

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on August 9, 2021 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

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

ELECTRONICALLY PRESENT: None

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - Good evening, Council. Happy to be here. Unfortunately, Mayor Tom was not available this evening so he asked me to give you a few messages. So I'm happy to do that. I'm gonna keep it short though. I know that makes you happy, I'm sure. We released a press release this morning so I just want to read the first paragraph and then we'll talk briefly about it. "Hammond, Indiana, Mayor Thomas M. McDermott, Jr. has notified all city and city related entities that a city wide boycott of Pepsi and Pepsi related products will take place unless there is a resolution between Pepsi management and Teamsters Local #142, whose drivers are on strike against the company. We've been good to Pepsi. We do a lot of business with them. But I can't, in good conscience, continue to be a customer if they aren't using Union drivers. If Pepsi management can't resolve their differences with the Union by Friday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, Hammond will begin using Coke and we will terminate all of our Pepsi contracts." Obviously, it's a ..... there's an issue over Healthcare benefits with the Teamsters and Pepsi. We have long been known as a city of supporting Union workers so I'm sure that this doesn't surprise too many here. But we just released this this morning. So Pepsi is on notice. I don't know how serious they're going to take City of Hammond's attempt to get them to do the right thing, but that's exactly what we are trying to do, is push them in the right direction. Mayor Tom has also asked other communities and other groups to stand with us in the fight and make the same proclamation as we are. So, we'll see if anybody else steps up. Besides that, I just wanted briefly to mention, you know, we had WHAM on Saturday evening, technically Saturday going into Sunday. It started at midnight. It's the Whiting Hammond After Midnight ride. We had about one thousand bicyclists at this event. It was amazing. I want to thank a lot of the Council folks that came out and supported, and helped, and gave water, and just participated at any level. There was a lot of Port Authority special events, a lot of employees that stepped up to make this happen. The Hammond Police Department, if you did the ride, there were police everywhere working with us to stop traffic and let the bicycles through and direct us, make sure we go the right direction. We did have one spot where it got a little confusing and there was one incident where a few of us, including myself, kind of went down a different path, but in the end it was a very successful event. It was thirty two miles altogether. I talked to at least ten different folks that were at the event, we were stopped at a train during the event, I don't know that any of them were from

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon cont. - Hammond. They were from other communities and they were just completely, or 100%, thankful that we put on this event and offered this to people that like to get on their bicycle and do these types of activities. So, very successful. Congratulations to all the people in Hammond that made it the success that it was. Lastly, just one update on Downtown Hammond. I'm sure everybody here, obviously, is aware that we been stepping up efforts over the last couple of years to really push Downtown Hammond in the right direction. Working with Jeff Speck, the renowned city planner, and we're gonna be making our streets a lot more walkable, more friendly, to pedestrians and just anybody that would live down there. But the most recent news is that the first residential project, which is the one at Sibley and Hohman, that would be located at the old JC Penny property, just received a \$2 million IEDC Grant to support that project. That is a 54 unit market rate residential building. It probably, will most likely, be the first one that will start construction in Downtown Hammond. If not in the Fall of this year, it will start in the Spring of next year. We also have two other projects, residential projects, in Downtown Hammond. One is the Bank Calumet Building, which I think Mayor Tom has updated you on a few different times. They also received a grant from the IEDC, theirs was in the amount of \$5 million. There's one other residential project that we're in the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of finalizing the development agreement. That would be a 200 unit residential building, market rate. All of these will be market rate. So, Downtown Hammond is certainly moving in the right direction. We've been taking these steps for quite a while to get it revitalized, if you will, and so another good news for Downtown. I've heard people say, by the way, rumors out there that we've talked about a Downtown Station in between Russell and Douglas. And I've heard people say that's not accurate. Just for clarification purposes, the Westlake Train Extension Project goes from the Gateway Station all the way to the Munster/Dyer border. That first project has two stations in Hammond. The Gateway Station that we're all aware of, and then the station At 173<sup>rd</sup> and Lyman. There is no station proposed in that project for Downtown Hammond proper. The Downtown Hammond Station that we are talking about, or platform, or whatever you would like to call it, has been something that we have talked to NICTD about many times. They've changed engineering for the track, knowing that this station will eventually be there. However, it will not be included in the Westlake Extension part of the project because the financing for that was done years ago and if you tried to change it you'd basically be starting over. But, all indications from NICTD and our friends at the RDA that have worked with us, are that that station will happen. It will be between Russell and Douglas and it will be a huge asset to what we are trying to accomplish in Downtown Hammond. So, I just want to put that out there for clarification purposes, but that's all I have for you this evening. If anybody has any questions, I'm happy to answer them.

