

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on July 14, 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 was observed in honor of Jason Hawkins.

ROLL CALL

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

ELECTRONICALLY PRESENT PER ZOOM: None

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor McDermott- It's good to see you all. Before I begin today's update, I want to echo what Councilman Woerpel was just talking about. I'd be remiss if I didn't acknowledge a profound loss we recently suffered at Hammond City Hall with the passing of Jason Hawkins, a beloved Code Enforcement Inspector with the City of Hammond. Jason was a friend to many of us. His visitation is set for tomorrow, and the funeral will take place on Wednesday. Jason leaves behind his loving wife, children, and grandchildren. He will be missed more than words can express. Please keep his family in your thoughts and prayers this week. We've had a busy and productive few weeks around the city. As you all know, it's been 3 weeks since our last Council meeting, so my report might be a couple seconds longer than normal. 3 weeks ago, I hosted the friendly Sons of Aaron annual wrap-up dinner at the Lost Marsh Emerald Green. Members from across NWI, dined and golfed on our beautiful golf course. Many thanks to Bernie Grisolia and his team at Emerald Green for their outstanding hospitality. I met with the CEO of the Southshore Convention and Visitors Bureau along with several members of their Board of Directors. We took the opportunity at that time to share Hammond's point of view regarding their support of the Gary Convention Center and their continued lack of support for the City of Hammond. I reminded them that Hammond is the largest city in Lake County by population and that Hammond has the second most hotel rooms which funds their budget and we have the highest assessed valuation. In my opinion, Hammond deserves much more than we are receiving from the SSCVB and we are challenging them to change. I attended the Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce golf outing at the Lost Marsh. I golfed with Corporate Council, Mike Milan the CEO of American Community Bank, and Dan Repay the CEO of Little Calumet River Basin. We finished 2nd place. I'm very happy with that. Last year we won it, so we had to return this year with the same team. I don't even know how we won it because none of us are really that good at golf. I met with the Bishop of the Diocese of Gary, Bishop Robert McClory, regarding the Diocese proposed efficiency plan. I appreciated the dialogue and the Bishop's willingness to meet. We talked about a lot of proposals for the City of Hammond and some tough decisions that they're making. I just wanted to make sure that he's keeping us in mind. Obviously, there's a lot of land going throughout Northwest Indiana by the Gary Diocese. I think it's a good idea for communication when they're making tough decisions. I think it's good that the Bishop took me into his office. I appointed Bill Lewter as the new department head of the Code Enforcement Department. Bill is a lifelong Hammond resident with more than 15 years of service to the city. He's worked in the 911 dispatch center,

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.- served as a Code Enforcement Inspector, and most recently was the Building Inspector. Bill bring institutional knowledge, professionalism, and a strong commitment to our community. Congratulations to Bill Lewter. I attended the 2025 Summer Concert Series kickoff on Saturday, June 28th. The Grateful Dead Tribute band, Hyryder, from Indianapolis, played a fantastic set. I know Councilman Mark was out there as well. It was a great time. We're doing the Summer Concert Series on Saturdays and it's a very diverse lineup. It's a very good lineup. We're working really hard, so if you guys could help us out, and attend and bring some people with you. After the festival it resumes again, Saturdays, starts at 7 o'clock. It's a really good time, everything's free. I had a really productive lunch with Matt Wells, the CEO of One Region and Alejandra Castillo, the Senior Fellow of Economic Development at PNW to discuss opportunities for Hammond, and how One Region can support our goals. I met with the Hammond Firefighters Union, President, Mike Cole regarding a new Economic Development proposal the Union wants to bring in Downtown Hammond, and I look forward to exploring this issue further, along with Mike and the Hammond Firefighters. I met with Councilwoman Janet Venecz to discuss several key ordinances she is sponsoring on behalf of the administration. I continued coordination with our Economic Development team for major projects happening across the city. On July 3rd, I spoke at the Naturalization Ceremony at the Hammond Pavilion where nearly 50 new American Citizens from around the world took their Oath of Citizenship. It was an incredibly moving event. I want to thank Councilwoman Janet Venecz for being out there as well as Representative Carolyn Jackson, representing our city. I participated in the Whiting 4th of July parade where I marched with a float representing the city. We had a lot of College Bound Coordinators marching in that parade as well. Many thanks to Mayor Steve Spebar, the Mayor of Whiting, for rolling out the red carpet for the region on Independence Day. I met with Hammond Water Department Officials and representatives from the City of Crown Point for regional water discussions. I attended the swearing in ceremony for 2 new Hammond Police Officers. Kristen Alamillo and Zachary Anderson, both former Correction Officers here in Hammond. We're proud to see them step up and take on this vital public safety role. I had a one on one with Calvin Sanders, the son of Reverend Calva Sanders who is heading to Notre Dame Law School this Fall. Calvin and I had a great discussion and talked about the life changes that are ahead of him and I want to help him prepare. I couldn't be more proud of him. That is not an easy school to get into, so Congratulations to Calvin Sanders and thank you for taking the time to meet with me. I met with Jay Buckmaster, the CEO of Crossroads YMCA to discuss future plans for the former YMCA building on Southeastern. I attended the Robing Ceremony for 2 newly appointed Indiana Court of Appeals Justices, Justice Sam Scheele and Mary DeBoer. Congratulations to the 2 new Justices to the Indiana Court of Appeals. I paid my respects at the wake of Tom Keilman, the former Public Relations Director at BP Amoco, Whiting, who we lost recently. I do want to remind everybody the Festival of the Lakes is here. The best week of the Summer is officially under way. Saturday July 12th, which was last Saturday, we already ran the Roadie Run 5k. I finished with a time of 28.40 and was beat by a lot of our employees, so I apologize, but it's a good thing. Wednesday, July 16th, John Fogarty plays, also on that day is Senior Citizen Day. Thursday, July 17th, is Brantley Gilbert. Friday, July 18th is Akon and don't forget on Friday, we also have the Lost Marsh Golf Outing. Saturday, July 19th, we have Third Eye Blind, along with the fishing derby and Special Person's Day. Sunday, July 20th, we have La Arrolladora, we also have the Polka Mania at the Hammond Marina. That's what I call it. It's the Polka Fest at the Hammond Marina and we have the hotrod and custom car show that day as well. This year we have 16 local food vendors. The Carnival will be packed as always, and the Hammond Police and Firemen are keeping everyone safe while the community comes together to celebrate. I'm looking forward to the Festival of the Lakes. I appreciate the Council and everybody's support for putting this together. The weather looks like we're gonna get through the next week without any rain which is the most important part. It's gonna rain, but it's not gonna rain during our shows. That's my report for the week. I appreciate the Council's patience

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.-with my long report and I'm available to answer any questions.

Councilman Salinas- You say you met with the Bishop?

Mayor McDermott- Yes, Sir.

Councilman Salinas- Anything you can share with us regarding the closures of Catholic Churches?

Mayor McDermott- I had a feeling you were going to ask me that, Councilman. I have, this is from the Bishop, they gave it to, I imagine, to the people in different parishes, so in Hammond, this is the plan right now, because it's not Mayor Tom's plan, this is the plan from the diocese; All Saints is going to merge with St. Casimir to become one parish with multiple worship sites; St. John Bosco and St. Joseph will remain under the care of their current Pastor/Administrator; Our Lady of Perpetual Help will remain under the care of it's current Pastor. That's Hammond's. Whiting, after completing the required canonical processes; St. Adalbert will merge with St. John the Baptist to become one parish with multiple sites; Sacred Heart will remain under the care of it's current Administrator. That was listed under Whiting even though St. John the Baptist is located in the City of Hammond. So, St. John the Baptist apparently is bringing on St. Adalbert's, St. John Bosco, and St. Joseph will remain under the care of their current Pastor/Administrator, and OLPH will remain under the care of it's current Pastor. All Saints will merge with St. Cas under this proposal, Councilman.

Councilman Salinas- But all mergers will have multiple worship locations, or was it just the 2 that you mentioned?

Mayor McDermott- I'm just reading off here, Councilman, I'm not sure. I had a great meeting. First off, the Bishop doesn't have to meet with me. I think the fact that he has enough respect for the City of Hammond to meet with me, and I think he probably thought I was there to get angry and say he can't do this, and instead I was like, hey listen, everybody has to make tough decisions. I just want you to keep us in mind. There's a lot of people that feel strongly about these different parishes in Hammond, so just like please call if there's anything I can do locally, that's more what the meeting was like, Councilman. I think it was a good meeting. They're making tough decisions, and I think it's good for them to see the face of the Mayor when they're making these tough decisions. This is right off the form he gave me, Councilman.

Councilman Kalwinski- Hi, Mr. Mayor. This is going back a couple weeks to the data center, I wondered what the contact was like when you reached out to NIPSCO to come talk with us?

Mayor McDermott- They're in the middle of a rate case right now with, I don't know if it's a rate case, but they're before the IURC in a trial over this spinoff company that they're trying to create that deals with data centers.

Councilman Kalwinski- GENCO

Mayor McDermott- GENCO, thank you. I don't know if realistically the CEO, until that's done, is going to come here on the record, but I did put the ask in. Going back to the larger issue is, we're not really making progress with the power needs either, which is not great news. So to remind everybody out there, this Council

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.- and this Mayor and the Redevelopment commission and the Planning Commission and Zoning, we passed a proposal for a data center that could be worth up to 7 billion dollars. That data center will bring this community of Hammond, 80 million dollars over the next 20 years if it's built under this development agreement. The only thing we're waiting on is NIPSCO. That's it. If NIPSCO says yes, Hammond gets 80 million dollars, we are planning to then maybe ask the Council to maybe fund College Bound or the next 20 years. These are issues that we have to work through, but like, this could happen if NIPSCO makes that decision and they won't. I don't know why. I don't know if it's because they can. I don't know if it's because they're trying to get a better deal, but we're all sort of being held hostage, Councilman.

Councilman Kalwinski- You know, as I've been reading about data centers around the country, some of what comes up is that, who owns them can be a little difficult to follow, they often do NDA's with cities. Have they asked to do an NDA with us, a non disclosure agreement?

Mayor McDermott- No, Sir. Everything that we've done with them has come before you. We're working with a big company that's CoreWeave. I don't have to be secretive about it anymore. CoreWeave is a publicly traded company. It's one of the biggest AI players in the world.

Councilman Kalwinski- So, if I could back up for a second, what is the name of the company that is coming in? Are they Decennial or are they CoreWeave?

Mayor McDermott- DX1, Decennial, I've heard multiple different.

Councilman Kalwinski- I have a hard time following this.

Scott Miller, Chief of Staff- So Decennial is the contractor who would build the facility and be the landlord. The main tenant which is already negotiated is CoreWeave, which is an AI company. They provide services for artificial intelligence.

Councilman Kalwinski- CoreWeave?

Mayor McDermott- CoreWeave, yes. They're a big company. I was on CNBC and the CEO came on and Hammond is one of their big locations right now. It's great, but that doesn't mean anything if NIPSCO says we can't do it. All this work we did, goes right down the toilet if NIPSCO says we can't do it. The thing that's really frustrating, now that we're talking about data centers is they're talking about putting data centers in stupid locations in Northwest Indiana. Locations where the community doesn't want them. We have a location in Hammond that nobody is really opposed to and NIPSCO is playing games. It's driving me crazy. It's 80 million dollars for us. All NIPSCO has to do is turn on the light switch. That's all they have to do. If they turn on the light switch, Hammond gets 80 million dollars. They're playing games. It's driving me crazy, but I can't talk about it, because it pisses off NIPSCO and then they turn the light switch off.

Councilman Kalwinski- But right now, they don't have enough energy to supply?

Mayor McDermott- True story, but in the defense of our developers, they gave 25 million dollars for that power upfront to NIPSCO. So NIPSCO has their 25 million dollars right now. That shows goodwill, right? 25 million

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.-dollars, I don't think that's an easy check to write to NIPSCO for nothing? They get nothing back. They paid for it. Give them the power. Turn the light switch on NIPSCO.

Councilman Kalwinski- It's frustrating, especially since Robertsedale had 2 outages in 36 hours lasting hours long each time, and NIPSCO has no explanation for it.

Mayor McDermott- I was out during this 3 week period for about 12 hours. Since the last Council meeting, I was out also. My little section of my neighborhood was out for, I think it was a tree, you can't get mad about that, but we were out for 12 hours. Turn on the light switch NIPSCO.

Councilman Kalwinski- Thank you.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you, Councilman. Any other questions?

Councilman Tyler- Mayor, is there any possible way in those conversations with NIPSCO we can talk about infrastructure repairs as well?

Mayor McDermott- Councilman, I love your idea. I think once NIPSCO gets through these rate cases, I think this is fair game. Realistically, that guy is in the middle of a huge case right now. I'll put the call out. I have no problem, Councilman. In fact, we had an issue with multiple constituents, in your district, but across the city, and it was over the NIPSCO light poles, and NIPSCO not turning their lights on. Their light would burn out and then the neighbor would call it in, and they would ignore it. There was hundreds. We worked with NIPSCO. We literally had a list. Alex McCormack in my office, got it done. It took too long, and the scary thing is, if that's the Mayor's office, if that's an individual constituent calling about that, good luck. We had a list, and they did our list for us.

Councilman Tyler- Same thing, like you said, I can't tell you how many times residents reach out, and I reach out to NIPSCO on their behalf and we have friends over there that we reach out to and maybe they can expedite things, but for the most part, it's hard to even find the right person to talk to, so I just think it's unfair for them to ask for all of these raises and to increase our rates if they're not improving our infrastructure and residents are without power for hours at a time.

Mayor McDermott- It's fair game, Councilman, appreciate it. I think if you guys can hold off until they're done with the GENCO litigation, and then we put these requests out, and I'd feel a lot more comfortable. I don't know, I'm playing, we're on TV for the record, but I'm being really nice to NIPSCO right now. I want them to do good for our city, and I think the best thing I can do is just shut up sometimes, and not get so angry. I'm trying to play the game right now so that they'll turn the light switch on, and then we can start talking about these tough issues, if you don't mind. This is a big deal.

Councilman Tyler- Even tree removal, because some of those trees that they're responsible to manage that are connected to power lines.

Mayor McDermott- That was my problem, Councilman, the tree, tree removal issue. A tree came down, one of those heavy winds, and we were out for 12 hours.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Councilman Tyler- Thank you.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you. Anymore questions? Sorry about the long report. Thank you all, good to see you.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Salinas, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to approve the minutes of June 23, 2025 and placed on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to approve the claims from June 18, 2025 through July 09, 2025. Claim #5350 through claim #5833, inclusive In the amount of \$10,831,822.28.

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

25R-17 Granting a Waiver of Noncompliance Pursuant to I.C. 6-1.1-12.1-11.3 with respect to an Assessed Valuation Deduction (Tax Abatement) for the Tangible Real Property of Park 24 Hammond, LLC

Councilman Woerpel- Does anybody from the public wish to speak?

George Stoya- Yeah, I complained about the formatting of this I think at the last meeting. I see nothings changed. I don't know if this is even worth commenting on. We know nothing about Park 24. You can hunt back in, what is it, 22, 23 that you guys granted them 10 million dollars from the city? They got 5 million dollars from the state, I mean, incentives, tax incentives, the tax abatement, they had a fee they had to pay 15 percent, now it was reduced by you guys to 7.5. We hear nothing about this, and you guys ain't saying anything. I don't understand this authoritarian tilt on this Council. What, we're the last to know? We don't need to know? You guys decide what we need to know? Is that how it works? Is this the MAGA wannabe's of the Democratic Party? What are we, just chop liver out here? Put some details in your captions, damn it, so we can say something. This is the farce, comment on what?

Anthony Higgs- My apologies, I stepped out, I didn't know if you were under Public Expression, but I guess you're under Item number 10? Am I correct?

Council President Woerpel- No, we're under Public Hearing.

PUBLIC HEARINGS cont.

Anthony Higgs- Oh, under the Public Hearing for the waiver of noncompliance pursuant to I.C. 6-1.1-12.1-11.3 with respect to an assessed valuation deduction (Tax Abatement) for the tangible real property of Park 24 Hammond, LLC. Where is that park located?

Councilman Salinas- 24 Marble.

Anthony Higgs- 24 Marble?

Councilman Salinas- Yes, just south of our gateway station.

Anthony Higgs- So you're giving them a tax abatement to build on that property?

Councilman Salinas- That was already approved. Park 24 was, I believe completed in 2024. It's a 40 million dollar investment. It's 400,000 square feet industrial building. It's located just next to Stateline and our gateway station.

Anthony Higgs- And so, who's investing in that land?

Councilman Salinas- I believe Juan Moreno, our Director of Economic Development is here. Could you give us a hand here with these questions, Juan? Thank you.

Director of Economic Development, Juan Moreno- Park 24 is located at 24 Marble Street and as stated, it is a 40 million dollar investment, 400,000 square foot on an under utilized site that would have not been looked at or touched, developed for decades to come. We have a Park 24 team who came in, built a state of the art sped building. They're in talks, touring the building. Tenants are just inches away of signing and being fully occupied. This is a great location, especially with everything happening with gateway station, City of Hammond over all, Downtown Hammond. We also have Rich, General Corporate Counsel for Park 24, Rich Dale here, if you guys have any other questions regarding the project.

Councilman Kalwinski- Juan, it doesn't look like there are any occupants there.

Director of Economic Development, Juan Moreno- Yes, Councilman Mark, as I stated, they're giving tours to interested parties and they're in constant negotiations with, but they're just inches away from getting tenants in that building.

Councilman Kalwinski- And that building has been completed for at least a year now?

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller- I'll make it simple. They don't have any tenants yet, so they asked if they could have another year before they start paying taxes on the building. That's what we're asking is that they can start. Hopefully they can recoup some income and pay their taxes. This doesn't cut anything off of their tax burden, it just starts it a year later.

Anthony Higgs- I just have one more question, so is this an anchor for other development from this potential property?

PUBLIC HEARINGS cont.

Director of Economic Development, Juan Moreno- Is this another anchor?

Anthony Higgs- In other words, is there additional development gonna come from this?

Director of Economic Development, Juan Moreno- No. This is already developed. The whole site is developed. It's already done.

Anthony Higgs- Ok.

Council President Woerpel- Ok, hang on. This isn't a trial. This is a public hearing. This was discussed at length when we passed this in 2022, was it?

Director of Economic Development, Juan Moreno- Correct.

Council President Woerpel- About the building, the property, the tax abatement and all that and like Mr. Miller said, all this is, which we discussed in caucus before the last meeting, all this is, is just to delay the abatement by a year.

Director of Economic Development, Juan Moreno- Correct.

Council President Woerpel- It's not a trial where we're gonna cross examine each other here. It's a public hearing. Thank you Mr. Moreno. Does anybody else wish to speak? (x2) Hearing none, the public hearing is closed.

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Tyler- I just want to announce 2, well actually 1, is an open house for Calumet Quickcare, which will take place on Thursday, July 24th, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. I think the Mayor has announced this a couple times in previous meetings. The location is 5518 Calumet Ave. Dr. Watson will be happy to meet potential new clients. Once again, it's Calumet Quickcare. It's not an emergency room, but just quick care for different health needs and different health services that they provide out of that facility there. I know the building has been under construction for quite awhile, I think it's been open for awhile too, but they're finally having their open house where you can go and meet and greet the doctor who is in charge of that facility. Also on, Tuesday, August 5th, at 12:30 p.m. at Tootie's Chicken and Fish there'll be a ribbon cutting hosted by the city. The address is 6022 Columbia Avenue. I know a lot of people have already been to that location. They're serving some great food and want to be a staple in the East Hammond community. It's ran by East Hammond natives too, so if you are available, once again, the ribbon cutting for Tootie's is on Tuesday, August 5th at 12:30 p.m. Address once again, is 6022 Columbia Avenue. Thank you.

Councilman Salinas- To Barry's point, Tootie's, I stopped by there a few times and I'll tell you what, they have excellent food. I've had both the fish and I also tried their chicken wings. It was great. Thank you.

Council President Woerpel- Does anybody else have anything under communications? (x2) Communications are closed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Upcoming meetings:

Whiting-Robertsdale Crime Watch; Thur., August 14; 6:30 p.m.; Calumet College

Councilwoman Venecz- I'd also like to announce that coming up on August 5th, National Night Out will be celebrated in the City of Hammond, sponsored by Mayor McDermott and the Hammond Port Authority. It's a great opportunity for everyone to come out and meet our first responders, police and fire, and see all of the equipment that they have to keep us safe. There will be many activities and the first 500 children will receive swag bags.

Councilwoman Venecz read a letter to Council President Woerpel in its entirety.

Capital Improvement Board- Councilman Salinas-The Capital Improvement Board met on July 7, 2025. We dealt with:

Item A- Funding Allocation #258-Kennedy Avenue Road Diet Change Order #4; Milestone Contractors North; in the amount of \$29,190.00

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

None

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

25-15 An Ordinance Creating New Fund (#2492) for Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program Funds Awarded to the City of Hammond Police Department

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading by title.

Councilwoman Venecz- At the request of our City Controller, we need to establish 2 line items, one for the receipt of, and the other for the distribution of, for the JAG grant in the amount of \$36,267.66.

AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

25R-18 A Resolution Declaring July Older American Month in Hammond, Indiana and to apply to join AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities

Councilwoman Venecz- This resolution is to proclaim July 2025 as Older Americans Month in Hammond, Indiana. The adoption of this resolution will allow us to make application with the AARP network of age friendly communities. We will have a committee after the passage of this and after we submit an application to AARP to become a member of this network. I would like to point out that we do have soon to be 7 senior housing facilities here in the City of Hammond. This will be very beneficial for our senior community and I urge passage of this.

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Rakos, moves for adoption.

Councilman Tyler- If possible, I would like to be added as co-sponsor on this resolution.

Council President Woerpel- So noted.

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. R18 ADOPTED

25R-19 A Resolution of the City of Hammond Common Council Clarifying Term Dates for
Commissioners of the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Hammond, Indiana

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Salinas, moves for adoption.

Councilwoman Venecz- This resolution is to correct an error regarding the Commissioner's start and end dates for the Hammond Historic Preservation Commission. An error was made somewhere along the line, and this is simply correcting the terms for each of the individuals.

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. R19 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Tyler- I just wanted to go on record and thank the Hammond Parks Department for their support of the Real McCoy Hoop Session. This was the 3rd annual event that we hosted at the Sportsplex. There were close to 200 school age children, so from ages 4 or 5 up to ages 18 that were there for basketball skills training and then the basketball tournament. It was a great turnout. We didn't have any issues whatsoever. We fed the kids and gave them free t-shirts. I just wanted to thank the Parks Department for their work and of course the McCoy family for hosting that event in our city in honor of their late family member. I also want to announce that Eric Pryor is once again hosting his 4 quarters for life football camp that will take place Thursday July 24th at 9 A.M. at Hammond Central on the football field. I will be supporting that event again and it's open to kids of all ages, boys and girls who just want to come out. It's not even necessarily just football training, they do all types of sports training, so excited to be part of that event again. It's free for all kids.

Councilman Salinas- I just wanted to highlight on this past Saturday, I attended the Venetian Night at our Hammond Marina and for those who haven't been up that way, it's such a beautiful area. I just want to say a special thank you to Jeff Smith and his staff for just a great event. We had beautiful weather and just a fantastic time all the way around. Secondly, I'd like to say thank you to 2 of our Public Works employees, Edward

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Gonzalez and Ralph Ruiz. They have been tasked with replacing and repairing a lot of our ornamental lights throughout the 2nd District and they have been doing a fantastic job, so I'd like to tell them thank you on the record.

Councilwoman Venecz- I have a question for Councilman Salinas. Every Monday on Fayette Street, they have the car show, is that correct?

Councilman Salinas- That is correct.

Councilwoman Venecz- and when do they have the Farmer's Market? It's not every Friday.

Councilman Salinas- There's some red tape going around with the Farmer's Market as far as getting the vendor's approval and what not. I believe it is the first Friday of the month, is the Farmer's Market, but yes, you're correct, the Car Cruise is on Fayette in Downtown Hammond every Monday from 5-9 P.M. I believe it starts right around 489 Fayette. On an average there's about 100 cars every Monday, and Paradise Mototiki has their wood fired pizzas and wings. It's a good time if you haven't gone out that way. It's nice seeing people back in Downtown Hammond. If you haven't checked it out, please do, it's a really cool vibe down there.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Gary Droischorff- Nipsco still hasn't fixed the lights. I wish we had ornamental that the city would maintain. Shout out to Mark McLaughlin and the Water Dept for a fantastic job fixing a water leak in the parkway near the water main. I watched the Citizens Inauguration Ceremony and Mayor McDermott impressed me and did a wonderful job with his speech.

George Stoya- To pick up where I left off earlier, you said all this was discussed in '22 or '23 when it was enacted, and nothings ever discussed here. You may discuss it in the caucus, but I guarantee you didn't discuss it out here. How are we supposed to know now when you're updating the percentage, how are we supposed to know anything? It's as if we're representing you, instead of you representing us. You've already broken in Councilman Salinas. He's already got the code down, keep everything abstract, discuss everything back there. You ought to outlaw that Caucus, because nobody knows anything. You're supposed to be discussing out here where we know what you're doing, not as you choose to dole it out to us.

James Douglas- I'm here to complain about the semis that are coming down Gostlin during the night. I called Councilwoman Venecz and never received a message. I called the non emergency number. I have pictures. They run all night long. An officer came and was more interested in my information, rather than all my proof. Nothing has happened, and semis are still coming through. Something needs to be done about these night time semis. I want to block them with my car but it would be a \$2500 ticket for me, the most the semi could get is \$1000 fine, so maybe that needs to be revisited. Signage needs to be updated.

Anthony Higgs- I have missed meetings due to being sick, that was my reasoning for asking questions. I just wanted clarity. I wanted to enlighten you on the fact that my neighbors did a wonderful job on 4th of July festivities. The problem with the data center is the power outages. They don't have enough power to supply Hammond with adequate power. We had an outage from Merrill to 165th and I want to thank NIPSCO for coming out. I'm wondering where are all the people who were so disrespectful when I was on Council?

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

Mary Schoons- Did anybody follow up on the guy that had to pay double for his business license? I have a question about tax abatements in general. I read an article about the School City of Hammond being possible projections of millions of dollars of debt. Why are we giving tax abatements? The businesses should have to pay taxes too. What's going to happen to our schools? Also, the data centers are going to use our water. You all may discuss this in Caucus, but there's a disconnect because it's not in turn discussed with us. Just skip the Caucus and have it all out here. Oh, one more thing, books, brushes, and bands is having an adult choir starting Monday, July 21st, and rehearsals will be at the Merge Building.

Councilwoman Alexander makes a motion to adjourn.

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Salinas, makes a motion to return to business.

ROLL CALL VOTE (return to business)

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

NAYS: Rakos

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

8/0/1

MOTION CARRIED

Councilwoman Venecz- I just wanted to state that caucus begins at 5:30 before every single Council Meeting. We are here in the Council Chambers. Anyone is welcome to come and address any issue that we are discussing for that evening on the agenda. I wanted to make everyone aware that we do have Caucus every single meeting prior to the start of our regular Council Meeting. That's it.

Councilman Tyler, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, 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	27	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	A	A	P											
	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P											
Dan Spitale																								
Janet Venecz																								
Mark Kalwinski																								
Al Salinas																								
Barry Tyler																								
Bill Emerson																								
Scott Rakos																								
Dave Woerpel																								
Initials	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	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.



Dave Woerpel, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:



Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 6:55 p.m.
mg/cb

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk