

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on in the Hammond City Council Chambers and was available to be viewed at gohammond on Facebook, gohammond.tv live and per Zoom.

Council President Dave Woerpel presided.

City Clerk Robert J. Golec facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.

Moment of Silence was observed.

ROLL CALL

PHYSICALLY PRESENT: Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Emerson, Rakos, Woerpel

ELECTRONICALLY PRESENT PER ZOOM: Alexander, Spitale, Tyler

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

NOMINATIONS

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to suspend the rules to consider nominations for Council President and Council Vice President.

ROLL CALL VOTE (Suspend rules for nominations)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 RULES SUSPENDED

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, nominated Councilman Woerpel for Council President.

ROLL CALL VOTE (President)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 MOTION CARRIED

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, nominated Councilman Rakos for Council Vice President.

ROLL CALL VOTE (Vice President)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 MOTION CARRIED

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

NOMINATIONS cont.

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved to return to the regular order of business.

ROLL CALL VOTE (Return to Regular Order)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RETURN TO REGULAR ORDER

MAYOR’S ADDRESS

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - Good evening. Mayor Tom asked me to fill in for him today. First thing I want to talk about, is to announce that Mayor Tom, by Executive Order, has reinstated the mask mandate for the city of Hammond and all public buildings throughout the city. Stating this, “With the recent surge in Covid 19 cases, it is imperative that we do everything we can in city government to insure that government and city services continue for our residents. By instituting the mask mandate in city buildings we can do our part to slow the transmission of Covid 19 and give our employees and those that visit city buildings and offices the safest possible environment under the current circumstances.” This does not extend to private businesses, obviously. The mask mandate, right now, is in place until March 1st. At that time it will be looked at again. Obviously, everybody is aware that the Covid 19 cases have really spiked and so this, obviously, is appropriate, makes sense and hopefully will slow things down. And this, obviously, isn’t new to our employees as, you know, we went through, we had the mask mandate early on when Covid first started. We also have, by Executive Order, changed our Covid policy to meet the new CDC Guidelines that came out. Not gonna go through the entire policy, otherwise we’d be here a while. But, essentially, it’s very similar to our policy in the past. The CDC has now recommended that when somebody tests positive for Covid that they remain off for five days and if they have no symptoms after five days, they come back and then there’s certain requirements of wearing masks for a certain period of time if there was no mask mandate for example. So that’s essentially what the Executive Order’s gonna state. We created a policy, or a guideline sheet, for all the department heads that will be distributed for all of them. Any of the Council that is interested in having a copy of the policy, obviously, we’ll make sure that’s available to you. It’s a very short, as Corporation Counsel, Kevin Smith, called it, handy dandy sheet that people can keep nearby and make it a lot easier to know what to do if you do test positive for Covid or for example, somebody in your family tests positive for Covid as well. I have the official 1st Quarter 2022 Gaming Budget Distribution numbers. Everybody here will be receiving an official letter form the Mayor but I have a breakdown for you now I’ll be happy to share. For 2022, 1st Quarter Budget, the number was \$3,577,452.00 and obviously, I don’t think I have to ... I know the Council knows that these numbers are based on the last quarter of last year as we change the way we go about working with the numbers in the future. So that’s from the last quarter of last year, so that’s the number we start with and that distributes as such. Capital Improvement, which receives 62% of that distribution, will receive \$2,218,020. The Mayor’s Discretionary, which is 15% of that number, will receive \$536,617.00. Each District that also receive 15% of that number divided by the six districts, will receive \$89,436.00, and the Gaming Advisory Committee and the Rainy Day Fund which both receive 4% of that number will receive \$142,098.00. So that’s the official breakdown. Like I said, you’ll get a letter from the Mayor shortly. So with that, because we have that number, I also am able to

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon cont. - share what the Gaming Advisory Commission will have to distribute for grants this year. Last year we distributed \$307,544.00, obviously, with the pandemic the number was way down to what we've been able to do in the past. We knew it was gonna be much higher this time around, so this year it looks like we'll have approximately \$550,000.00 for distribution. Not quite as high as we'd hoped, but again, we're still having effects from the pandemic. I think it's affecting revenue in different parts of the city. The application period for any not for profit organization to apply is right now. So if you know of any not for profits that are in need for these dollars and this could be a very impactful grant for them and help them through, especially this very trying time in society. Please let them know to fill out the application now and get it to us now. The application period will end on Friday, February 25th. So we've got a little bit of time but there is some documentation that the Gaming Advisory Commission likes to have provided when you submit an application. So it would be nice to give them some time now to put all that together. The last thing I'll touch on, just Councilman Torres asked me to speak to, you know, salting throughout the city. We had fourteen salt trucks prepared to salt prior to the snow even starting. Plenty of salt, by the way. The city has a lot of salt. Obviously, the last couple winters, I think, have been a little light so we're doing great with our supply. We did do all the mains, all the sub-mains, all the important routes, anything with the hospital, the police department, fire department areas. I know there's been a few complaints which we'll get every year when there's a storm like this and, you know, after speaking to Public Works Director, Gary Gleason, the one thing to keep in mind is when it's below 32 degrees, obviously, salt is not as effective and so we're not going to be doing things like salting alleys and some other areas that maybe aren't as traveled on. However, if there is somebody that would like to contact the Mayor's Office and let us know that there is an issue that you would like us to look at out there, please let us know. I had somebody contact me this morning and say there's a street right by Montessori needed some additional salt for the kids, so Gary Gleason went out there right away and took care of it. So, if you have any complaints from constituents, please let us know. But at the same time, and I know you know this, salt only works so much in this type of weather, when it's this cold outside. So, we'll do the best we can but we obviously aren't gonna throw salt on just for the perception that it will work even though it can't. So, we're doing the best we can. But we know there's more snow coming Thursday and Friday and maybe a little on Saturday as well and we are fully prepared for that and our Public Works Department said all their trucks work very well and also a side thank you to the Sanitary Department, Marty Wielgos let the Public Works Group use three of their trucks through this process as well, which is what we should be doing as a city, is working together. When one group doesn't need the trucks, but in this situation Public Works does, that's exactly how it should happen. That's my report. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Council President Woerpel - On the Gaming Advisory Committee, is that a one time meeting, like once a year?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - No. I want to say last year we finalized the process in three meetings. I could be wrong, it might have been four. But my recollection is three. This year could be a little bit longer process being that we have more money. Last year we had to put a cap on the max grant that we could offer to not for profits because the number was lower than a typical annual distribution. So, I don't want to say it's gonna be exactly three meetings, it might be a little longer but I would say it would be in that, either three or four meetings will be my guess.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Councilman Torres - Thank you for addressing the salt issue. I did advise the complainant to call your office, the Mayor's Office. I don't know if she did today or not, but it was over the weekend. It's always an issue every year. But I know Public Works does the best it can and thanks for mentioning that after 32 degrees, below 32 degrees, salt is not as effective.

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - Yeah, I was also told, I should have mentioned that we did not have a lot of police reports, as far as accidents this year. It was actually way down, which is great news. But again, if there is a complaint, you did the right thing, Councilman Torres, have them contact the Mayor's Office. We will look at it and if it's something that could be addressed and taken care of, obviously we'll do that.

Councilman Kalwinski - Going back to the Executive Order on the policy change for coming back to work. The CDC has come under a lot of fire for not requiring a positive test to come back as well. Did we look at that at all? Are we gonna require employees to have a positive test in order to come back?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - The way the order is written, it does not require a positive test. Reality is this, it may take you as long as 72 hours to get a test and results, from the folks I've spoken to that have tried to get tested. The, I believe it's called the PCR test, hopefully I'm saying that right, we don't accept home tests when it comes to official testing because obviously there could be a lot of mistakes made when you are doing it yourself. So I would say we are following what the CDC is doing. If CDC changes their policy, I would hazard to guess that Mayor Tom would change the Executive Order and immediately switch it to a testing policy as well. A lot of it has to do with symptoms. So if you are symptom free after five days and when you come back, obviously you are going to be required to wear a mask for a certain period of time as well, and obviously we're always encouraging social distancing and everything else we can do.

READING OF MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to approve the minutes of December 13, 2021 and place on file.

ROLL CALL VOTE (approval)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MINUTES APPROVED

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to approve the claims from December 8, 2021 through January 10, 2022. Claim #1 through claim #231, 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

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Capital Improvement Board - Councilwoman Venecz- No meeting was held.

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz- Upcoming meetings:

Thur., January 20th ; Hessville Crime Watch; Jean Shepard; 6:00 p.m.

Tues., Jan 25th; Pulaski Park N.A.; Mohawks Club; 6:30 p.m.

As usual, if you see anything suspicious, please call 911, and most importantly, these days with the temperatures that we have, do not leave your car running with the keys in it. That’s an invitation for somebody to come and take it for a joyride. So, please don’t leave your keys in the car with it running. As always, if you notice any suspicious activity, please call 911 . Because community is not just about me, it’s about us.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING- FINAL PASSAGE

None

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

22-01 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: 5230 Hohman Avenue.

Councilman Torres, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a Committee Meeting on January 24th, 2022 at 5:15p.m. with an Intent to Consider on January 24th , 2022.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES cont.

Councilman Torres-This area known as 5230 Hohman Avenue, is where the fountain now stands. And all the ordinance does is reclassify this from an S-1 open space and recreational facility to a C-3 Central Business District to allow for the future development of Downtown Hammond.

ROLL CALL VOTE (1st & 2nd)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MOTION CARRIED

21-02 An Ordinance Amending Ordinance Numbers 7685, 8200, 8564, 8630, 8645, 8718, 8754, 9755, 8854, 8930, 9017, 9061, 9194, 9252, 9359, 9375, 9462, and 9470 also Known as Section 36.005 of the Hammond Municipal Code, Pertaining to Hammond is My Home Eligible Improvement Projects

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading

Councilman Rakos- I would like to be added as a sponsor to this ordinance.

Councilman Emerson- The crux of this ordinance is actually the addition of the Governor’s Parkway Project, which will be located in Hessville. So, that project will be located in Hessville and is something we’re looking forward to and its scheduled in the future. Let’s just say that. I think it’s a couple of years from now but, and it will be an addition to the community as one who has been stuck by trains in Hessville for a long time now. I support this

ROLL CALL VOTE (1st & 2nd)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MOTION CARRIED

RESOLUTIONS

None

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Council President Woerpel- I will entertain a motion to approve the Capital Improvements Committee. And the Gaming Advisory Committee. You want to do them both together or separately or? Just so everybody knows the people that signed up for the Capital Improvements Committee are Councilman Tyler, Councilman Spitale and Councilwoman Venecz. And the people that signed up for the Gaming Advisory Committee are Councilwoman Alexander, Councilman Rakos, a Councilwoman Venecz, and Marcus Mabry and Laurie Czluno.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Rakos, Supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to accept the appointments.

Councilman Emerson-Nothing personal, but I don't think for the Capital Improvements Board, any Councilperson should be on it. I have given it a lot of thought and it's nothing personal, but I think that it would be better if they were not on it for reasons that I have. I think we're political by nature, and I think that tending to prefer certain areas of the city might be inadvisable. So, it's hard... I have no objection to the Gaming Committee. So, under discussion, I mean, under the vote, because we're voting for both of them at once, I will vote for those, but if we did them separately, I would not approve of that vote. Thank you.

ROLL CALL VOTE (appointments)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 MOTION CARRIED

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to continue the Council Committee Assignments from 2021 to 2022.

ROLL CALL VOTE (committee assignments)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

No One Spoke.

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Torres, 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

2022 HAMMOND COMMON COUNCIL ATTENDANCE RECORD OF
ELECTRONIC AND PHYSICAL PRESENCE

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec			
	10	24	14	28	14	28	14	28	11	25	9	23	13	27	11	25	8	22	12	26	10	24	14	28	12	26
Katrina Alexander	E																									
Dan Spitale	E																									
Janet Venecz	P																									
Mark Kalwinski	P																									
Pete Torres	P																									
Barry Tyler	E																									
Bill Emerson	P																									
Scott Rakos	P																									
Dave Woerpel	P																									
Initials																										

AWG

- 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.

[Signature]

Dave Woerpel, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:

[Signature]

Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 7:05
cb/dw

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk