal. We congratulate the many kids, the children who graduated from all of our Hammond Schools. You are our future. We applaud your accomplishments and we look forward to hearing of their triumphs and of the next chapter of their life. Congratulations to all of the graduates.

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved to send a letter to Code Enforcement and Board of Works about the demolition of the property at 1135 on 1646th Place. It's been vacant and the trees are falling down and the house is abandoned and it's deplorable.

AYES: 7
NAYS: 1

LETTERS SENT: JUNE 10, 2014

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved to send a letter regarding 840 Becker Street where the tree has fell over the fence and it's adjacent to the driveway towards the street that needs to be picked up and that was the purpose of implementing a new ordinance so that we don't have to look at these type of instances throughout the city. But I would like a letter be sent to the Board of Works as well as to Code Enforcement to see what we can do to get this tree removed and get this property demo'd.

LETTERS SENT: JUNE 10, 2014

Councilman Higgs - I sent a letter on May 12th to Hammond Code Enforcement for 2017 164th Place which happens to be in my district off Kennedy Avenue where the property is being neglected. I would like Code Enforcement to inspect it and give me a feasibility study as to how and what they are doing to rectify the situation. I so move.

Councilman Hinojosa seconds.

AYES: 8
NAYS: 0

Councilman Higgs read correspondence from Africa Tarver regarding the status of the Columbia Avenue Business Park at 5851 Calumet Avenue, formerly Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant; and 5820 Calumet Avenue, formerly Burger King restaurant.

Councilman Hinojosa - I'd just like to remind the audience, hopefully the tape doesn't get cut off, but that we made history here tonight. I think the citizens and the residents of Hammond should know how we're spending our money, even our casino money and this council just voted five to three that anybody that wants to know did

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Hinojosa cont. - we make any money for the Festival of the Lakes for 2011, 2012, 2013, it was voted no by five councilmen. In other words, ain't none of your business how much the Festival of the Lakes made. I think it is. I think we should have accountability. We should know where our casino money is. We have five councilmen that voted no that you should know this information. That was Councilman Spitale, Councilman Emerson, Councilman Uylaki, Councilwoman Venecz, and Council President Opinker vote that you shouldn't know how much the Festival of the Lakes made for 2011, 2012 and 2013.

Councilwoman Venecz - The Festival of the Lakes has been going on, I believe, this is going to be the 10th year and in due respect to my colleague, why were these questions not answered in years prior? Why was there no curiosity about what was going on with the Festival of the Lakes? But it's obvious from some of the activity here this evening that we are approaching election season and next year are the Municipal Elections and there's going to be a lot of grandstanding. If there was a valid reason why, other than political, that there was a question about the finances of the Festival of the Lakes I would have been in favor of that. With regard to Councilman Hinojosa's letter earlier regarding the flooding that occurred in Hessville. I do want to point out to the residents of Hessville that the flooding was discussed in great detail at the Mayor's Night Out which was on May 28th. If anybody is interested in hearing from each of the city departments exactly what happened with that event you can visit gohammond.tv and you can view the Mayor's Night Out from that particular evening. I do have one more thing Mr. President, at the last meeting we voted to extend College Bound through the year 2025 and the question was asked by Councilman Higgs how many students are coming back to Hammond. So, for the councilman and for public consumption I pulled out the report that we received and 56% of the College Bound students do return to Hammond after graduation with several purchasing properties in Hammond. 66% of the students completed college in four years with another 23% graduating or anticipating graduating in five years. 42% of the College Bound students are seeking graduate degrees, including 7 MBA's, a doctor of osteopathy, a law degree, a masters in engineering and a masters in chemistry. I said it before and I will say it again. I believe that College Bound is money well spent for some of our young people in the city of Hammond. It will give them an opportunity to attend college when they perhaps may have not had that opportunity before. So, thank you very much.

Councilman Higgs - First and foremost I would like to say that as being the 3rd District Councilman, I don't just work at election time, I work year round. Secondly, as it relates to anything that is financially accountable in regards to going on within our city, it's all of our responsibility to find out. If Councilman Hinojosa has a question it shouldn't be a problem to get the answers. Whether he chooses to run for something or not, that's his decision. But if any of us out here request information it should be given and it shouldn't be a question as to whether or not someone's planning on doing something. The bottom line, we have to be accountable to our constituents, and it's sad that you make a request and a lot of time, and it's not the first time I've made requests and it takes months and months to get it. For what? I can not answer. But at the end of the day we are all responsible. These are our constituents. We work for them, bottom line. So, to say that just because we may be going into a political year he can't ask a question or get answers to something that we're financially responsible for is wrong. And if there's nothing to hide, bring it on. That's what I say. Bring it on. What's the problem. It shouldn't be a problem. The problem is that the majority of the people that sit on this council were not elected by the people. That's the problem.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Hinojosa - I think we just found out from this five to three vote that the Festival of the Lakes is protected. I believe that we should have accountability and this is not political, this is accountability. Why are we hiding how much the Festival of the Lakes made for the past three years. Okay, well let's go back ten years. Let's get some figures. What are we hiding? I think the citizens of Hammond should know how our city is spending the money. I mean nothing wrong with the festival. I love the festival myself. I love it. But let's have accountability. Accountability is not political. Accountability is something that should be given to all the citizens of Hammond. It should be given to all these councilmen over here. But to vote five to three. In other words, it's none of your business how much the festival made or lost. That is wrong.

Councilman Higgs - I will say this, on June 8th there was an editorial in the paper and I apologize I don't have it because I had planned to read it for you tonight, Chico. But it gave you a outline of the expenditures and what they spent a portion of the money on and what the mayor said. So if you can pull that up on northwestindiana.times you can probably pull up that editorial in regards to the festival. It was something in the paper in regards to that but it doesn't answer all the questions that are being requested and that's what I'm saying. All they basically gave you an outline of what was spent and parking is \$15 and how much they spend for entertainment. But they couldn't give you a definite number as to what they are paying for each entertainer. But they gave you an outline of what and also there was a quote in there from the mayor saying that if they don't make money they just want to break even. So that's what was stated.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Carlotta Blake-King - Here regarding flooding. Where is this \$500 grant that homeowners can receive regarding flooding and what is it for?

Alvin Cheeks - Trash in the area. Trash pick ups are very slow in my district. My alleys look like a third world country. I've helped clean up both fallen trees and the flooding in basements. But the people that work for the city departments need to do their jobs.

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

AYES: ALL

Michael Opinker, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:

Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Minutes approved at the Common Council Meeting of June 23, 2014.

Time: 7:20 pm
cb

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*