

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on May 12, 2025 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 observed

ROLL CALL

PHYSICALLY PRESENT: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Salinas, Emerson, Woerpel

ELECTRONICALLY PRESENT PER ZOOM: Tyler, Rakos

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor McDermott- Hi, how's it going? Thanks, Councilman Woerpel. It's good to see the Council. I'm giving you my report for May 12, 2025. I met with Councilwoman Venecz, and Councilman Spitale on the possibility of Hammond becoming AARP friendly city. They've done a lot of research on this. I think you guys will be hearing more about this in the future. National Day of Prayer was held over the last couple of weeks as well at the Dynasty Banquet Hall. I want to thank the Council Members for attending that as you always do, and for being in attendance. It was a really nice day. Ribbon cutting for Firehouse #2 occurred over the last 2 weeks also. Firehouse #2 is in Hammond's Robertsedale section. Councilman Kalwinski hosted that day. We had to have 300-400 people there that day. It was really nice. That new Firehouse is up and running. It was up and running before we cut the ribbon, but it was a really good day to see that happen in our city. I met with the CEO of NIPSCO in regards to data centers, Vince Parisi . Vince is a great guy, a normal guy. I know he's trying to do the right thing for Northwest Indiana. He is an important person for us as far as we need megawatts, and it's going to be up to NIPSCO on who gets those valuable megawatts. If we get them in Hammond, we could do a big deal, bigger than we've ever done before. NIPSCO's got a lot of proposals that they're considering right now. Ours is on there along with them. I think any chance we get to talk to the CEO of NIPSCO is a good opportunity for all of us. Hammond Police monthly Captain's meeting occurred. I met with the Captain's and Chiefs from the Hammond PD regarding crime stats, transit, personnel issues. Councilwoman Venecz and I also touched base regarding a variety of topics as we usually do. I met with the Sanitary District Officials over a proposed digital billboard Lamar wants to put up on Hammond Sanitary District Property. If that moves forward, it'll have to come before the Hammond City Council. We'll be talking to you about that if we're going to move forward. Last but not least, met with Councilman Scott Rakos, for lunch at Freddy's Steakhouse. It was a really good day. Resolutions by the Council, today you have a resolution before you sponsored by Councilman Dave Woerpel, 25R-10. I heard you all talking about it in regards of making a good faith offer for the purchase of Cooper Tire, it's like 7300, I don't know the exact address on Indianapolis Blvd. Another resolution also, coming before you in regards to the Economic Revitalization area. Port Authority bonds, I know we're talking about that introduction of ordinance, if you have any questions about that, I have details on me as well. 3 141st, I know Councilman Kalwinski pays close attention to that. The warehouse building on that property is having it's old exterior panels removed and the new exterior panels are already on the property ready for installation. It's

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.- going to be a major improvement on that property and to the neighborhood. It seems like things are moving in the right direction right now. I want to thank the council for all their support. If you have any questions, I'm available to answer them.

Council President Woerpel- Any questions for the Mayor?

Mayor McDermott- Thank you very much.

Council President Woerpel- Thank you.

COMMON COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP DRAWING

Councilwoman Venecz- Thank you, Mr. President. It has been 25 years since the Hammond Common Council has been offering 15- \$1,000 scholarships to our graduating seniors who live in Hammond and attend a Hammond High School. At this time, I will start with District 1, and we'll draw 3 names for District 1 and 2 alternates. My mistake, only 2 per District.

WINNERS

DISTRICT 1	ANNA DE LA TORRE	BISHOP NOLL
DISTRICT 1	JAIME LOZANO OROZCO	HAST
DISTRICT 2	MARCUS BROWSER	HAMMOND CENTRAL
DISTRICT 2	ORIANA NAVA	HAST
DISTRICT 3	BIANCA SOLANO	HAST
DISTRICT 3	GREGORY DOTSON	HAMMOND CENTRAL
DISTRICT 4	GIOVANI BAILEY-HANNAH	HAMMOND CENTRAL
DISTRICT 4	OPEMIPO ADEPOJU	HAST
DISTRICT 5	NYA DOTSON	MORTON
DISTRICT 5	JA'MYARA ELLIS	MORTON
DISTRICT 6	KAELYN FORD	MORTON
DISTRICT 6	EDUARDO ARCEO	MORTON
DISTRICT 2	LYILA VEGA	HAST
DISTRICT 2	BIANCA POINTER-THOMPSON	MORTON
DISTRICT 3	EMMET BYRNES SWIBES	HAST

ALTERNATES

DISTRICT 1	GISELE HURTADO	HAST
DISTRICT 1	RASHEL VALENZUELA	HAMMOND CENTRAL
DISTRICT 2	VERONICA JUDE ROSARIO	HAMMOND CENTRAL
DISTRICT 2	TA'SHON WILKERSON	HAMMOND CENTRAL
DISTRICT 3	DANTE MOORE	MORTON
DISTRICT 3	JASMINE BREWTON	HAMMOND CENTRAL
DISTRICT 4	LILY GONZALEZ	MORTON

COMMON COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP DRAWING cont.

ALTERNATES cont.

DISTRICT 4	AKIAYA GORDON	HAMMOND CENTRAL
DISTRICT 5	JOSHUA MORALES	HAST
DISTRICT 5	MATTHEW SHUTKO	HAST
DISTRICT 6	JORDAN NIX	MORTON
DISTRICT 6	ANTONIO CARRANZA	HAST
DISTRICT 2	LIZBETH GONZALEZ	BISHOP NOLL
DISTRICT 5	STEPHANY ARREGUIN	MORTON

Councilwoman Venecz- Thank you to all the students who applied. You will receive notification, and at the next meeting, you will be invited to come and accept your certificate. Thank you, thank you very much.

Council President Woerpel- Thank you

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Salinas, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to approve the minutes of April 28, 2025 and placed on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to approve the claims from April 24, 2025 through May 7, 2025. Claim #3748 through claim #4097, inclusive. In the amount of \$7,033,953.70.

ROLL CALL VOTE (claims)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

CLAIMS APPROVED

PUBLIC HEARINGS

25-10 An Ordinance to Appropriate Funds in the Hotel/Motel Innkeepers Tax Fund for Economic Development Purposes in 2025

Council President Woerpel- Does anybody wish to speak? (x3) Hearing none, public hearings are closed.

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Tyler- Sorry I'm not there in person, I have a work event tonight, but I do want to just go on record. We've had quite a few residents in the 3rd District over the past month or so, pass away. So I just wanted to go on record and give my condolences to the families of Mr. Robert Allen, Ms. Deborah Rancifer-Jones, and Minister Cheeks. All of you will be missed, and thank you for your contributions to the city. I know Mr. Robert

COMMUNICATIONS cont.

Councilman Tyler cont.-Allen was a long time employee of the City of Hammond as well. I just wanted to send my condolences out to those families. Thank you.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Capital Improvement Board- Councilman Salinas-The Capital Improvement Board met on May 5, 2025. We dealt with:

Item A- Funding Allocation #244- Median Modification of Florida Ave; J&J Newell; in the amount of \$32,208.33

Item B- Funding Allocation #245- 2025 Overlays Supplemental; Milestone Contractors; in the amount of \$265,000

Item C- Funding Allocation #246- Stateline Road Closures Change Order No. 3; Rieth Riley- in the amount of \$9,595.76

Item D- Funding Allocation #247- Repair Michigan Street Sink Hole; Grimmer Construction; in the amount of \$39,940.21

Item E- Funding Allocation #248- Lighting Modifications at Kennedy Bridge; Dunnit Bay; in the amount of \$55,873.26

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Upcoming meetings:

Edison Community Watch will not be meeting throughout the Summer
Harrison Park Crime Watch; Tues., June 3; 6 p.m.; VFW on Hohman
Hessville Crime Watch; Thur., May 15; 6 p.m.; HC3 Community Center
Irving Community Watch; Tues., May 13; 9:30 a.m.; Irving School
Whiting-Robertsedale Crime Watch; Thur., June 12; 6:30 p.m.; Calumet College

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilman Spitale - Brought out 25-10

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

25-10 An Ordinance to Appropriate Funds in the Hotel/Motel Innkeepers Tax Fund for Economic Development Purposes in 2025

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved for final passage

Councilman Spitale- The Innkeepers Tax funds are used for marketing purposes, promotional events, advertising, and the economic development in the City of Hammond.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

ORDINANCE NO. 9673 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

25-11 An Ordinance of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana, Approving and Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of Revenue Bonds of the City of Hammond, Indiana, to Procure Funds to Finance Certain Projects Recommended by the Hammond Port Authority, Together with Expense in Connection With the Issuance of the Bonds

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading by title, referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee for May 27, 2025 at 5:15 p.m.

Councilwoman Venecz- This is a request for a \$25 million dollar bond, for renovation and construction of docks at the Marina and also to continue the repairs to the break wall at the Marina.

Councilman Kalwinski- Just a quick question, if we spend the whole \$25 million, what is the total payback of the loan, of the bond, what will it be?

Councilwoman Venecz- What was the question?

Councilman Kalwinski- How much with the interest are we paying back on the bond over the \$25 million. I wonder if we have a number yet?

Councilwoman Venecz- I don't have a number for that, Councilman. I can tell you that the bond will be paid by slip fees and income at the Marina, that I can tell you. I cannot give you an answer on that at this time.

Mayor McDermott- Councilman Mark, we'll get you the exact number, next meeting. It's 1st and 2nd reading. This, just for everybody's information, the current bond that originally paid for the bridge over Calumet Avenue, at Wolf Lake Memorial Park, the hill for viewing at the Pavilion, the water pipe relocation, and the trails in and around Wolf Lake and Lost Marsh, is falling off. This new bond is going to be issued to help pay for the breakwall, the 2nd phase of the breakwall. We already did the 1st phase of the breakwall project. The 2nd phase which replaces the original rocks with much larger rocks, so that we don't destroy everything we're building right now. We all remember that 1 Halloween night in Whiting, and they had too small of rocks and their park got annihilated by waves. We have to invest in our break wall to make sure that doesn't happen to our marina. That's one of the projects that's moving forward. We're also going to do projects replacing docks with it, and that's very expensive. Each dock that we replace is almost a million dollars each. 25 million between the breakwall, the docks, and we also plan to replace the aging fuel tanks, a couple other just knick knacks around the Port Authority, but, obviously a 25 million dollar bond paid off over a period of years is going to result in probably, I imagine, twice, I don't know, in that ball park, but we'll get you that exact number next meeting.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES cont.

Councilman Kalwinski-Thanks

Councilwoman Alexander- Also Mayor, it's my understanding that we have to replace those docks because they are over the amount of time, meaning, I think they were extended for like 20 years, and they're at 30-34 years now?

Mayor McDermott- Exactly, Councilwoman. Original docks were designed for a 20 year life, and we're at 34 years old at this point. You know, we do our best to maintain them, but they get splintery, and they get old. We are replacing the docks one at a time. It's about a million dollars a hit. This is a 25 million dollar bond with a lot of work going into the breakwall, so they'll be doing docks one at a time. I'm trying to think, which dock are you planning on doing with this, Jeff?

Jeff Smith- B & T

Mayor McDermott- B & D?

Councilman Kalwinski- B, T, and H when you're doing the breakwall.

Jeff Smith- Well, with the breakwall, H dock will have to be done, but B & T right now.

Mayor McDermott- Ok. That's thumb rule, 2 ½-3 million dollars right there on docks. This is 1st and 2nd reading, so if we don't have the information you guys need, obviously we'll have it by the next meeting.

Council President Woerpel- Thank you. Any further questions? Councilwoman, I wasn't being, I was just looking to see if you had a question, and I just went like that, I wasn't being disrespectful. Any further questions on this? Any further discussion on this? All those in favor, signify by saying Aye. Opposed?

AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

25R-10 A Resolution Ratifying the City of Hammond (Through the Hammond Redevelopment Commission) Making a Good Faith Offer to Purchase Pursuant to I.C.§ 32-24-1-5 and Authorizing the City of Hammond (Through the Hammond Redevelopment Commission) to File a Condemnation Lawsuit Pursuant to I.C.§ 32-24-1, ET SEQ.

Councilman Salinas, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moves for adoption

Councilman Salinas- The property at 7305 Indianapolis Blvd. known as Cooper's Garage, as we stated in Caucus, it's received numerous citations for violations of Hammond City Ordinances, including, but not limited to, maintaining junk vehicles, nuisance violations, condition of their parking lot, and basically the overall condition of their property. The Hammond Redevelopment Commission has determined it to be blighted and in need of redevelopment. They've received our fair market appraisals and we will be making a good faith offer to purchase the property, so I ask that we all support this.

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

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilman Salinas- Thanks, Dave.

Council President Woerpel- Is there any further discussion? (X2)

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R10 ADOPTED

25-R11 A Resolution of the Hammond City Council Approving Certain January 1, 2025 Assessment Date Form CF-1s as Timely Filed With the Common Council of the City of Hammond as the Designating Body by Applicants Previously Approved for Economic Revitalization Area Deductions of Assessed Valuation, Pursuant to Indiana Coude 6-1.1-12.1

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moves for adoption

Councilwoman Venecz-This is an annual procedure that we need to do for the businesses who receive tax abatements. There is a CF-1 form that needs to be submitted to the Auditor to make sure that they are in compliance to receive the abatement. This year, we have American Stair, Hampton Inn & Suites, Home2Suites by Hilton, Analytic Stress, Korellis Roofing, Team Industrial Services, and Marble Holdings LLC, and Park 24 Hammond LLC. Of these businesses, we have 185 Hammond City residents who are employed by these businesses. This is a good thing for Hammond, and I ask for your approval.

Council President Woerpel- I don't know if there is anybody in Chambers representing any of these companies, but there's some on zoom. I see a John Marinello and the other ones don't have names by them, so if you guys want to introduce yourself, and anybody have any questions for them?

Councilman Kalwinski- Can they introduce themselves and what company they are a part of?

Council President Woerpel- Sure. The guy in the white shirt. What's your name?

Brian Enright- Brian Enright, CFO of Korellis Roofing.

Council President Woerpel- And then, the guy in the green shirt.

Peter Fitzsimmons- Good Evening, Council. My name is Peter Fitzsimmons. I'm the executive Vice President of American Stair.

Council President Woerpel- And then there's a John Marinello, and you represent?

John Marinello-Analytic Stress

Council President Woerpel- (unclear)

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilman Kalwinski- John Marinello, thank you for coming on today. Any job openings at American Stair?

Peter Fitzsimmons- We're always looking. I think right now, it's a little bit slow out there in the construction business, but we're always interviewing. You never know when you're going to find a great employee, especially locally, which we've been very fortunate to move to Hammond and find quite a few good employees around the city. It's a little slow these days in construction, so we're not hiring a ton, but always come by and we'll interview pretty much anybody.

Councilman Kalwinski- Thanks.

Peter Fitzsimmons- No problem.

Council President Woerpel- As far as Korellis goes in the 5th District, I don't even think I came to my first meeting after I got caucused in, and I met with the management at Korellis Roofing because they were looking for an abatement and to do some expansion over there, and as far as I'm concerned, and the neighbors are concerned, they're great neighbors. We love what you did with the property. Everything you guys promised, you've kept up and I just wanted to thank you.

Brian Enright- Thank you. I will pass that on to Pete Korellis and I know that means a lot to him.

Council President Woerpel- Anybody else? Hearing none. Any further discussion? (X2)

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R11 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Salinas, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moves to reschedule the May 26th, 2025 meeting to May 27th, 2025.

ROLL CALL VOTE (rescheduling meeting)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MOTION CARRIED

Councilman Emerson- Memorial Day is Monday, May 26th, 2025, and the Mohawks Parade, this is for people that we lost in any war, not too many WWII Vets left, but any war that we've been involved in as a nation. It steps off at 10 a.m., and there's a short ceremony after the parade at St. Casimir's and Thank you.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Kalwinski- Let me put some parameters around it. The lineup begins at 10 a.m., and the parade steps off at 11 a.m. and it starts at Gostlin, near the old roller dome rink or Cavalier Inn, so between Baltimore and Torrence is where it will step off. If you want to be in the parade, you can call the Mohawks. The parade chairman is Larry Fentress, and the phone number to the Mohawks is 219-933-9823. The most important part of the parade, the parade is used to attract people to come to the Memorial Service after the parade, at St. Casimir's Church where there's a short prayer service and the raising of a new flag, Hammond Police will do a gun salute, a couple of speakers, and it's our way of commemorating all of those that we lost during the wars as well as honoring the families that survived those Veteran's. Thank you.

Councilwoman Venecz- I wanted to announce that on May 21st at 1 p.m. the FOP Memorial will be at the Hammond Police Department. It's always a very somber event and please come out and honor those who defend and serve us. Thank you.

Councilman Woerpel- I have 2 items. Number 1, I was talking to the City Engineer because I saw a sign about lane reductions on Columbia Avenue starting next Monday on the 19th. Those of us that are on social media know that apparently peoples front ends are falling off on Columbia because the roads are so bumpy, they say and this project has been a long time coming and it will go from 167th Street to Summer Street starting next Monday with the lane reductions. The other item I have kind of pairs with what Councilwoman Venecz was talking about and for the last 4 weeks, I have been attending the Citizen's Police Academy at the suggestion of Councilwoman Venecz, and Councilman Spitale, and Tom Strabavy took it, sign me up, oh Councilman Salinas too. It's been very informative. I've learned a lot. I learned how police officers have to make the decisions that they have to make. Last week for instance, they split it in 2 classes, one class did CPR, while the other class toured the jail, and then they switched. I'm not gonna lie, when I toured the jail I was afraid an inmate was gonna go hey, Woerpel, how you doing? That didn't happen. It's very informative. I think there's 4 more classes left and it's something that they offer twice a year. If anybody has any doubts on what police officers face on a daily basis, I highly recommend this class. I do know that there's a few people in there that took the self defense class too that the police department offers and it's very informative, and I want to get to the part where we get to the range, and have to make those decisions, but that's all I wanted to say. Does anybody else have anything under new and unfinished business? Hearing none, new and unfinished business is closed.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Gary Droischorf- The sidewalk at Martha and Alexander never got completed. Some of the bollards on Kennedy Avenue have been hit and need to be straightened. Nipsco needs to fix the lights around my house. It's been over 2 months. We should look into fixing our own lights or getting a refund.

Georgianne Graves- I'm here on behalf of Logan's Love. It's a local 501c3 founded in memory of Logan. He was autistic, and one of his side effects was eloping, and he escaped out of his backyard and tragically was killed by a train. His mom created this foundation in his memory. I am here to let you know we are coming into Hammond for sensory events that provides accommodations for autistic children. We're trying to make Lake County safe with our Ben's blue bags, and project lifesaver. We are creating bags for the Hammond Police and Fire Departments. They will need 219. We have secured funding for 12. They're \$125 and they also come with autism training. We do this through sponsorships and our 2 fundraising events. We're inviting you to our golf outing which is June 13th, and also the Autism walk August 24th. I just wanted to let you know that we are trying

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

Georgianne Graves cont.-to come to the Hammond area.

Jeffery Colby- I am the President for the Hammond Alumni Association. We're doing a Golf Outing for our 8th year. We give out a scholarship for the Hammond schools. We would like for all of you to participate and sponsor/donate. Your secretary has all the information.

Anthony Higgs- I would like to thank the police for their efforts on Drackert street where someone got shot and they apprehended the subject quickly. Secondly, in regards to East Hammond, I would like to do a Hammond Day in the near future. It's a lot of work, but I am willing to do it. There are a number of trees that still haven't been cut down on my street. One is 1129 Morris Street, and also at the 1000 block of Tapper and Merrill there's one on that corner.

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

AYES: ALL

2025 HAMMOND COMMON COUNCIL ATTENDANCE RECORD OF
ELECTRONIC AND PHYSICAL PRESENCE

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

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.

ATTEST:



Robert J. Golec, City Clerk


 Dave Woerpel, President
 Hammond Common Council
Time: 6:57 p.m.
mg/cb

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
 Hammond City Clerk