The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on November 23, 2020 in the Hammond City Council Chambers.

Council President Dave Woerpel presided.

City Clerk Robert J. Golec 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

I wanted to give an update on where we stand in regards to our customer communities and also talk about the Covid-19 Task Force that I was urged by Councilwoman Alexander last week to reimplement. A lot of Council people actually recommended that I start this Task Force up again. So I took your all's advise and we did our first broadcast last week and now it's in the reformation of the Covid-19 Task Force and we plan to meet weekly on Wednesday's, obviously the Council is invited if you want to, just get the details from I.T. We plan to air this live on gohammond's Facebook page so that the public will be able to see it as well, and talk about where we are in regards to Covid-19 in the City of Hammond. I know Scott Miller, Superintendent of Hammond Public Schools plans to be on there himself which is nice, so we'll be able to update in regards to the schools as well. We usually get a real good crowd watching that so I think it's a good opportunity for us to get the word out on how Hammond is dealing with Covid-19. And also in regards to last weeks water rate increase that was passed unanimously by the Hammond Council, I've since met with the Mayor of Whiting. I have meetings coming up with Griffith, Highland and Dyer to talk to them about ... and we've had remonstrances filed by all of them. We expected that. You may have received paperwork. I'm not sure if the Council got copies or not. We received copies on behalf, which is required for our customer communities if they wanted to remonstrate against the rate increase they had to file that within five days. So that was not unexpected, if you guys got copies of that. I just wanted to let you know we did as well and that was completely expected. So, I am available to answer any questions in regard to Covid or in regards to the water rate increase or any other questions you have and then obviously when the Data Center comes up and then when the resolution you have pending before you comes up, I'll probably speak on those issues as well.

Council President Woerpel - I just want to thank you, in these unprecedented times, it's been nine months now where we not missed a meeting, and I appreciate you giving us our updates during the meetings and we plan on continuing until this is over with. We welcome your comments before the meetings. Does anybody have any questions concerning anything the Mayor brought up. One thing I will add to what the Mayor said is we should have .... you all should have been e-mailed that packet of what he's talking about, as far as the customer communities. The remonstrance, they were probably sent late.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor McDermott - If the customer communities did not send us that written remonstrance, they would not have been able to appeal the rate increases. So they had to do that within five days. And they all, every community, specifically reached out to myself or Corporate Counsel and said, "We're not trying to go to war with you guys. We want you to know we're filing this because we have to file within five days." I'd like to point that out, that this was totally expected. It's just part of the process we are going through right now. I hope at the end of the day to be able to reach a deal with the customer communities to bring up their .... you know, to bring their rates up to our rates over the next couple of years. If we could avoid litigation doing that, I think it's a great resolution. This is different because when we dealt with this litigation with Chicago Heights, Chicago Heights, all due respect, even thought they're our partner in Illinois they're not our neighbors as Munster and Highland and Griffith, and Dyer, and Whiting are our neighbors. And it's a lot different, I think, dealing with you neighbor than it is dealing with a business transaction between communities in two different states.

Councilman Kalwinski - Did all Indiana customer communities enter a remonstrance?

Mayor McDermott - Yes, sir. They did. I'm not sure .... the interesting .... with Illinois also, no. This is an interesting question, Councilman Mark, I'm glad you asked this. You know, we talked about how all Indiana contracts were tied to the rates Hammond residents pay, they are. And then we talked about how Illinois communities aren't gonna be affected by that rate increase, well, we forgot about two Illinois communities that were pegged to the rate that Hammond residents pay. Lansing, South Holland and Lynwood. These communities got a deal from us about three or four years before we started changing the way we do business and water. They got a real good deal from us, especially in regards to Illinois communities. They were pegged to Hammond rates and Hammond rates were next to nothing, which means they were buying our water for next to nothing, just like Indiana communities, and marking it up a lot and making money. Well, because of what the Hammond Council and the Mayor did last week, those contracts are affected in Illinois as well and we did not get a written remonstrance from them. By the way, in Illinois, $1.90 for a thousand gallons of water is nothing. Illinois pays so much more for water than Hoosiers do, so, you know, we haven't received anything from them. Then, as far as Chicago Heights, our business partners in Illinois that sell water for Hammond water, they have not been effected by this at all. I guess the long way to answer your question, Councilman Mark, is all Indiana communities did file a remonstrance but the two that are affected in Illinois did not.

Councilman Kalwinski - Were they given formal notice or were they required to give formal notice of the increase?

Mayor McDermott - Yes, sir. They were.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to accept the minutes for November 9, 2020 and November 16, 2020 and place on file. AYES: ALL

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to approve claims from November 6, 2020 through November 18, 2020. Claim #5355 through claim #5578, inclusive.

ROLL CALL VOTE (claims)
AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Rakos, Woerpel
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried 9/0/0 CLAIMS APPROVED

PUBLIC HEARINGS
None

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to place the letter submitted by George Stoya on file. AYES: ALL

Councilman Tyler - I would like to go on record and give condolences to the family of Camellia Lynette Ridgell Robinson. She was a long time resident of the 3rd District. There's actually a street named after her father in the 3rd District as well, so she was very much an integral part of my life growing up and I know a lot of people to even ... Councilwoman Alexander, I'm guessing she's going to say a few words too. So just wanted to share my condolences with her family and everybody whose life she touched, not just in Hammond, but across Northwest Indiana, through the good work that she was doing.

Councilwoman Alexander-Just like Councilman Tyler said, definitely want to give condolences to the Ridgell Robinson families in the loss of Camellia. She was definitely an intricate part of a lot of our lives growing up. We grew up with her daughters and my sincere condolences to them and their children, and just the Hammond community, and the Smith Bizzel Warner family. Because she's done so much even with Hammond Day and providing different dinners for our senior citizens, helping with that, and she's gonna be extremely missed. So I wanted to get that out of the way before I talk about Covid, of course. So I do send my condolences to her family. Secondly, of course as I do come with the Covid numbers last week, I told you we were at an additional 784 cases. This week that number has grown again. For 46320, an additional 158 cases. For 46327, we have an additional 127 cases. For 46323, we have an additional 262 cases. For 46324, we have an additional 297 cases. For 46394, we have an additional 151 cases. That's a total of 994 cases. We are in a Holiday week, this is Thanksgiving week and I just want to remind our residents that we know that you'll probably celebrate with your families. But please be mindful that Covid is real and it affects all ages. It does not have a name on it, it affects us all. Some it affects mildly, some it affects not so mildly, and it can be fatal. But at the end of the day, please wear your mask, social distance as much as possible. At this time, Happy Thanksgiving to everyone. You're in my thoughts and prayers as we continue to battle with Covid 19. But like I said, these numbers are continuing to go up. Mayor thank you for getting the task force back started. I'm going to continue to hold you to your word, but I also want to remind, regardless of what the Governor does, we can still do something more in our City if these numbers keep rising the way they are. Thank you.

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilwoman Venecz- As the Councilwoman was talking about Covid-19, we are not going to have any Community or Crime Watch meetings during the month of December. The facilities that we normally use to have our meetings are not available to us during this pandemic. So we just recommend that everyone please wear your mask, wash your hands, socially distance during this holiday season. Please listen to the experts, don't gather in large groups, please protect yourself. And you can go to the Hammond Indiana Police Department's Facebook page. Edison Community Watch has a Facebook page and you can get some helpful information. So as I always say, community is not just about me, it's about us. So be sure to make the call if you see anything that just does not seem right. Thank you.

Council President Woerpel- As far as Committee Reports go, a couple of meetings ago we created a committee of the Capital Improvements Board. Did you guys happen to name a chair of the committee between the three of you that were appointed?

Councilwoman Venecz- I'll give you an update. That's what you're looking for?

Council President Woerpel- I couldn't have said it better myself.

Councilwoman Venecz- Yes, I did attend that meeting and it was quite an education, to say the least. Dean Button, our City Engineer, did a wonderful job of explaining in detail what it takes from beginning to end on a project and there are a lot of details that I, for one, as a Council-at large, and never having to spend a dime on a project in the City of Hammon, I was not aware of all these little intricacies. So, as I said, it was quite an education. We are meeting again December 7th. There we will have a... we'll be here in the Council Chambers. We will have a work study session at 5pm and then the meeting will be open to the public beginning at 6 pm. I have gotten a couple of calls from residents about projects that they are interested in and one of the calls was with regard to a project that is already on the list. It's been designed, it didn't have a dollar figure on it just yet. I wasn't at liberty to go into detail with this resident but at least his project was on the list. I did get another call from another gentleman up in Robertsdale who has been waiting for some curbs to be fixed and I've explained to him the procedure on that they don't fix curbs unless the street is being redone, but I think he wants to hear a definitive answer from somebody in more authority, than me, anyway. So I suggested that he attend the meeting. So if any resident has any questions about any project that they are interested in or just to learn about some of the projects that are in the hopper, I mean, I went to this meeting kind of thinking... and I know I'm talking a lot, I'm sorry. I went to this meeting thinking we kind of start with a clean slate. And oh, that's not the way it was at all. But very, very, interesting and very educational and I'm looking forward to more of the meetings. Thank you.

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Kalwinksi- Can the public attend via Zoom?

Councilwoman Venecz- Yes.

Councilman Kalwinski- And how do they get that number?

Councilwoman Venecz- It will be posted on the legal notice.

Councilman Kalwinski- Thank you.

ORDINANCE 3rd READING - FINAL PASSAGE
None

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

20-30 Ordinance Establishing Economic Improvement District and Authorizing and Approving Other Actions with Respect Thereto

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading by title and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with public hearing on December 14, 2020.
AYES: ALL

Mayor McDermott- I appreciate you considering this Ordinance. This is in regards to an economic improvement district that we hope to put around the second data center. It is being built right next to our first Data Center. The hope is one day to have multiple data centers and not just two. But right now, it appears that the first data center has been widely successful. There's a proposal for a partnership between the City of Hammond and the development group for the data centers for the second phase, we're in discussions right now between them and us and I appreciate you considering this ordinance. It's a big ordinance and there's a lot to review in there.

RESOLUTIONS

20-20 A Resolution Approving a Certain Preliminary Access Agreement Between the City of Hammond, Indiana and the City of Joliet, Illinois for Joliet Water Facilities

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

Council President Woerpel- Kevin, is this Allison here on Zoom?

Mayor McDermott- Yes, she's the Public Utilities Director for the City of Joliet, she's monitoring this right now, Mr. President, if you don't mind.

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Council President Woerpel- Go ahead.

Mayor McDermott- Thanks. We're in competition to be one of two suppliers of Lake Michigan water to the City of Joliet. And this is a proposal that's pending before the Joliet Mayor and the Joliet City Council and they're gonna decide between Hammond or the City of Chicago to supply their water beginning around 2030, 2031 continuing for 125 years thereafter. This is just... If you let me go through a couple of important points I think we should consider. Joliet's aquifer, which is where they receive water, will be out of sustainable maximum daily water by 2030. So obviously, they're not adjacent to the lake like we are and you know they rely on their aquifer to supply their water needs and they're projected for that waster to go dry. So that's a big Community with surrounding communities obviously, this is the number one concern of the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Joliet, right now. Joliet did a research into alternative water supplies, which river water was discussed, other aquifer in the area, we looked into Lake Michigan alternatives and basically Joliet settled on two possible sources of water in the future, which will be the Chicago Water Company, which is finished water or a raw water supply out of Hammond, Indiana. Basically what this would be is a pipeline that goes from Lake Michigan to the City of Joliet. $1.2 billion dollars project at this point. We've dealt with issues like this in the past. We had dealt with something called the J.A.W.A. out of Illinois 10 years ago. I was Mayor at the time and it was like dealing with a hydro. There were so many different bosses. We're dealing with multiple mayors on the South side of Chicago, and it was just hard to like understand who was calling the shots. I don't even think they knew who was calling the shots. And the thing about this proposal, that makes a lot more sense for us, this is being driven by one city by the Mayor of Joliet, quite frankly, the Joliet City Council, which makes it much easier for us to deal with one point of contact versus the J.A.W.A., which was multiple points of contact. I said earlier we're in competition with Chicago, so we might not be chosen. This is something that we need to show the City of Joliet and the Mayor that we're interested in this proposal and they have to choose us. So just because you pass this Resolution doesn't mean that this is definitely gonna happen. We're in competition with Chicago and the Joliet Council will be meeting on December 17th to decide. Chicago has agreed to have their City Council to show commitment by that meeting, in other words, the Chicago City Council and the Mayor doing what we're asking the Hammond City Council and the Mayor to do right now. So that we can show the same commitment. Joliet plans to enter into a J.A.W.A. type agreement with the small communities surrounding Joliet and the raw water will only serve Joliet and those communities. So it's... what's Joliet 60 miles away, 48 miles away? We also made sure that Joliet agreed, through a contract, not to sell water with any of our potential customers. We don't wanna get into a situation where we're planning to sell water to a community and Joliet says, "Hey, we got cheaper water coming. We plan to sell it to you." So we negotiated those terms with Joliet as well. Joliet estimates that raw water to be approximately 30 million gallons a day if it's only Joliet that signs on or up to 60 million gallons a day for a regional water commission would serve the communities of Joliet and the communities around Joliet if they get the max 60 million per day that still would be smaller than the Hammond Water Company to put it in perspective. We're still gonna have more daily output than Joliet would have, but it's fairly significant source of raw water in the City of Joliet. Joliet plans to build a filtration plant in Joliet so it will be a pipeline of raw water that goes from Hammond all the way out to Joliet and they would filter it in Joliet and sell the raw water to, obviously, their customers and the communities surrounding them. City of Hammond, if this all becomes a deal, finalized and agreed upon by both parties at the end of 2020. The City of Hammond will receive a $250,000 dollar payment upon signing of the preliminary agreement. We will also be

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - reimbursed for all of our legal and other fees to date, there are quite a few. I mean, we've been working hard on this proposal. If the long termed agreement is signed it will be a 99 year term, plus a renewal of 25 years, at that point we agree to assist... Joliet will build all infrastructure at their cost, including a pumping station, the rights of way, the land acquisition, Joliet pays for everything. We pay for our legal fees, technical fees, on our side we agree to waive the permit fees for Joliet in the City of Hammond. We also agreed to assist technically and to help them get their right of way just to get them out of Indiana. Once they get to the border they're on their own. We're done at that point. Long- term agreement, if we enter into a long-term agreement with them, we will receive $750,000 by July 31st, 2021. Upon review and approval of all the bidding documentation, City of Hammond Civil City, by the way, not the Water Department, will receive $1 million dollars and that's around 2023 or 2024 and then $2 million dollars per year 2025, 2026 and 2027, for a total of $6 million dollars. All said and done there's about $8 million dollars in fees that will be paid to the City of Hammond during the 2020's if we enter into a long-term agreement with Joliet and then every year beginning in 2032, the City of Hammond will receive a flat fee of $110,000 dollars per year, forever, basically, for 99 years and then 25 years and then whoever the Mayor and Council is, I'm pretty sure we will be done by then, will be negotiating with the City of Joliet over what the fees will be in years 126 on. So this is a deal we will never see the end of but the City of Hammond will see a significant amount of money coming to it during the 2020's and then $110,000 into perpetuity. The advantages for Joliet to take Hammond's agreement, they'll be in control of their own destiny, water wise. They won't be reliant upon the City of Chicago or the rates changed by the Mayor of the City of Chicago, but it is more expensive for them to do the pipeline and the filtration plant and all that, let's just be honest, but I think for the extra money that they have to spend in Joliet, it'll be well worth it because Joliet will be in charge of their own destiny and they won't be relying on aquifers and they wouldn't be reliant on the good will of the Mayor of the City of Chicago. So this proposal we have pending before you, I hope that not only you agree with it, you tell the City of Joliet, because they're watching, that we'll be good business partners. They would be just as much as Hammond's business partner in Illinois as Chicago Heights is right now. Chicago Heights is a good business partner for us. So this is a proposal I wanna thank Kevin Smith and Shanna Levinson and all the people that worked so hard on this agreement and getting it before you. And I think it's a great proposal and quite frankly, we're being a good neighbor because Joliet needs somebody's help right now. It's only Chicago that's gonna be there for them and Chicago has sort of got them at their mercy. So we're literally helping Joliet stay alive and I think that's a good thing to do. Thank you.

Council President Woerpel- Mayor, I hope to be on this side of the ground in 2030, but before I open it up for questions, I see there's an Allison on here, is there anything you would like to add? It doesn't have your last name up there so...

Mayor McDermott- Her name is Allison Swisher. She's the Director of Public Works for the City of Joliet.

Allison Swisher, Director of Public Works for Joliet, Illinois - Thank you, Mayor and Council, I appreciate having the opportunity to speak to you tonight. I think as the Mayor said, is, um, you know, a huge benefit to the City of Joliet as well as to the City of Hammond and we would look forward to being your partner, you know, in this project for the long-term if our city council does select that alternative.

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilwoman Venecz- This has nothing to do with the Hammond Water Department?

Mayor McDermott- Thank you. No. This is through the City of Hammond, much like our contract with Chicago Heights. This is City of Hammond negotiating with Joliet in this case and you know, obviously, Joliet, we would be very... if Joliet was 30 miles closer to Hammond, this would probably be a different type of conversation, but Joliet being 48 miles away, you know, this is us being good neighbors to somebody that needs access to raw water and we could really change their fortune by helping and cooperating with them. Because they're in control of their destiny. And the Mayor of Joliet, it's Mayor O'Dekirk right now, but future Mayors of Joliet could go to surrounding communities and sell water to them, Lake Michigan Water, that's filtered right there in Joliet. It's a great opportunity. So even though it's more money for Joliet, it's a great opportunity for them to redefine themselves for the next 125 years that this contract is valid for.

Councilman Kalwinski- This is for the Mayor. This may be premature and it is an exciting prospect for Joliet as well as Hammond, how many miles of pipe would be laid in Hammond and do we know what the route of the pipe at this point or is that just premature?

Mayor McDermott- In Hammond, 8 miles of pipe, Councilman Mark, and we do know the route. I'm sure it's in your packet. It's a preliminary, by the way.

Councilman Kalwinski- Okay, Thanks.

Mayor McDermott- You know, it's below ground, I imagine, it's below ground. So it'll be a lot of work and acquisition and once it's finally out of Hammond and in Illinois, it's pretty much on Joliet to make sure that it gets from the state line all the way to Joliet. And then think about the cost, I mean, Joliet is spending, if they do this proposal, they're spending over a billions dollars. I know a filtration plant alone is a hundred million by itself. So Joliet is going all in, but they're also establishing themselves as a water central for the next 125 years. So, I think it's worth it, personally, but man I do hope we get chosen and that's why I'm talking to you guys today.

Councilman Kalwinski- Thank you.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you, Councilman Mark. One more important point I think I need to point out right now is the inlet coming into the City of Hammond we've also made a deal with the City of Joliet Mayor O'Dekirk who I wanna thank. He visited the City of Hammond. We've done virtual meetings. He's done a great job on behalf of the citizens and if the Joliet residents are watching, I didn't know Mayor O'Dekirk before a year ago and he's outstanding, and I think he's doing great work for the residents of Joliet. I've been here before and this is way further than we ever got with J.A.W.A. and that took years. So, like, the fact that they made so much progress in one year is pretty amazing to me. But we did make a deal that if Hammond decided to build a second filtration plant, which I hope we're grappling with this decision down the road, Mayor O'Dekirk and this deal allows for us to tap into their inlet, which is huge, which will save us money down the road if we wanna build a second filtration plant instead of having a new line go out into Lake Michigan, we could tap off the line that they're gonna lay for the J.AW.A. So I want to Thank Mayor O'Dekirk for that.

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilman Kalwinski- The Inlet is roughly located where?

Mayor McDermott- Good question, Councilman, one mile offshore, which is where ours is. East of the current intake, Councilman Mark. So same area.

Councilman Kalwinski- Got it.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)
AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Rakos, Woerpel
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried 9/0/0 RESOLUTION NO. R20 ADOPTED

Mayor McDermott- Thank you, Hammond City Council, and I'll make sure Mayor O'Dekirk knows the news. I know Allison is on and I appreciate you being, and all the help you provided us with. Allison please tell the Mayor we said, "Thank you from Hammond."

Allison Swisher- Oh, thank you.

20R-17 A Declaratory Resolution Determining that a Certain Area of the City of Hammond, Indiana be Designated as the Oxbow Landing Economic Revitalization Area #2 to which Deductions from Assessed Valuation may be Requested by an Applicant to the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana pursuant to Indiana Code 6-1.1-12.1

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, tonight council will consider the Declaratory Resolution 20R-17 to declare and establish Oxbow Landing Economic Development Target Area Number Two as an Economic Revitalization Area. Also, the Council will schedule a public meeting confirming this Resolution on December 14, 2020.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)
AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Rakos, Woerpel
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried 9/0/0 RESOLUTION NO. R17 ADOPTED

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to reappoint Gregory Myricks to the Redevelopment Commission. His term expires December 31, 2020. If he gets reappointed his start date will be January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021. He's been on the Commission for nine years and has been Vice President for the last 4 years.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)
AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Rakos, Woerpel
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried 9/0/0 APPOINTMENT APPROVED

Council President Woerpel- Just as a reference, I've been asked a couple of times how long do we plan on doing meetings like this, as far as the governors orders and stuff like that, and I know it's a little bit harder to have meetings on Zoom and in the chambers and there's been some discussion of going back to all zoom meetings and my opinion is, I have no problem with coming here and having a meeting here in the council chamber, even though it might be a slight inconvenience, I still feel like we need to be present here. This is just me personally, that one of us needs to be present here so the public can see us and speak on issues too.

Mayor McDermott- I forgot to mention earlier, in regards to Covid, we have, because of the governors latest restrictions, placing us in the red, we have a capacity limit for indoor and outdoor events limited to 25 people. If you exceed 25 people, technically you have to have a plan approved by the Board of Health. So we've submitted plans in regards to the Sportsplex Shepherd Center, the Civic Center, really mostly for the Sportsplex, which has leagues which are legal under the governors orders, we've also submitted to the Health Department for and those have been approved by the way, we've also submitted to the Health Department for approval of the tree lighting ceremony that's been scheduled outside and quite frankly, probably gets more than 25 people in the Christmas Parade, which is outside and definitely gets more than 25 people. We haven't heard back whether or not those events are approved. If they're approved we still have the option to not have it or have it, it's up to us. If they're not approved, we don't have options, so we have put in for approval for the Christmas parade and for the tree lighting ceremony and we're waiting to hear back. But the Sportsplex has been approved with the Shepherd Center and the Civic Center from what I heard. Okay, so the possibility is they allow us to go forward as far as the Health Department's concern and it's up to us, we could still deem it unsafe, I imagine, that's something we need to talk about with the Covid Task Force or the Health Department to say, " no", and if they do, then it's over at that point, we have to cancel the ceremony. Thank you.

Councilwoman Venecz- And the tree lighting is this Friday, correct?

Mayor McDermott- Yes, I think it's Friday.

Councilwoman Alexander- Maybe this is an option we can think about, maybe we can just... if you do have it, have it virtually. I mean so many things happen virtually, we have our devices to be able to hold it on gohammond like they do any other event that we have. That's another option and the residents can still see it

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilwoman Alexander cont. - without actually physically being there. That's also an option maybe even for the parade, no residents on the streets, but we can stream it so we can actually see something still going on so just something to put it out there as an option.

Mayor McDermott- Councilwoman Katrina, I know the plan is for the virtual tree lighting. I think that's totally feasible and quite frankly more people may watch it virtually than would actually show up to City Hall to watch it. I think that having a virtual parade is a lot tougher. Parades are expensive. Part of a parade is a band and the bands may not participate if, you know, so I think that if we were not given permission by the Board of Health, I don't think the parade can go forward. The tree lighting ceremony could definitely easily be converted virtually and we're gonna still be on gohammond.tv like we do most events. So regardless, we'll still do the tree lighting ceremony even if we're denied the occupancy by the Lake County Health Department, so I appreciate the recommendation.

Councilwoman Alexander- No problem, Mayor. And if I.T. wants any more ideas, I'm more than welcome to talk to them about anything they need.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION
No one spoke.

Councilwoman Venecz- Before I make the motion to adjourn, I'd like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving no matter how you choose to celebrate this year, just please be safe. Happy Thanksgiving and God's blessings.

Councilwoman Venecz moved to adjourn. AYES: ALL

Dave Woerpel, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:

Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 6:45 p.m.
dw/cb

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk