MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL MARCH 25, 2019

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on March 25, 2019 in the Hammond City Council Chambers.

Council President Robert A Markovich presided.

City Clerk Robert J. Golec facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.
Moment of Silence was observed

ROLL CALL
PRESENT: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos, Markovich
ABSENT: Higgs
TOTAL: 8

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to accept the minutes of March 11, 2019 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Council Rakos, moved to approve the claims from March 6th , 2019 through March 20th , 2019. Claim #1508 through #1810, inclusive.

ROLL CALL VOTE
AYES: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos, Markovich
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Higgs
Motion carried 8/0/1 CLAIMS APPROVED

PUBLIC HEARING

19-05 An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance 9363, Ordinance 4487, Ordinance 4851, Ordinance 6099, Ordinance 7429, Ordinance 7830, Ordinance 8211, Ordinance 8471, Ordinance 8845, and Ordinance 9412, also known as Chapter 35 of the Hammond Municipal Code as it Pertains to the Hammond City Court and the Orderly Transition of Cases in 2019

19-06 An Ordinance to Appropriate Funds in the Hotel/Motel Innkeepers Tax Fund for Economic Development Purposes in 2019

No one spoke

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk

COMMUNICATIONS
None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council as a Whole Committee- Council Woerpel,- brought out 19-05 and 19-06.

Community & Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Announced upcoming meetings:
Wed., Apr 3rd Edison Community Watch Edison School; 6:30p.m.
Tues., Apr 2nd , Harrison Park Crime Watch VFW .
Fri., Apr 5th Irving Community Watch will meet at Irving School at 9:15 a.m.
Tues., Mar. 26th ; Pulaski Park N. A.; American Legion; 6:30 p.m.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING- FINAL PASSAGE

19-05 An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance 9363, Ordinance 4487, Ordinance 4851, Ordinance 6099, Ordinance 7429, Ordinance 7830, Ordinance 8211, Ordinance 8471, Ordinance 8845, and Ordinance 9412, also known as Chapter 35 of the Hammond Municipal Code as it Pertains to the Hammond City Court and the Orderly Transition of Cases in 2019

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved for passage.

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved for amending 19-05 and be replace 19-05A in its entirety.

Councilman Woerpel- Basically 19-05A is the same Ordinance it was just in the "WHEREAS" parts the Judge's Office felt it necessary to change the language but there's no change to the "FURTHER BE IT ORDAINED" parts.

ROLL CALL VOTE (amedment)
AYES: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos, Markovich
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Higgs
Motion carried 8/0/1 AMENDMENT ADOPTED

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)
AYES: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Higgs, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos, Markovich
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Higgs
Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9435 PASSED (as amended)

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk

ORDINANCE 3RD READING- FINAL PASSAGE cont

19-06 An Ordinance to Appropriate Funds in the Hotel/Motel Innkeepers Tax Fund for Economic Development Purposes in 2019

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

Councilman Spitale- Economic Development Department requires the use of monies in the Innkeepers Tax fund for marketing purposes, promotional events and advertising total amount of $ $20,622.53.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)
AYES: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos, Markovich
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Higgs
Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9436 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

19-09 An Ordinance to Appropriate Monies into the 2019 Gaming Fund

Councilwoman Woerpel, supported by Councilman Spitale , moved the proposed Ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a public hearing on April 22, 2019.

Councilman Woerpel- This is an Ordinance to appropriate monies that wasn't spent out of the District Gaming balances from 2018, either the project came in under or the project wasn't done its just re-appropriating it into the 2019 balances. AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS
None

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mayor McDermott- I wanted to give an update on the Gaming situation. I know there are people watching on GoHammondTv just want to keep them in the loop. We were in Indianapolis last week testifying for Public Policy Committee of the Indiana House, on Gary's proposal to relocate the Casino to 80/94 and Burr street. Even though the Gaming proposal passed, the Senate very easily. I feel like we are doing pretty well in the Indiana House, Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon, and Rep. Carolyn Jackson, are doing a great job representing Hammond, and East Chicago. Rep. Earl Harris and I had a really long conversation last week I feel like the forces are on our side. They're asking questions that make a lot of sense. You can tell from the tone of their questions there is some skepticism about Gary's proposal in the House, I take that as a good sign. We have someone in the Statehouse everyday of the week. I think things are starting to look better, but things can go bad and we can lose this.I am here to answer any questions.

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont

Council President Markovich- When does the session end this year? Is it a long session ?

Mayor McDermott- No, I think it's a short session this year. They do the budget the long session. Dave do you know?

Dave Hamm- I think the session is over in April.

Mayor McDermott- This is a short session. It's in the 2nd half right now. Gary pushed the Bill through the 1st half. This isn't about Democrats and Republicans. This is an issue that's strange. You have a lot of Republicans on Hammond and East Chicago side. You have a lot of Democrats that aren't on our side. Gary is a Democratic City, Indianapolis seems to be siding with Gary and their proposal. Evansville and Lawrenceburg is with us. It's a strange issue but like I said we are not out of the woods by any stretch. Any questions on that issue?

Councilman Emerson- My Rep. is Carolyn Jackson. Would you recommend for people watching to write their Representative?

Mayor McDermott- I am glad you asked that Councilman Emerson. I think just letting Carolyn know you love her and you're watching. There is tons of pressure on Rep. Jackson, Rep. Candelaria Reardon and Rep. Harris to not protect us, it's not a threat everyone is watching this Bill. Do the right thing for our City. Make no mistake about Rep. Jackson is under a lot of pressure not to support her own constituents in this case. Rep. Candelaria Reardon is a fighter, she's with us. Rep. Earl Harris and I had a great meeting last week and he's with us. Mayor Copeland of East Chicago, has done a great job rallying employees of Ameristar Casino with buttons saying save my job. I am not saying we are done, but for the first time I have good news to report in a long time.

Councilman Kalwinski- We received correspondence from State Rep. Carolyn Jackson. I will be hosting a Public Forum at the Hammond Public Library 564 East State St, on April 5, 2019 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. My co-host will be Rep. Earl Harris, Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon, and Sen. Lonnie Randolph. There will be an opportunity for the public and ourselves to meet and talk about those issues.

Mayor McDermott - Although if it gets through the House and they reconcile it, I think both Councilmen are right. You can email her or give phone call. Let her know we need her to be strong for us. I think that goes a long way. The forces of evil, in my opinion, are the people that bought Ameristar, Rod Radcliffe. Not that he's a force of evil has hired everyone in the Statehouse, they do it to conflict everybody out. It's like everyone is working for Majestic Star. They all get conflicts of interest and they have to sit out but they took one of our good lobbyist and they conflicted him out. If we come out unscathed on this we owe our lobbyist Andy Miller a bottle of Dom Perignon.

Mayor McDermott- Council Markovich if we're done with this issue can I bring one more up?

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont

Council President Markovich- Sure.

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk

Mayor McDermott- I updated you all in Caucus about a case the City of Hammond, had go all the way to the Indiana Supreme Court, came back with a victory for the City of Hammond. We all know its about Rental Registration, you all know we use to charge $80.00,then the State Legislature targeted Hammond and specifically lowered us, which is against the Indiana Constitution, so we filed a lawsuit to challenge this Ordinance and we won. So we thought because of the victory we would be able to charge the higher amount. Instead, what the Legislature did was take the two cities that were charging higher, Bloomington and West Lafayette, and forced them to charge $5.00, so we won. West Lafayette and Bloomington got screwed because of the lawsuit. I apologize to the residents of West Lafayette and Bloomington. I think it's great we won a Supreme Court case.

Council President Markovich- Let the record show that Councilman Higgs is now present.

Councilman Higgs- Recently some residents contacted me about 24 or 38 Ruth Street, maybe the Mayor can give me an update on that property.

Council President Markovich- What is this now?

Councilman Higgs- It's a vacant property on Ruth Street, it's a building that has been vacant for quite sometime.

Mayor McDermott- We have 30,000 houses in the City of Hammond, I have a house that's two doors away from my house, can you come with the answers off the top of your head?

Councilman Higgs- If I was your District Councilman I could.

Mayor McDermott- Oh really right. Thanks Councilman Higgs.

Council President Markovich- Maybe you may want to send a letter to Code Enforcement?

Councilman Higgs- Yes I can.

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Torres, moved to have letter sent to Code Enforcement.

Council President Markovich- Councilman Higgs, will you please state what you want the letter to say?

Councilman Higgs- What is the status of the property?

LETTER SENT: MARCH 26,2019

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

George Stoya- Presented a letter which is attached to the minutes.

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to adjourn. AYES: ALL

Robert A. Markovich, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:

Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 6:30p.m.
dw

Minutes approved at the Common Council meeting of April 8, 2019.

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk