

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on May 26, 2020 in the Hammond City Council Chambers.

Council President Dave Woerpel presided.

Council Coordinator Carmen I. Balboa facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.

Invocation by Councilwoman Alexander

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Rakos, Woerpel

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor McDermott- Thank you. It's good to see you all back on zoom. I wanna update the Council on what's going on in Indiana. The Covid-19 we have 32,000 positive Covid -19 cases in the state of Indiana, over 1,832 fatalities, 226,000 Hoosiers have been tested. In Hammond right here in our hometown, we have 540 positive cases of Covid -19. We've had 16 of our residents pass away from this dangerous disease. City Hall is open, we are monitoring temperatures. We are monitoring the number of people in the building. We are recommending if you're 65 and older you stay at home. Most people in City Hall are wearing face masks at work. Under the phase, we're currently in the gathering of people is 25, max. Non essential travel is allowed in this stage. We're in right now. Religious services are allowed. I went to church this weekend in Gary... actually I know the First Baptist Church has been meeting for the past three weeks in Hammond, so religious services have resumed. Retailers are open, like retailers that were shut down during the shelter in place, they are open at 50% capacity. These are retailers like liquor stores, clothing stores, furniture stores, jewelry stores, are open at 50% capacity. Restaurants, barber shops, beauty salons, tattoo parlors, are open at 50% percent capacity. What is still closed, as far as nightclubs are still closed, gyms, community centers like the Shepherd Center, the Sportsplex, the Senior Center, the Civic Center is still closed, playgrounds, tennis courts, basketball courts, skate parks are still closed, casino still closed, movie theaters still closed, pools, schools and universities still closed right now. The Governor's got us going to stage three on June 1st. What that will do is increase the capacity limits on Monday from 25 to 100 retail and shopping will increase to 75% capacity. Gyms and fitness centers can reopen like Sportsplex, community pools, playgrounds, basketball courts, outdoor stuff like that will open in stage three, which is Monday. But still closed on Monday are movie theaters, playgrounds, bars and night clubs. Cultural entertainment, sports venues, Elementary and high school buildings still closed. In stage three Porter County, Laporte County, every County in the state of Indiana, is in stage three except for Lake County and Marion County, so there's some cities and towns in Northwest Indiana that have chosen to go slower. Gary is one of them and they're still really early on stage two. So we've handled it differently in the City of Hammond. We've been open for three weeks now, with, you know, relative success so far. As you all know, over the weekend we experienced a micro burst in the City of Hammond, where within 15 minutes we got 1.8 inches of rain and over the course of an hour, three total inches of rain. To put that in perspective, each inch of rain across our city equals about a billion gallons that we have to treat, now a lot of that seeps into the ground, but our plant is rated

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont- at 70 million gallons per day, and we had a billion gallons, three billion gallons dumped on us in an hour. Our storm water detention pond could only hold so much like 50 to 60 million gallons and then we're bypassing the plant. You know I hear a lot, about 250 homes suffered basement damages so far. Parts of our city that we were suffered the most damage. Hessville suffered a lot of damage and a lot of different areas. South Hammond, over in that area, Highland, Munster also. I was on both sides of the bridge that day checking out what's going on on both sides. Highland, Munster, experienced a lot of damage in that area as well. So like in Schleicher, where the water was going up front doors and then over in the 7400 block of Alabama, real bad, four feet deep, we lost a police car going down the street on that street. So, obviously, a lot of parts of our city affected, hundreds of homes suffered damage. That's obviously horrible. I hear a lot during the incidents like this that the flood gates were closed. The operator was sleeping. The valve wasn't open. I just wanna put this to rest that is not the case. Our city is highly automated. It reacts when rainfall hits it. And no municipal water system can handle the amount of water we had dumped on us at one time. It'd be like taking 50 gallons and trying to dump it instantaneously down your kitchen sink. It's just it would get backed up and overflow, which is what happened to us as well. We had all the water hit us at once. But anyway, I wanna point out that obviously we had a number of residents calling us today at City Hall. Obviously, we've been talking a lot about this and I wanna thank the hardworking men and women of the Hammond Sanitary District. You know in the plant itself and in the field. Jack's crews, sewer and maintenance, were out 24 hrs straight, basically, Saturday night to Sunday. Gary's crew had a full call out, we had multiple emergencies happening, flooded cars, trees down, homes damaged, garbage piled everywhere. There was a full nights work for Department of Public Works and for the sewer maintenance crew. We've had a few days to contemplate what happened and I think it's time for the Hammond Sanitary District to step up and try to offer some type of relief to the homes that were affected. So we're in the process of announcing a rebate process through the Hammond Sanitary District where each home that suffered damage, right now we have 198 homes listed and suffered damage, and we have another 60 or so awaiting inspection. In each home that could be verified and suffering flood damage this week from this weekend's storms will get \$500 rebate from the Hammond Sanitary District to apply towards, you know, the damage that they suffered. Some of them had damage to their cars. Some of them lost thousands of dollars in furniture and personal memories and stuff like that and those can't be replaced. But I think it's for the city of Hammond Sanitary District to step forward to help try to. The damage suffered by 250 of our homes, which is, you know, that's a significant... so I know we've been working in coordination with the Sanitary District today to come up with how the system's gonna operate. More information will be coming on this real quickly. Let me just read this real quick so they will be offering qualifying homeowners storm relief of up to \$500 per home to help cover damage from Saturday's extreme weather. Applications will be made available to the Community Development Department beginning Wednesday, checks should be able to be issued 7 to 14 days after it's verified that you suffered storm damage. Homeowners must have an inspection by the Hammond Sanitary District or the Inspections Department to verify damage to their home due to the storm. Homeowners must either have a Homestead Exemption with the County or otherwise show proof of home ownership and residence at the damaged house. This \$500 is for damage to the home, including carpeting, personal items, furnaces, hot water heaters, drywall, and the lights, it cannot be used for painting, you know, in many cases the damage suffered by the homeowners is gonna far exceed the \$500 that we're offering. I think it's a gesture of goodwill. We know that there's nothing that could have been done to change what happened when three billion gallons of water hit us within the period of an hour, but I think \$500 for damage suffered by our customers is a good first step and I appreciate Marty Wielgos and the Hammond Sanitary District for stepping forward and, you know, offering to fund this program. So I don't know if you got any other questions, Councilman Woerpel

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott- or any other councilman have questions? I appreciate you giving me the opportunity to speak.

Councilman Tyler- How do homeowners go about informing the City that they sustained damage? Is that through calling the Sanitary Department directly or through the 311 app? What are ways that they can notify us and set that inspection up? Thank you.

Mayor McDermott- You could call my office first off. We need to get you on the list, 219-853-6302 is Hammond Mayor's Office. Took hundreds of phone calls today, but I know that number off the top of my head, 219-853-6302, we'll get you the info and connect you up with the right line off the top of my head. I'm not sure, but this program is being run out of the Sanitary District. The claims will be verified through either the Inspections Department or the sewer maintenance crews and once you're verified that you received storm damage from the last storm, you'll literally get a \$500 check within 14 business days. After the verification happens. So, but, worst case scenario, call my office tomorrow. Barry, hopefully we can get you some more information during the Council meeting, but that's my answer right now. I'm not sure if Phil or anybody else can help me out with that. Could you jump in real quick?

Chief of Staff Taillon- Yeah, no, you're correct. I believe the number is 853-6413 for sanitary and I think they said the extension is 514 is what they're gonna wanna hit to fill out.

Mayor McDermott- Are you sure on that? You think you're positive?

Chief of Staff Taillon- If you give me a couple of minutes I can go grab the press release. I'll be right back.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you. We'll get that in a second, Barry. Does anybody else have questions on this program or on our response or anything?

Councilwoman Alexander- Some residents have already started to do their clean up process. If they are providing like any pictures or video will that also help them and be able to secure those dollars?

Mayor McDermott- Absolutely, Councilwoman. Thank you for asking that. Everybody takes pictures of storm damage, so pictures of the storm damage, video, and our crews can go in there. If it's completely fixed up, I mean, I'm still, I'm sure that if this has been a couple of days, I doubt too many of them are already completely fixed up again, but the guys, the workers at the Hammond Sanitary sewer crew will simply walk in and see the watermarks realize that it's a legitimate claim and follow through with pictures and video will certainly help with the homeowner building a case, but it's not like a high burden. We know the areas that were hit with flooding, so if you're in that area you can prove that you have flooding in your basement from this event, you'll qualify for the program.

Councilman Kalwinski- The gentleman who went to get the number and extension, could he also actually make that call and do the extension? In the past it's been difficult to navigate sanitary lines and get through to people. So if you could do that for everybody. Before they start calling to make sure that's intact and correct that would be appreciated.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you Councilman Mark. Phil, could you make sure before we announce that number... I can tell you for a fact 853-6302, Councilman Mark, but obviously I'd rather the department handling it... Phil do you have that number?

Chief of Staff Taillon-Yes, I have that number it is 853-6413, and extension 515, is what they want to hit to actually fill out the application. That, one more time, the number is again 219-853-6413, and extension 515.

Councilman Kalwinski- Can somebody make that call now?

Mayor McDermott- Applications will be up and running and available on Thursday. We're finalizing the application. The program itself is, the details are already out there, but the application itself will be available for Thursday. However, anybody that calls the Mayor's Office that has been letting us know that they've had damage, we are directing them to the Sanitary District. They will do an inspection now so that by the time the person fills out the application they'll already have it and it'll, you know, efficiently, move them to the process and it's, going back to Katrina's question from earlier, we know where the basement backups happen. We have these maps, scatter maps, to show you where the backups occurred and we use it for after you have a flooding event, you can sort of see what parts of the system struggled with this storm. And if they say, for instance, there was a homeowner that wasn't from an area where we had a lot of basement backups. We may be more skeptical in the area, like that if they didn't, but if you're in the area where everybody backed up, you know, it's obviously a lot easier to prove that case, so. Any questions?

Councilman Rakos- Mayor, would that also apply to businesses?

Mayor McDermott- No, right now it only applies to homeowners. We are using the HUD money as part of it, if they live in a low income area... HUD is actually gonna be able to pay for these emergency repairs. But right now, it's not for businesses. Thank you, Councilman.

Councilman Torres- Other than the \$500 that the city is offering through the Sanitary District, is there any other? Do you know of any other program, FEMA? Will FEMA help or just with anything that we can help and that the city can help in the processing of applications?

Mayor McDermott- For FEMA to get involved, the Governor has to declare a state of emergency and I haven't heard that there's no consideration at all to a state of emergency for the City of Hammond. If he declares a state of emergency and FEMA could get involved and open the doors, but I haven't heard any mention by the governor to declare a state of emergency. I know the Township's offering like \$30.00 gift cards for cleaning supplies, which is nice. So I know that's available. It's not a lot but every bit helps, but and I realize even \$500 isn't a lot if you lost \$10,000 worth of stuff in your basement, it's just we're trying to help. And at the same time if 250 people participate in this that's \$125,000 from the Hammond Sanitary District.

Councilman Torres- I personally got a call from a lady over on Sherman Street, had lost her furnace, over \$5000 bucks or in that area. So it's people like that with a good sum of money and she's trying to... right now she has no way to replace it.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott- Sherman Street was one of the worst affected Street in the city, and in fact a day later they still had a couple feet on the Street, a couple of feet of water. And we both know it's an extremely poor area. The residents that live there struggle and to have this burden placed on them. If there's anything we could do in an extreme low, low to moderate income area, like that area, it would be through HUD, so that would probably be in addition to this program, Councilman, and I would recommend if you have situations like this, why don't you approach us separately with this person's name and maybe there's something that we could do if they qualify financially. You know, HUD is able to help in extreme cases, but the citizens that receive the help have to be financially able to receive the help. So, Sherman Street was horrible, Councilman, I agree. With what happened there was they're so close to the plant, they sort of got penalized. It's a... I learned a lot about this. A hydraulic lock, all the water that's going across our city to the plant, and here we are one of the neighborhoods closest to the plant, Sherman Street, couldn't get their water in the high pressure system until everything went by and they sat there for a day with water on their street and it was unacceptable, but it was a bad storm, Councilman. It's a helpless feeling as a Mayor to watch your city go under water.

Councilman Torres- Thank you. I will give her this information.

Mayor McDermott - In extreme cases like that, with extreme poverty, I think it's more a case by case scenario. You know, I think Owana could help you with that. She has a lot of latitude on a case by case issue.

Councilman Kawlinski- Mayor, I just called the Sanitary District line, 853-6314, and you get after hours and you press one if you've had a sewage backup or manhole cover missing and you leave your name, your phone number, and your address, and the answering service will call someone who is on service and they will get back to you. If you call during working hours, the extension is 515 to Katie Sherman, but I couldn't do anything with that after hours.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you, Councilman Mark. The public can't go wrong by calling my office either. So if you're having trouble, call my office, I'd rather have a cleaner route to get through to the Sanitary District to prevent overloading my office, but the worst case scenario, 853-6302, get to my office and we'll transfer you where you need to be. So, thank you for doing that, Councilman.

Councilman Emerson- I had the opportunity to ride around the 4th District today and I drifted into Hessville a little bit, but parts of the 4th were hit, you know, pretty hard. But I saw no debris on either in any of the alleys I looked at. I got off the beaten path a little bit and looked around and I saw no debris that people would take it out of their basements or whatever, so the Street Department... and I drifted into Hessville and I didn't see anything out there so the Street Department should get some kudos for really picking up. I don't know if they worked all weekend, I couldn't find any stacked up dressers or anything.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you Councilman Emerson. I worked Sleicher during the flood, that's where I was stationed, a few hours stopping traffic going through the neighborhood because water was so high on the street that the cars would go by and the waves would hit the houses and so I was working with the Hammond Police Department and we're just blocking all traffic from going through the neighborhood just so our system could catch up, and once the water levels start going down, we allowed traffic back through, but we were spared in Sleicher because most of those homes are on a slab, and if they were in basements, we would have lost hundreds

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - of homes in the area this basement. But we got lucky, it's mostly slab homes but... it was tremendous in this area and then I got called to the 7400 block Alabama, which is right by the ice, the ice skating rink, and that was the deepest water I've seen in the City. Like I said there was a police car that we lost. We tried to go through Alabama Street and it got stuck right in the middle of a four-foot swamp. So I spent the rest of my night there, but I was in the 4th, most of the flood, helping the Police Department.

Rachel Montes- I did want to clarify the number for sewer backups, you can call the main number during office hours. But the Sewer Department's 853-5364, extension 637, after hours it will forward to the on call person. They are taking down numbers and trying to return the phone calls this evening. They are working until 8 o'clock tonight.

Mayor McDermott - So you said you wanted people to call 219-853-6405, ext. 637?

Rachel Montes - And what we've had to do is we had them roll all the lines to the phones in the Sewer Department and we've taken our administrative staff back to the Sewer Department and we've got about four of us manning the phones throughout the day. We had a board meeting today so we had to cut out early but tomorrow we'll be there all day, as long as it takes. We're taking the calls. We're verifying things. People are calling to see how soon they are going to be serviced and we can get Jack or one of the guys on the radio to see who has their but they've had hundreds and hundreds of stacks of papers today that they went through.

Mayor McDermott - And each home has to be inspected to participate in this program. You need to get through to the Sewer Department, get yourself lined up for an inspection, once you do that and it's verified, it's an easy process from there.

Rachel Montes - I've also asked the people that I spoke to on the phone, because some of them cleaned it up. They had pictures, so I said show the inspectors the pictures, the videos, anything you have showing things you threw out. Take them to the back, show them what you threw out so it shows the water damage, and most people did. Most people took pictures and had that type of information.

Mayor McDermott - I think that's a natural thing is to take pictures of the damage. I imagine we have pictures.

Councilman Tyler - Yeah, I have a few. I've been monitoring the questions on Facebook and one of the first questions is, what if they're renters. I guess they would go through they're landlords to apply for ...

Mayor McDermott - Exactly, go through you landlord. Hopefully you have renter's insurance. But, yeah, this is a super expensive program obviously, and it's geared towards homeowners and I realize there are renters out there that are going to be frustrated to hear that. But, this is a expensive program and we're trying to, you know, obviously, if you're a homeowner invested in our city, it would be like a stockholder in the city and we're trying to take care of our bosses. But, I apologize to the renter's. It would be cost prohibitive to include everybody. Hopefully there's renters insurance or some type of insurance policy with the landlord could provide in a situation like this.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Councilman Tyler - My next question is, what about visitors? So, let's say a family member was visiting a homeowner, what are their options?

Mayor McDermott - Good question, so let's say you parked your car on the street and then the street flooded, and you suffered damage. I'd file a claim the same way other people do, Barry, I would file a claim with the Sanitary District. We'll have to evaluate it. But, by the way, like, keep in mind, this is an act of God, you know, we're not liable legally for what happened. We had three billions gallons of water dumped on us. This is a program for us to show good will to our homeowners but, as a city, we're not liable legally because what happened was an act of God. We had three inches of rain in one hour, you know, there's no place to put that water.

Councilman Tyler - My next question is, I know a lot of homes have already been inspected, do they need to go through the inspection process again or are they already on file.

Mayor McDermott - If they've been inspected they're gonna be already on the list. I would make sure to reach out to Rachel, reach out to someone in the district and make sure you're on the list. If you've been inspected, you don't have to be inspected twice. We've already inspected a number of homes, by the way, so a lot of them have already been taken care of.

Marty Wielgos, Sanitary District Manager - Yeah, we've already inspected about 170 homes.

Councilman Kalwinski - So I just want to be clear of that phone number. Day or night call 853-6405?

District Manager Wielgos - That's correct.

Councilman Kalwinski - Extension 637, so that is the only number and extension we need to call right now?

District Manager Wielgos - That's for nighttime, the day time we have the phones manned with four extra people all day long.

Rachel Montes - That's 853-5364, it's manned with four people all day long.

Chief of Staff Taillon - I just want to make sure we're understanding. To clarify, when you want to fill out the application for the program, that's when you are going to use the other number which is 219-853-6413, Ext. 515. So, we're talking about two different things. You just want to report that you have damage and you want the inspection done, that's when you use the other number.

Councilman Kalwinski - Perfect, I appreciate that. By the way, I just had a phone call from the Sanitary District after I placed my message during the meeting. So they are responding already, the on call person. So, thank you.

Councilman Tyler - As I was out and about driving in the 3rd District this weekend, it seemed like the majority of residents in that area had some type of flood damage. One of the big questions was and they were asking this on

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Councilman Tyler cont. - Facebook, are there any plans to upgrade our sewer systems? I know, Mayor, you talked about it on Facebook a bit on how the storm we had was just too large for our system to accommodate. I know Marty might have some comments too. But can you all clear up just one last time, I guess, the severity of the storm that we received, how we just overloaded the system, like the same time talk about that you guys have been in talks about exploring upgrades to our system and where we might be with that too.

Mayor McDermott - We are working with the USEPA. They want us to do \$250 million of improvements over the next fifteen years, which is, even after doing the \$250 million worth of improvements in the next fifteen years, if we got the same type of storm that we had on Saturday where we get three inches of rain dumped on us at one time, we still would overflow. But keep in mind our plant is rated for 70 million gallons a day. We also have storage capacity for over 50 million gallons right across the street and we were overflowing our plant, meaning we were on bypass, we we're flowing water right into the river which is reportable violation with the EPA but we were doing that because where we're holding the water back, that water has to go someplace and it will end up in all of our basements so we were doing everything we can to bypass the plant and put the water right in the river. But, we are gonna be doing some major upgrades to our plant over the next fifteen years. It's gonna be needed because this isn't, you know, we've been reading in our newspapers about our shorelines, our lake levels are high and the storm's are so bad it's causing major damage. Wildfire season is growing longer and hotter in California and on the west coast. Hurricane season is getting longer and more violent along the gulf coast and the east coast. I mean, this is life in the 2020's. I mean, this is global warming in my opinion and we need to start getting ready, and that means that when we're doing these improvements it costs a lot of money. But we have to keep upgrading and making that plant stronger and stronger. That means the money's got to come from somewhere and that's the hard part. You know, to upgrade that plant costs tens of millions of dollars, hundreds of millions of dollars, that's got to be paid by our rate payers which is all of us, and that's the hard part. No matter how big our plant was, that storm Saturday would have wiped out almost any plant. It was the worst case scenario. We were already saturated with rain and we got drenched with three billion gallons in one hour. It was a horrible situation. When that happens I feel like I'm letting you down as a Mayor but there was nothing we could have done. All I could do was get in my car and try to help the Police Department control traffic and try to prevent further damage. I know all of us were doing our thing. I saw a lot of you going out buying cleaning supplies. I saw a lot of you I saw buying cleaning supplies. A lot of you in your cars and you saw me. But, I mean, a gas station fell down because of the wind and rain. There was nothing we could have done. That storm was intense and hard.

District Manager Wielgos - You're exactly right, the intensity in such a short period of time. You're right, we could have had sewers twice the size and it wouldn't have made a difference. But the other key thing is we are pumping at 1.3 hundred million gallons into the river, 300 million gallons, it's unprecedented.

Mayor McDermott - Marty if you didn't do that, that waters coming into our basements, the streets, all over the place.

Councilman Kalwinski - How many events per year does the EPA allow into the river.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

District Manager Wielgos - Well, we've been negotiating that back and forth, it's either three or four a year.

Councilman Kalwinski - How many events have we had in the last three years, per year? Do you know?

District Manager Wielgos - Actually, we've been pretty lucky. This year has been a tough year so far but in previous years we were under, in those events, we were under. I keep telling the EPA, you never know when these storms come. You never know how much rain it's gonna dump and the storms have become more tropical. We've been talking about this at least for the last four years. Especially here in Hammond, we don't get the same rains like we used to get. We used to get rain that would drizzle all day across the entire city, now we get this very heavy concentrated downfalls in only small portions of the city. North Hammond got less than an inch. It's hard to believe, less than an inch and you're how many miles away from South Hammond? It's just crazy.

Mayor McDermott - I heard they had no idea it rained that day.

District Manager Wielgos - You're right.

Councilman Kalwinski - Even today when I was talking to Dan Spitale, it was pouring here in North Hammond and he had the sun shining. But Marty, if we keep it under three violations a year, are they considered violations then or are they just tossed out?

District Manager Wielgos - No, they're considered legal, so they're not violations.

Mayor McDermott - But we still have to report it, right Marty?

District Manager Wielgos - And, not only do I have to report that, I have to report every house, every inspection, every address, to them also.

Mayor McDermott - If we don't bypass the plant, that situation, it's so much worse. We had no choice, to save homes, we're literally bypassing the plant and putting straight water, it's not treated, into the Grand Cal.

District Manager Wielgos - And I had, myself, and all of my management staff out, Mayor, with our crews, I was talking to the people that night, as you know, you and I were on the phone, just so they knew we were trying to do everything that we could.

Councilman Spitale - Marty, I want to congratulate you and your employees on the job you've done. Up 'til now we had no flooding in the basements, my understanding, and we've had some pretty bad floods in the past but they have been corrected a lot. I take my hat off to you. I know I talked to you a few times and you said no basements had flooded with some of the high rains that we had prior to this.

District Manager Wielgos - Well you could just ask the Mayor's father, he would tell you every time it rained in the city of Hammond he cringed. A rain like this, back in the day, we would have had over 2000 calls, at least.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - I know it doesn't make anyone feel better, that's true. But if you've got a flooded basement with thousands of dollars worth of damage, you don't want to hear this, I know. That's why we wanted to make this program available as a gesture of good will from us. We're not legally obligated to do this. There's nothing we could have done, as a city, to prevent what happened. We're doing it because the Hammond Sanitary District and the city of Hammond feel that it's our gesture of good will to it's citizens. We care about you. We appreciate your investment in our city and , you know, we want to help. It's tough times. It's not bad enough that we're going through a pandemic, it's not bad enough that 10 thousand Hammond residents are out of a job, and then we get floods and basement back ups on top of that. I apologize on behalf of the city and behalf of the Hammond Sanitary District. We're working all the time to try to prevent this type of thing from happening. We're gonna keep working and try to dissect what happened so we can prevent it in the future.

Councilwoman Alexander - Just for clarity's sake, for the people that are watching, the number that their calling is 853-6405, Ext. 637. Is that correct?

Rachel Montes - Yes.

Councilman Tyler - Can you explain how this program is different than the standpipe program as well?

Mayor McDermott - Thank you, the standpipe program is something people should learn a little more about while we're going through this process. Thank you for bringing this up, Barry. The stand pipe is like a check valve. They call it a stand pipe, in the Navy we called it a check valve, but it's a protection that you basically screw it into your basement that allows water to leave your basement but doesn't allow water to backup into your basement. The Hammond Sanitary District has a program that Marty will talk about in a second that helps cover the cost of that check valve and this is a proven to prevent these types of basement backups from occurring. I know, Marty, you have one of those check valves in your basement, right?

District Manager Wielgos - I do not, because I have overhead sewers and with people that have overhead sewers, because my house is newer, I was told and was under the belief that you would never have basement backup. But, as I had told you, Mayor, I got backup even though I had overhead sewers because that's how strong the intensity of the storm was. But the program that we offer at the District is a back flow preventer and it hooks on to the main sewer line lateral as it leaves the house going out to the street. It's a one way valve flapper. So it allows sewage to go through toward the street and the flapper closes, as in a big rainstorm, to stop it from coming back in your house. It usually averages, depending on the kind of house you have and if you're installing it in the basement in concrete or outside in the lawn in the front yard. The cost is anything from \$2 thousand to \$3 thousand. We will pay up to \$1 thousand reimbursement after you have had a licensed Hammond contractor come in and install it. And for whatever reason, and I've had this program for many years and I'm hoping people take more advantage of it this time around.

Councilman Kalwinski - And you don't have to have a flood event to qualify for it.

District Manager Wielgos - No, you do have to have a flood event that we have to ...

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott - Hold it. Marty, if I wanted to put one in my basement as a preventative measure I couldn't do that. I'd have to flood before I could do it?

District Manager Wielgos - It's not the way they wrote that, no.

Mayor McDermott - That doesn't seem maybe we could work on that, Councilman. Like for preventative reasons. Like you've learned your lesson because your neighbors lost their basement and you want to prevent that from happening to you. I think they should be able to participate in that program as well.

Council President Woerpel - I would just like to add that, Mayor, you talk about the hydraulic lock and I want to commend staff for giving me a tour of how everything works during the event and everything. I literally seen that hydraulic lock and it's the equivalent of waiting on a train. Water would be that train that is going by at 500 to 1000 miles an hour. You don't realize it but water, when it's moving that fast it blocks other water from entering the system. You know I read a lot of the comments on social media, I saw you out there, I saw Councilman Rakos, and trust me, what I saw was every department head working hard that night and kinda had a helpless feeling on their faces with everything that was going on but I commend the city for their response.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Torres, moved to accept the minutes of May 11, 2020 and place on file.

AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to approve the claims from May 6, 2020 through May 20, 2020. Claim #2256 through #2544, inclusive.

Councilman Kalwinski - I wonder, do we still have the money to pay claims or have we had to do anything extraordinary regarding the payment of claims?

Mayor McDermott - Obviously, we anticipated having property tax revenue by now, which makes life easier, we do have current cash flow to get through a little while longer but we do get a tax draw shortly that's gonna help our cash flow situation but obviously the cash flow's getting tight because we're not getting the revenue we anticipated for this period. Megan has pushed out, I think most bills are at 60 days now, which helps us cash flow wise but we're getting close to the time where once we get our tax draw we're gonna have to talk to the Council about strategies to get us through 2020. I think we're gonna be fine at the end of the day. I see the economy starting up again and signs of life are coming back. I appreciate the question.

District Manager Wielgos - Just to clarify, even though the taxes were pushed out, we still get there's still a tax draw from the people that pay their tax by escrow, correct?

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES cont.

Anne Anderson, Director of Economic Development - The city of Hammond is receiving CDBG funds directly sent to us due to Coronavirus relief at a price of \$1.25 million.

Councilman Kalwinski - And that's the total amount for the city of Hammond? Yes, and it is going to be disbursed into different programs and funds that need assistance.

Councilman Kalwinski - And the programs, what programs are you referring to? Like city run programs?

Anne Anderson - The one that I can speak of tonight is a small business resiliency program that we have set up with some of the funds in order to give small business in Hammond some assistance due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Councilman Kalwinski - And the amount allocated to that is how much again?

Anne Anderson - It's a little under \$1 million. It's about \$900 thousand.

Owana Miller, Director of Community Development- Councilmen, I wanted to give you a little bit more information. These are funds that were additional appropriation from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. These funds are to bridge a shortfall for our citizens and our businesses here in Hammond during the Coronavirus pandemic. The amount of CDBG funds, which is Community Development Block Grant, is \$1.25799 and then the Emergency Solutions grant will be receiving \$635,393 thousand. The funds are to be used for public services, economic development as well as our homeless shelters. The ordinance to appropriate the funds based off of the packet that everyone should have received last week.

Councilman Kalwinski - So, if I can clarify just for myself. There's one amount for small business at \$900 thousand, another amount from CDBG for \$1.257 and an Energy Solutions for 635,000 plus, is that correct?

Owana Miller - Okay, so, Community Development Block Grant, that's the money we'll be receiving \$1.2 million. Of those funds we're recommending that a portion, \$17 thousand go to mental health, to expand those services, Hammond Legal Aid, We Care from the Heart, Meals on Wheels and then a big chunk of it is going to economic development for their new program to help the small businesses here in the city of Hammond.

Councilman Kalwinski - So mental health, legal aid, economic development, and what were the other ones, Meals on Wheels and one more?

Owana Miller - We care from the Heart.

Councilman Kalwinski - What is that?

Owana Miller - We Care from the Heart is a senior service program. That's where they go into individual homes and assist the disabled individuals resident.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES cont.

Councilman Kalwinski - Who runs that and where are they out of?

Owana Miller - They are out of Downtown Hammond. Kim Hunt is the Executive Director.

Councilman Kalwinski - Okay, thanks.

Owana Miller - And then, the ESG dollars is the \$635 thousand, and that we have for First Baptist Church who runs the rescue mission, the Claude Street Shelter, Continuum of Care, Greater Hammond. And that's where you got the total of \$1.892492 dollar amount.

Councilman Emerson - Within the 20-09, one of the applicants is Continuum of Care Network out of Gary, Indiana?

Owana Miller - Yes, the Continuum of Care is an umbrella over all of the shelters in Lake County. It's actually called a District One A so they're over our shelters in the city of Hammond. They just happen to be located in Gary. And they'll assist with the case management homeless preventions operations and administration.

Councilman Kalwinski - Then when the money is allocated, who decides where the money goes, and who decides how much to what particular business or entity that you're dispensing monies to?

Owana Miller - When it comes down to the business program, I'll let Anne Anderson chime in on that because that comes out of her department.

Anne Anderson - So, tomorrow we will start receiving online applications from businesses. The criteria is they have to be a for profit, independently owned business in the city of Hammond, with 50 or less employees

Anne Anderson - So tomorrow we will start receiving online applications from businesses. The criteria is they have to be a for profit, independently owned business within the city of Hammond, with 50 or less employees. Along with the application they have to submit a profit loss statement from the beginning of this year to date to show a decrease in profit and they will also be submitting some financial documents to back that up. Once we receive all that information we will be going through each application and deciding on their need up to \$10 thousand.

Councilman Kalwinski - And did the business already get applications or do they have to find the application online somewhere? How does that happen?

Anne Anderson - We put in a press release last week, it will be available online at the gohammond website tomorrow morning. And we've been fielding many, many calls in the past four days in our office, so we're ready for them.

Councilman Kalwinski - Perfect, thank you.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES cont.

Council President Woerpel - All in favor? All against?

AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

20R-09 A Resolution Recognizing and Honoring Roosevelt Moore Jr. for his contributions as an Educator and Coach with the School City of Hammond

Councilman Tyler, supported by Councilwoman Alexander, moved for adoption.

Councilman Tyler - This is a resolution honoring Roosevelt Moore Jr. for his Contributions as an educator and Coach. He started off at Morton High School and has been at Hammond High School for the past ten plus years. Was an assistant coach first, for football, and then later became a head football coach and recently resigned. He and his family are getting ready to move out of the area. Before he makes the move down to Florida I wanted to honor him for all the work he's done for the city of Hammond in general but specifically at Morton High School and Hammond High School. As I said before, he's a 2001 graduate of Hammond High. He's mentored, educated, has assisted hundreds of students coming through those two high schools. And so if possible I would like to suspend the rules to allow Roosevelt Moore Jr. to say a few words.

Councilman Kalwinski - Second.

Council President Woerpel - All in favor? Opposed?

AYES: ALL

Roosevelt Moore Jr. - I would like to say I appreciate the award. It's not really what I was looking for when I got into to it. I'm from Hammond. Went to Hammond High. When I came back I really wanted to help out and give back to the youth as much as I can and coaching and teaching was my best opportunity to do that. I'm really humbled by the experience and helping young men reach their full potential. I couldn't do it without some of the great guys that came from Hammond like Coach Tyler, David Moore, Keith Harris, the Athletic Director Larry Moore Jr., we had Officer Sean Garrison helping us, so it was a lot of Hammond guys showing Hammond students what they could become. So, I appreciate this honor and thank you guys.

Councilman Spitale - Mr. Moore, you've done a great job for Hammond High and I wish you the best.

Councilwoman Alexander - I just want to congratulate Roosevelt on taking and embarking on a new journey but also for his dedication to the youth of our city so thank you Roosevelt for everything that you've done . I appreciate it.

Councilman Kalwinski - That goes for the entire city. Well deserved and enjoy your Florida adventure.

Council President Woerpel - If you're retiring you're gonna love it, so.

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilman Tyler - I just want to say one more thing, if I can. It's been a pleasure working with Roosevelt for the past fourteen years as I've served as an assistant Coach at Hammond High as well. One of the most important things I learned from him was it wasn't always about X's and O's and winning football games, he really tried to make sure that the young men that we were coaching knew their full potential, and rose to that and so I have a few testimonials that I'll add to the minutes to reflect some thoughts from some of the players that he's coached and the impact that he's made on their lives. Roosevelt I'll make sure that you get a couple copies of those as well. You sent several players on to play football in college but more importantly they've gone on to become great men and great leaders back in the Hammond community. So I think that's a testament to your leadership and to your vision. And nothing but well wishes to you and your family down in Florida.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Rakos, Woerpel

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 RESOLUTION NO. R09 ADOPTED

20R-10 Resolution of the City Council of the City of Hammond Authorizing the filing of the CARES-ACT Application and Designating Signatories for Payment Vouchers on Letters of Credit for the CARES-Act Programs

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

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Tyler, moved to amend out the name "Garner" and replace with "Flores".

The Council Coordinator read the entire resolution in its entirety.

Council President Woerpel - Is this in addition to the ordinance or is this like what we have to do once that ordinance passes.

Owana Miller - Basically this resolution just gives us the authorization to apply for the funds that we have been awarded.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Rakos, Woerpel

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 AMENDMENT ADOPTED

RESOLUTIONS cont.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Rakos, Woerpel

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R10 ADOPTED
(as amended)

20R-11 A Resolution Authorizing the Hammond Police Department to apply for a 2021
Comprehensive Highway Injury Reduction Program (CHIRP) Grant

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

Councilman Spitale - Funds are provided for the purpose of preventing highway injuries and fatalities. This consists of seatbelts, drunken driving and excessive driving. This grant does not require any matching funds on the part of municipalities. The grant is requested for the amount of \$159,500. The city of hammond must complete the application in order to be awarded to get this grant.

Councilman Kalwinski - Thank you, Councilman Spitale, I was wondering how much they were applying for because it's not in the resolution. I'm wondering if we need that in print.

Councilman Spitale - You don't have that in the resolution, Councilman?

Councilman Kalwinski - I don't see it. Oh, wait, I do see it. My oversight, thank you.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Rakos, Woerpel

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R11 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilwoman Alexander - I just would like to congratulate the entire class of 2020 on getting ready to embark on their new journey. I also commend the School City of Hammond for a job well done in the midst of a pandemic in providing education to our students in the city and kudos to those teachers who have changed from teaching in the classroom to teaching online. A job well done. As well as the cafeteria workers that (unclear) breakfasts every day for those students.

Councilman Rakos - I want to let everyone know who works for the city, especially the guys that were working the storm this weekend. Cash Charities wants to thank the Hammond Public Works and join us at Madvek's on

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Rakos - Friday, May 29th from 10:30 to 12:30 for an appreciation hot dog or polish sausage. Lunch donated by Cash Charities and they also have their yard signs which all proceeds go to charity. (Unclear) for PPE for front line workers

Councilman Torres - I'd just like to apologize to Coach Roosevelt Moore for the Resolution 20R09. For some reason I was disconnected from the meeting at the time of roll call so I was that absent vote but I too would like to honor him. It's well deserving for anybody that spends that much time with the kids in the schools. I don't know how to amend it but that would be a unanimous vote. But I was cut off the air, so my apologies.

Council President Woerpel - Can he be added, Atty. Berger?

Council Atty. Berger - Yeah, that would be the right thing to do.

Councilman Emerson - I too was thrown off the internet during the minutes, I believe, and maybe the claims so if my vote was missing I would vote in favor of those two.

Council President Woerpel - I had those down as 9 to nothing votes.

Councilman Emerson - I do have another item. As if enough didn't happen over the weekend, we had a car hit Dairy Bell in the 4th District. No one was hurt. One employee was thrown around. I saw the video. I believe that was Saturday after the rain. Anyway I met with the owner and discussed how to make the business safer with the installation of some kind of barriers on the front, mostly on Calumet Avenue. There is a large rock on 171st Street. You know, the owner would like planters etc., but I'm not an engineer. I'm not gonna quibble over what kind of barrier but if a car got through and hit the building, people, even though they social distance, stand in line for ice cream and, you know, the worst case scenario, you know what that would be. It's further complicated by INDOT runs that section of Calumet Avenue. So I called INDOT and they want, their engineers want to look at that situation on that corner since Calumet is primarily, I think, what needs some attention. Well their engineers will look at it. I also called Engineering and the Street Department regarding something we could do even though INDOT is involved. I'm working with Engineering to try to put up some kind of barrier, however, it is further complicated, you wouldn't think it would be this complicated by the frozen infrastructure money, as you know, but I do think that because they are staying in business and with all that said, it would be great, due to the Covid virus where everything's frozen, to get something to have some kind of barrier put up, provided INDOT agrees. That's the situation as it stands. No one was hurt but we got to hope nobody tries to run the red light or whatever they try to do, or a medical emergency while you're driving. It's probably one of the few places, at least in the 4th and probably the city, where people stand in line, pre-virus on a normal day, to get their ice cream. So that's kinda what we're up against there. Minor point but part of the weekend.

Council President Woerpel - Just to address your first thing is, obviously my Ipad didn't want to work tonight so my phone gets to points where words drag out and then when it catches up you guys talk real fast. So if I heard some that wasn't there and took a 9 to nothing vote.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Kalwinski - I feel the pain of all the people and businesses that went under water this past weekend. I too have been in that same circumstance several times before, spending \$3 thousand, like Marty Wielgos said earlier for a check valve or whatever the term is and having had that experience, but it was a large outlay of money and I know that this has been a torrential rain event several of them in May but I still can't think and wonder about how much we may have saved during this catastrophic rain or rains if we were putting more dollars in something not so sexy like underground work for sewers and water and separating lines. I know that the 1st District and I'm pretty sure most districts have not had their full amount of gaming distribution and so districts have not done underground work for probably eight years and I can't help but wonder if we had our full amount of gaming dollars per district during those eight years how much more we could have done underground with sanitary sewers, water lines, that may have saved a few houses, a few streets, or a few businesses, in this catastrophic event. I'm just asking the Council to rethink and their priorities about the budget and their gaming dollars and how much you want to keep in your district because it takes a lot of money to spend on underground work. No one sees it but what it does is help prevent some more of these flooded basements and properties. So that's just a cautionary note on what to look forward to in our next budget, when it's gonna be a difficult budget, and yet clearly a priority is infrastructure that includes underground work with sewers for sanitary water lines.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Laurie Czulno - Delighted to see that all are well. Our neighborhood was without power due to the storm. Without power our LIFT Station could not run and could not assist emptying sewers. The Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission told me that Hammond is the only municipality in the area without permanent generators at their pump stations. I was told we have portable generators. To my knowledge none was brought out.

Marty Wielgos - I just want to assure you when the power was lost at that station we immediately had a generator there. So that station was down for a very short period of time, maybe 20 minutes. That is part of what we're doing at the District. We're doing a \$14 million upgrade on our electrical. But we have our pumping stations well covered.

Owana Miller - Was contacted by the Indiana State Department of Health and they're going to be conducting a second Covid-19 drive thru testing site at Miller School, 6530 New Hampshire on May 28, 29 and 30 from 9 to 6. This will be the only testing site on those days in Lake County. They are encouraging everyone to get tested.

Council President Woerpel - Is there a number they can call if they don't hear back?

Owana Miller - No, I don't, but I can get one and make sure it's published.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

Councilwoman Alexander, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to adjourn

AYES: ALL



Dave Woerpel, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:



Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 6:35 p.m.

cb