

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on May 28, 2019 in the Hammond City Council Chambers.

Council President Robert A. Markovich presided.

Council Coordinator Carmen Balboa facilitated.

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

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Higgs, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos, Markovich

ABSENT: Torres

TOTAL: 8

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to accept the minutes of May 13, 2019 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to accept the claims from May 8, 2019 through May 22, 2019. Claim #2775 through claim #3050, inclusive.

ROLL CALL VOTE (claims)

AYES: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Higgs, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos, Markovich

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried 8/0/1 CLAIMS APPROVED

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Upcoming meetings:
Harrison Park Crime Watch; Tues., June 4; VFW; 6:30 p.m.

This is an excellent opportunity to find out what is going on in their neighborhood and ask questions of their community police officers. The 2019 Hammond Security Light Program will begin taking applications on

COMMITTEE REPORTS cont.

Councilwoman Venecz cont. - Monday, June 3rd in Room 113, City Hall. Applications will be taken from June 3rd through June 7th. You must own and reside in your Hammond home, supply proof of home ownership, and provide a copy of a valid drivers license or a state I.D. That is through the generosity of Mayor McDermott, Hammond Community Watch, Hammond Community Development and the Hammond Urban Enterprise Association.

Councilman Higgs - Initially I was able to get that information out to the community, somehow the program changed where you have to come in and submit an I.D. and other procedures. For a lot of the seniors within the community it's a burden on them because they may not have transportation. In the future, I would hope that in the future, the community would not have to go through so much red tape.

Councilwoman Venecz - The reason we ask that our residents come in is so that one particular district does not monopolize the program. There are ten lights per district now. The only fair way to do it is to have them come to city hall and complete the application. Any senior citizen or handicapped resident who is not able to make it to city hall, I will be more than happy to take the application to their home and complete it in the privacy of their home. I can be contacted at 219-937-9774.

Councilman Rakos - The 6th District residents seem to appreciate the fact that they have an opportunity to get this kind of light. Many times I can't get the ornamental lighting, this is another opportunity to light their homes. The 6th District residents very much appreciate that opportunity.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

None

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE

19-11 An Ordinance to Create Fund 242 and to Appropriate Funds within the Hammond Police Department Grant Fund for 2019

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved the proposed Ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a public hearing on June 24, 2019. AYES: ALL

19-12 An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance 7246 also known as Section 37.086 of the Hammond Municipal Code as it Pertains to Travel

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading and referred it to the Council as a Whole. AYES: ALL

Councilman Rakos asked to be added as a sponsor.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE cont.

19-13 An Ordinance Appropriating the Proceeds of the Annual Action Plan and Dealing with Other Matters Pertaining to the Expenditure of Plan Proceeds for Program Year 2019

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a public hearing on June 24, 2019. AYES: ALL

19-14 An Ordinance Vacating a 9 Foot Portion North of Roselawn St. lying Between 6941 Stateline Ave. and 15 Roselawn St. in the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana

Councilman Emerson, 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 June 10, 2019. AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

19R-14 Resolution of the City Council of the City of Hammond Authorizing the Filing of an Annual Plan Application and Designating Signatories for Payment Voucher on Letters of Credit for the 2019 Annual Action Plan Programs

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

Councilman Spitale - This resolution just authorizes the filing for the Annual Action Plan application.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

AYES: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Higgs, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos, Markovich

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried 8/0/1 RESOLUTION NO. R14 ADOPTED

19R-15 A Resolution Authorizing the Hammond Police Department to Apply for a 2019 SAVE Pedestrian Safety Grant

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

Councilman Spitale - This is authorizing the Hammond Police Department to apply for a 2019 SAVE Pedestrian Safety Grant for a total of \$8 thousand.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

AYES: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Higgs, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos, Markovich

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried 8/0/1 RESOLUTION NO. R15 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Higgs - I understand one of our secretaries recently left, so what is the status in regards to someone filling in for her?

Council President Markovich - We had interviews roughly three or four months ago and several city employees applied. Ms. Alexander was put in there by whatever reason, under some certain auspices and what I've been looking at is we've interviewed people in the past that have applied for that position and due to the emergency situation, because we're only gonna have one secretary, she'll be coming on board as part time starting Monday. She is an employee already with the city and also involved with the school city. So, that's what's gonna happen there.

Councilwoman Venecz - And this secretary is aware that this is a temporary job until we advertise the position.

Council President Markovich - No, that's not true. It's not temporary. It's filling a part time position. We were involved with in, I believe, September, October, November, where we interviewed several people and this individual was very qualified. College, education, degrees, teaching at South Suburban College. Knows everything about computers. Is involved with the School City, comes highly recommended by the School City. We've all interviewed and we're in an emergency situation here.

Councilwoman Venecz - Yes, if I'm not mistaken we conducted those interviews for a full time position if that was correct.

Councilwoman Venecz moved to send a letter to this new employee, who at this point remains nameless....

Council President Markovich - No, the name's been given out. Everybody has been talked to about it. It's not nameless.

Councilwoman Venecz - Well, I have not been included in that conversation. I make a motion that we send a letter to her advising her that this is a temporary until we advertise the position.

Council President Markovich - Motion by Councilwoman Venecz, is there a second? Is there a second?

Councilman Rakos second.

Councilman Woerpel - I would like our attorney to tell us if the position has to be advertised.

Council President Markovich - I don't believe it has to be advertised.

Councilman Woerpel - I would like our attorney to tell us whether this position has to be advertised.

Council Atty. Berger - I really don't have an opinion right now. I'd have to check through the ordinances and the personnel manual.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Council President Markovich - Question is why would it have to be advertised? For correction for Councilwoman's motion, it's not temporary, it's a part time position.

Councilman Woerpel - Once again, I'm asking our attorney if it has to be advertised.

Council Atty. Berger - I'd be happy to give you an opinion but I can't give you one offhand.

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Kalwinski, motioned to table the discussion.

ROLL CALL VOTE (table discussion)

AYES: Kalwinski, Higgs, Emerson, Markovich

NAYS: Venecz, Woerpel, Rakos

ABSENT: Spitale, Torres

Motion failed

4/3/2

MOTION FAILED

Councilman Woerpel - It's my understanding our attorney says he has to research this so, as a councilperson, I would like to follow our attorney's advise.

Councilman Higgs - Just for clarity, initially the motion was placed on the floor to table. That was the purpose of it, Councilman Woerpel. So that it would be tabled and the attorney would have an opportunity to review and check what the law states in regards to hiring another person or whatever. Because in the past they did whatever they wanted to do so now it's all a big commotion about it. But the reality of it is, instead of staying here for two hours going back and forth over something so small, about a part time position, which so many people are in need of employment at this present time, however the attorney can not give you a suggestion tonight so that was the purpose of making the motion to table, Councilman Woerpel. So, that would give the attorney an opportunity at next meeting if you want to ask any additional questions of the attorney or call him you can.

Councilman Woerpel - What I heard was a motion to table the discussion. The discussion was brought up in New and Unfinished Business, if I would have known it was a motion to allow him to research it, I would have voted opposite of that.

Council President Markovich - Councilman Woerpel, let me just, for clarification here, motion to table failed. So then you, and maybe I misunderstood you, you said that you wanted to have time for our attorney to research it. So that's why I took that as a motion and Councilman Higgs seconded to not table it but refer it to our attorney to look into it when he gets the time. Do you agree with that?

Councilman Woerpel - Right now, yes. When there was a motion to table the discussion on this ...

Council President Markovich - That failed.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilwoman Venecz - I do believe that there is a motion on the floor to send a letter to this new person who I do not have her name, advising her that this position is temporary until we advertise the position. Now if I, Carmen, you can play the tape back, but I do believe that that passed.

Council President Markovich - I believe that the councilman ...

Councilwoman Venecz - Councilman, Mr. President, you are not to engage in the discussion on the floor. My question is ...

Council President Markovich - I'm just trying to do clarification, because right now we are trying to have our attorney look into it. So, until he looks into it, as far as sending any kind of letters, until he researches it you don't want to send out a letter with the wrong information. Is that correct?

Councilwoman Venecz - So, who would be responsible for composing this letter?

Council President Markovich - Has the letter been voted on and passed?

Councilwoman Venecz - It's my understanding that we did. May I amend my motion?

Council President Markovich - Go ahead.