Councilman Spitale - Did they have any problems with all the water that needs to come out of the basement at Bank Calumet?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - Right now there is a group that is actively pumping water out of the basement. The group that's gonna be potentially renovating the building is called Northwest Indiana Development. They hired a group to come in and pump the water out. That process is happening right now. So, how it's going, I think it's going well. But I think we all know there's a high water table in Downtown Hammond, so not only do you first have to get the water out, then you got to put a system in place so that it doesn't happen again. Unfortunately, nobody's been actively in the Bank Calumet Building for many years and this is what happens when nobody is around to keep an eye out. But it is in the process. They are pumping out water now and it is going well.

*Prepared by  
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Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Councilman Spitale - What's supposed to go in there?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - It will be about 105 units when it's all said. Somewhere between 105 and 110. The bottom floor of that building will be co-working space and maybe potentially a small café of something that will be used by not just the folks in that building but anybody in Downtown Hammond.

Councilman Spitale - I forgot, back a couple months ago, where those gonna be ones you could buy on these units or are these gonna be rental? How is that gonna work out?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - As of right now, as I understand it, all of them are going to be market rate rentals. Meaning, like, when people ask, like, what does market rate mean? We had a study done in Downtown Hammond and they broke down what it would be ... how much should be charged for market rate as opposed to say what somebody would call affordable housing, and so every agreement we have signed with each group has to sign an agreement said they're gonna charge market rate. Meaning it's gonna be a certain amount of money. I didn't answer your question though. What was the ..

Councilman Spitale - That was it. Same thing's that they're doing at the Penny's building also?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - Same thing. As far as I know, nobody is actually doing condo's in Downtown Hammond right now. Not to say that can't come up in the future at a different development. But the three that are being proposed right now all are apartments. They all kind of have different a different feel to them. So, I think each building will be attractive to certain demographics of people based on the amenities they're gonna have and other things they are offering at their site. I know they're all gonna be competing against each other for residents obviously, but they're also gonna have their own ways of separating themselves from the other two.

Councilman Torres -Speaking about pumping water, there was talk about a retention pond at Westlake, is that still in the works?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - It is, that's an active conversation we're having right now. We want to make sure, from the Hammond side, that whatever type of retention they're gonna be mandating as part of that development, that we're comfortable with it. What we don't want it to do is prohibit development in the future around the station. Because obviously, we believe if you plan properly and you take the appropriate steps you could have a lot of great economic development opportunities, retail and whatever else, around the station. So, we are having a conversation right now. Our City Engineer, Dean Button, talked about it staff this morning. We're working with NICTD on that. I know Brian Poland, our City Planner, is actively involved with that as well. I don't know that we have the final design or resolution for it, but we are working on it right now.

Councilman Torres - Okay, thank you.

Council President Woerpel - Phil, as far as Bank Calumet Building goes, which you spoke about, is that all good to go as far as a developer and everything they needed?

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - I would say the last step for them, based on the conversation I had with them. The city has, essentially has, a verbal agreement with them. However, there has to be a development agreement that has to come before the council before it will be officially approved. The IEDC has, obviously, granted them \$5 million through they're program. They are working with the banker's group that put together that \$25 million of money that they said it specifically will go towards transit development districts. I think the final step from them is to get approval form that bankers group. Then, obviously, whatever financing they're working on on the private side. It's a \$24 million development. So even with whatever the city's gonna do, and what the IEDC is doing, there's still quite a bit of money that they're gonna need to renovate that building and get it up to the standards they need for their market rate apartment building.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to accept the minutes from July 26, 2021 and place on file.

ROLL CALL VOTE (approve minutes)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 MINUTES APPROVED

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to approve the claims from July 21, 2021 through August 4, 2021. Claim #3643 through #3925, 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

Councilman Rakos- HUGS Cultural Committee is planning their Mexican Independence Day Parade, 5th annual, on September 19<sup>th</sup> starting at 1pm. Starting from Morton High School and more information will become available.

Councilman Tyler- I just want to announce that the First Tee of Lake County is once again hosting their Cow Patty Bingo. Uh it'll take place August 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2:30 pm at Lost Marsh Golf Course. They are selling tickets for

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

COMMUNICATIONS cont.

Councilman Tyler cont. - \$100 for a grand prize up to \$5,000, and \$20 tickets for a grand prize of \$2,000. Along with that, the Hammond Firefighters Association Local #556 will be hosting it's annual Burn Golf Outing on September 13<sup>th</sup> 2021 at Wicker Park. I know they're looking for sponsors to help with that event as proceeds will benefit Hoosier Burn Camp for kids. And the NAACP Hammond branch will be hosting their 2021 Freedom Fund Luncheon on Saturday, September 18<sup>th</sup> from 12pm to 3pm at the Dynasty. Tickets are on sale for \$50 but they also have a ton of different sponsorship packages. And then lastly, I want to remind the public that the City Council is hosting a Back to School Giveaway this Sunday at the Hammond Sportsplex. I want to thank all the Council people that have already contributed to that. We're on pace to give away about a 1000 book bags worth of supplies. So, exciting, just want to remind everybody that your children have to be present to receive that. We will be also giving away free haircuts. We have about ten barbers that are slated to be there too. The event will take place once again from 1 to 4 pm at the Hammond Sportsplex. I just want to go on record too for thanking all the Council people who have contributed, as well as Meijers, Nipsco/Nisource, Miss Print and Huhtamaki are the companies we received contributions from so far. I know that we have a few more that are outstanding. So, looking to do some more shopping. Thank you.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilman Torres - will be bringing out 21-25.

Capital Improvement Board - Councilwoman Venecz- The last meeting was August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Funding was approved in the amount of \$50,000 for Geotechnical Engineering Services. Funding was also approved in the amount of \$97,600 for Design Engineering for the State Line, cross street closures in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District from Highland to 165<sup>th</sup> Street. We also approved \$24,500 for a Fire Department siting study to determine the proper location of proposed new Fire Stations in the City of Hammond. Um, also, we approved \$105,000 for Engineering Services for the resurfacing of 165<sup>th</sup> Street from Columbia to Summer Street. The next meeting will be August 18<sup>th</sup>, with a work study session at 4pm here in the Council Chambers, with the meeting beginning at 5pm.

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz- I first of all, wanted to thank everyone who participated in National Night Out this past Tuesday. It was different here in Hammond. We didn't have the big party. But I know in our neighborhood there were several neighbors who sat outside and visited and a couple of the police officers came by so, it was a great opportunity not only to get to know your neighbors but also to meet some of the police officers who patrol our neighborhoods. So, if ever we get in a jam, we know who may be coming to help us as the result of our call.

Wed., August 11<sup>th</sup>; Community Watch at Mt. Zion Pleasant View Plaza; 1:00p.m.

Wed., September 1<sup>st</sup>; Edison C.W.; Edison School; 6:30 p.m.

Thur.; August 19<sup>th</sup>; Hessville C.W.; 6 p.m.; Jean Shepherd Center

Irving C.W.; Fri., September 3<sup>rd</sup>; 9:15 a.m.; Irving School

Whiting/Robertsdale C.W.; Thur., August 12<sup>th</sup>; 6:30 p.m.; Mascot Hall of Fame

COMMITTEE REPORTS cont.

Community and Crime Watch cont. - Councilwoman Venecz - Seems like everything is beginning to move forward now that things are beginning to open up a bit. Uh as usual if you see something, say something. Don't be afraid to call 911. Watch out for your neighbors. And uh they'll watch out for you if you watch for them. So, please call 911 if you see anything suspicious because community is not just about me, it's about us. Thank you.

ORDINANCE 3<sup>RD</sup> READING- FINAL PASSAGE

21-25 An Ordinance Reclassifying Certain Lands in the City of Hammond for Zoning Purposes and Amending Ordinance No. 8514 (An Ordinance Establishing a Zoning Plan for the City of Hammond Including the Regulations and Maps to Administer the Zoning Plan in Order to Provide for Orderly Growth and Development Within the City, All in Accordance with the Comprehensive/Land Use Plan, as Amended) for Property Commonly Known as 5047 Columbia Avenue, Hammond, IN 46327

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

Councilman Torres- Machine Works manufactures railroad car parts. This is just another expansion to their business. They've been there for 60 years now at that location. This will hire between 5 and 10 people and they need it to put their Lathe Machine to help them improve their railroad parts. Thank you.

Councilman Emerson- I would just have a comment. I had known Pete Nau and he is the owner of the business and his family for years and his father that owned the Hammond Machine works before Pete has done great things for the City of Hammond. And actually his grandfather prior to Hammond Machine Works. I believe owned the Hammond Boiler works and that's way before my time. But the whole family has done a lot for Hammond in general his father's name was Dean Nau. I wish Pete was here tonight but I'm sure that it is as it is. So, that's all. Thank you.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

ORDINANCE NO. 9514 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

None

RESOLUTIONS

None

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

21-27 For Variance of Use from Zoning Ordinance to Allow the Operation of an Automobile Quick Service and Tire Shop in a C-1 Local Commercial District located at 5604 Hohman Avenue within the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved for approval.

ROLL CALL VOTE (approval)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

BZA Z-21-18 APPROVED

.Councilwoman Alexander- I have the updated COVID numbers and vaccine numbers from last meeting for our COVID numbers. For 46320, we have additional 15 cases; 46327, we have an additional 15 cases; 46323, we have an additional 38 cases; 46324, we have an additional 27 cases; 46394, we have an additional 5 cases; that's an additional 20 cases from our last meeting this week we are up 100 cases. For vaccines we have 138 new vaccinated residents for 46320; for 46327 we have 106; for 46323, we have 190; for 46324, we have 195; for 46394, we have 108. We've seen an increase of 1% of newly vaccinated residents across the board. So, um I'm looking forward to just looking at the numbers as they go especially as we're getting back into trying to have some sense of normalcy. Um, kids are going back to school. Just making sure everybody is staying safe and protecting themselves especially with the new variant out. So, continue to mask up when you can and wash her hands and social distance as much as possible.

Councilwoman Venecz- There was a Mayor's Night Out that was scheduled for Wednesday, August 11<sup>th</sup> and that has been cancelled. Thank you.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

No one spoke

Councilwoman Alexander, supported by Councilman Tyler, moved to adjourn.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adjourn meeting)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

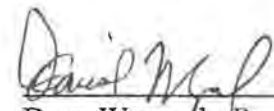
MEETING ADJOURNED

2021 HAMMOND COMMON COUNCIL ATTENDANCE RECORD OF ELECTRONIC AND PHYSICAL PRESENCE

	May	June		July		Aug		Sept		Oct	Nov		Dec		
	24	14	28	12	26	9	23	13	27		25	8	22	13	27
Katrina Alexander	P	P	P	P	P	P									
Dan Spitale	P	P	P	P	P	P									
Janet Venecz	P	P	P	P	P	P									
Mark Kalwinski	E	P	P	P	P	P									
Pete Torres	P	P	P	P	P	P									
Barry Tyler	E	P	E	P	P	P									
Bill Emerson	P	P	P	P	P	P									
Scott Rakos	P	P	P	P	P	P									
Dave Woerpel	P	P	P	P	P	P									
Initials	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	<i>DJG</i>								

E=ELECTRONIC  
 P=PHYSICALLY PRESENT  
 A=ABSENT

If the member qualifies for an exemption from the "Consecutive - 50" requirements, draw a circle around the E for that meeting/ member.

  
 Dave Woerpel, President  
 Hammond Common Council

ATTEST  
  
 Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 6:25  
 cb/dw

Prepared by  
 Robert J. Golec  
 Hammond City Clerk