Councilwoman Venecz - I amend my motion to say that our Council Attorney Robert Berger compose the letter advising this new part time person that the position is temporary until we advertise the position.

Council President Markovich - Motion by Councilwoman Venecz. Second by? Is there a second? Is there a second? Motion not accepted for a lack of a second.

Councilman Woerpel - It is my understanding that Council Atty. Berger is going to research whether or not it has to be advertised, correct?

Council President Markovich - Yes.

Councilman Woerpel - So we don't need to even vote on that. He is going to advise this council on whether or not we need to advertise the position at the next meeting, correct?

Council President Markovich - He's gonna look into it, yes.

Councilman Higgs moved that the council attorney have an opportunity to review and do the research that is necessary to move forward on hiring a part time secretary.

Councilman Markovich - Did we do that already?

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilwoman Venecz - Where is my motion?

Council President Markovich - It was defeated, I believe.

Councilwoman Venecz - No, there was a second but there was no vote.

Council Atty. Berger - Your motion hasn't been voted on, I don't think.

Councilwoman Venecz - But it was seconded, correct?

Council President Markovich - Who second it?

Councilman Rakos - I did.

Councilwoman Venecz - I believe Councilman Rakos.

Councilwoman Venecz - That was Councilman Woerpel. I feel like we're speed dating going through this meeting like.

Councilman Woerpel - It's my understanding that her motion was to hold the hiring of the position until she's informed of the fact that it's a temporary position. Our attorney has advised us that he is going to research whether or not it has to be advertised. So, in essence, we won't know nothin 'til two weeks from now.

Council President Markovich - From what I understand we're gonna have our attorney look into this. Whether it has to be posted or whatever.

Councilman Woerpel - Basically, it's my understanding that, basically, we're not taking any action until he tells us it has to be advertised.

Councilwoman Venecz rescind her motion.

Councilman Rakos rescind his second.

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Kalwinski, moved to acknowledge receipt of a letter from George Stoya with regard to the chicken issue and place it on file for the record.

Councilman Woerpel - This isn't a big issue but we did that at our last meeting.

Councilwoman Venecz - Oh we did? I'm sorry, I wasn't here.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Higgs - Recently I did attend the school board meeting where they voted in favor of closing three schools. Unfortunately, it's not good for the city of Hammond and for the teachers that are the children of this great city. So, in regards to that, I wish them all well and I would hope that some how or another that something could be resolved. But unfortunately, they are in a \$10.2 million deficit so they had no other choice but to close three schools in our city and unfortunately those schools are going to be consolidated and it's unfortunate. But, again, I was in opposition of it and still is and what can you do but pray that our children get the best education because in order for a city to be vibrant and move forward we need a good school system. You need good teachers and people that are interested in the children's future. So, as Councilman of the 3rd District, again, I was in opposition of it and I still am in opposition of having three schools close in our great city.

Councilman Rakos - I want to commend the Mayor and the Park Board for the recent ribbon cutting of the Hessville Park improvement project. Our interactive water feature that's now in the center of Hessville Park. We had more kids and more people at that project in the first four days, when it never hit 75 degrees than we probably had in two years at the Hessville pool. I commend them for their job well done.

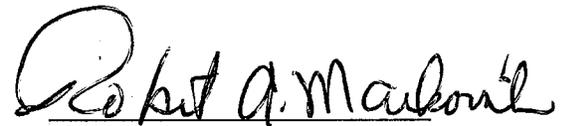
Councilman Markovich - I would like to take note here that if there was any discussion as far as the way that this meeting was scheduled tonight and changed because of time. Just to let everybody know there is a meeting going on that we are all trying to attend at the H.A.S.T. Academy about the Downtown Redevelopment of the city of Hammond and that's why we had this meeting scheduled and moved it up to 5:30 p.m. So anybody watching and wants to go Downtown Hammond at the H.A.S.T. Academy and see what's going on about what we are paying for, for a consultant what they want to do with Downtown Hammond.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

None

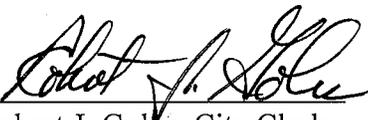
Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to adjourn.

AYES: ALL



Robert A. Markovich, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:



Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 6:45 p.m.

cb

Minutes approved at the Common Council meeting of June 10, 2019.

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk