The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on September 22, 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. Invocation by Councilwoman Alexander

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- Hi, good to see you all. This is my report for the week of September 22nd, 2025. Recently we resumed weekly staff meetings. We do take a break in the summertime after the Festival of the Lakes and we slow down the staff meetings. We do resume after Labor Day with all 3 sections coming back. We call them red, white, and blue sections. I meet with executive staff on a weekly basis. We did one big staff meeting to get started again with all the department heads in attendance. We're all back on the same page which is great. It's hard during the summertime sometimes to get everybody in the same room at the same time, so it's good to be back in swing. Also back in swing with their monthly Hammond Police Department Captain's meeting where we discuss crime statistics, emerging trends, and personnel matters. I met with the new CEO of the Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce, Kellie Taillon, and welcomed her into her new role. It's great to see a Hammond person get chosen for the CEO's position there, so that's great to see. Featured guest on a podcast called Mayor's of Main Street. It's a national podcast. They recognized Hammond, Indiana, so I thought that was nice. I met with potential developers of a prominent piece of property in Downtown Hammond. I don't want to talk about which piece of property we met with, but it was an interesting meeting. I talked with Councilman Salinas about it, just to let him know that we were looking. It's interesting. Hopefully it continues down the path. It's real early right now, so I don't want to talk about details because I don't want to screw anything up, but it's nice that people are looking and interested. I met with the executives of Hutamaki in regards to HUEA paperwork snafu. We got a chance to talk to the finance team and local executives. It's always good to get on the same page. As you all know, they just got done doing a hundred million dollar expansion in the City of Hammond, and they're talking about doing another expansion shortly, which is great news. Along with another expansion with Hutamaki, would be another round of hiring, which is usually Hammond residents that get hired there, so that's good news. I cut the ribbon on Swinger's golf simulator lounge in the Hammond Sportsplex. It's named Swinger's because you swing a golf club there, so don't get any funny ideas. It is in the Sportsplex. It's available for rent. On the app, you could do it through the sportsplex website, or you can do it on the app for the developer. I don't remember the name off the top of my head. I think it's around \$50 an hour. Food and drinks are available. It's a bar, so you can have drinks while you're doing it, watch the Bears game and things like that. We expect it to do very well with volleyball dads when they drop off their daughters, and they're playing downstairs, they go

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.-upstairs with their golf clubs. That's what we're hoping for. I met with the Captain in charge of the Hammond City Jail over an exemption from Hammond's hiring freeze. I have quite a few of these meetings. As you all know we started a hiring freeze about a month ago and I have individual departments coming and asking for exemptions in places like the jail. I met with a supervisor in charge of the Hammond Sportsplex over the exemption from Hammond's hiring freeze. I met with the CEO and CFO of the Hammond Sanitary District over exemption from Hammond's hiring freeze. Not all of our departments are subject to property taxes like we are, you know, over here in the Council, anybody in City Hall, we rely on property taxes, but we do have some people that report to me that don't rely on property taxes, like the Water Department for instance, and the Sanitary District. So what do they do? Are they subject to the hiring freeze? So we have a lot of that kind of stuff going on right now that we're trying to clarify. Last but not least, participated in Hammond City Employee Olympics. As you all know, we do this once or twice a year, where we get the employees together and play a sport and compete against each other. Usually the firefighters win, they did not win this year. Kickball was the sport. We played it in Dowling Park on the PNW women's softball field. The winner of the event was the Hammond Department of Public Works. So, congratulations to Department of Public Works. There was a lot of requirements on these teams. You had to have a certain number of people over the age of 40, you had to have a certain number of men, you had to have a certain number of women, so it really encouraged teamwork and you know, multiple departments working together. It was pretty cool. Congratulations to Felix, the team captain for that team. I know that there's a resolution that you all are considering today. We did a press release on this also. The resolution is a variance request from the BZA. This is located at the old Hose Connection building on the 6700 block of Kennedy Avenue, so right there in Hessville. Councilman Woerpel sponsored this resolution and it fooled everybody because we all thought it was the 6th District and we were asking ourselves why Councilman Woerpel would sponsor a resolution in the 6th District, but as it turns out, that side of Kennedy Avenue is still Councilman Woerpel's District. So Councilman Woerpel sponsored it, this is good news, we've been talking about this for awhile, but not really openly. The old Hose Connection building on the 6700 block of Kennedy Avenue, it's currently unoccupied, the business moved to a bigger building. We have a new Foreign Local Brewery and Taproom opening there. They're looking to open by the end of the year with 10-15 new jobs created, a million dollar investment, will brew a variety of craft beer on site, and will showcase amazing mexican barbeque along side their food vendor and partner, Smoke on the Water. The new owner recognized the value the City put into the new streetscape along Kennedy Avenue, and it's the perfect kind of business the City has been striving for in Downtown Hessville. I appreciate you all considering that. The BZA has already gone through this. Obviously, you guys have a lot of questions I'm sure still to ask, but I think it's exciting that we have a new brewery locating in Hessville. I think that's a good accomplishment for us so far. I'm not satisfied, but it's a good step in the right direction.

Council President Woerpel- Mayor, Mr. Glowacki, the owner is sitting right here in the front row.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you very much, I appreciate what you're trying to do.

Council President Woerpel- And he's staying in case anything else, but does anyone have any questions, or were you done, I'm sorry.

Mayor McDermott- Yes, sir.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott- I have, if anybody has any questions.

Council President Woerpel- Does anybody have any questions or comments for the Mayor?

Councilman Tyler- Mayor, I know at one point, Hutamaki had planned a re grand opening or a ribbon cutting or something, and it got postponed, do you know if there's any plans? I know they have a lot of guidelines in terms of ...

Mayor McDermott- I know it's hard for them because they have an international company.

Chief of Staff Scott Miller- We had a meeting with Hutamaki recently, and essentially, they're planning another expansion, so they're going to wait until that's done.

Mayor McDermott- Good, thanks Scott. That's sort of what I previewed earlier. It's good news, and if you all remember when we did the ribbon cutting the first time, it was probably the hardest rain storm I've seen in Hammond in years. It was a monsoon, so they're probably scared to come to Hammond. There's people that flew in from all across the world for that ribbon cutting and it was a monsoon.

Councilman Tyler- Sorry, and I got one more question, I know Swanel shared with us that they're hiring, do we know where that project is? It seems like they're about to be done.

Mayor McDermott- It's almost done, Councilman. I got a report on it this morning. I can't remember off the top of my head. Juan gave the report. I wanna say, they're doing a ribbon cutting in December. Do you remember?

Chief of Staff Scott Miller- It should be before the end of the year.

Mayor McDermott- Yeah, and they were trying to coordinate my calendar with like the Governor. They want the Governor there and stuff like that, so it's coming real soon. It looks done, but I'm sure there's still some work going on in the inside. That's a great project too, right here in the 3rd District. It's gonna help out a lot with the TIF District here, and we're using the TIF District here to try to develop a piece of property just to the North of City Hall. We also have property just to the South. One more thing Councilman, I also have an update on the Uhaul project, there's a ground breaking coming very soon for right there off of, what is that Kenwood right there? Yeah, right off of Kenwood. We got a lot of stuff coming in your district. One ribbon cutting, one groundbreaking, and hopefully we get this moving. We've been trying to develop this for awhile.

Councilman Tyler- Yeah, I was talking to Scott about that today.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you.

Councilman Tyler- Thank you, Mayor.

Council President Woerpel- Anybody else have any other questions? I, as long as we're talking about ribbon cuttings, I see I got one here for October 2nd, for Ivan's Roofing, that is the old, I called it, what was it, Dan

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Council President Woerpel cont.- Bertadelli or whatever's towing place on Kennedy Avenue at, Bertinelli's, I'm sorry, 7325 Kennedy Avenue at 11 on October 2nd. Does anybody else have anything for the Mayor?

Mayor McDermott- While we're here at a Council Meeting and we're talking about Kennedy Avenue, the City just closed on a piece of property over there on, just to the North of Hessville Park. It's the old Bargain Finder building, that's the one right? Do you remember the address on that? 7105 Kennedy Avenue.

Councilman Rakos- It goes all the way to Orchard Drive right?

Mayor McDermott- We got the entire piece of property. We did not get the tower behind it. The tower behind it's a cell phone tower, but we got that entire piece of property. It's intrigal to developing over there. We had a little bit of money in the TIF District, we used to buy that building. That's gonna come down shortly, so that's the goal. I don't know if you have any questions on that, but that just closed earlier this week.

Councilman Rakos- All the vehicles parked there will be gone?

Mayor McDermott- Yes, sir. Absolutely. It's been an eyesore and it's coming down. It's right next to a great park, and it's a junkyard.

Councilman Rakos- I'm so happy to hear that.

Mayor McDermott- I am too.

Council President Woerpel- Is that the old Ardem trucking, is that the property, or is it the Bargain Finder building?

Mayor McDermott- Yeah, the Bargain Finder building which is like a football field on the inside. It's a humongous building and a little parking lot that has turned into a junkyard.

Councilman Rakos- It is Ardem trucking. Ardem trucking is actually one that the church bought on the other side.

Mayor McDermott- Ok, I hope I did it justice but I'm really happy about that. We'll probably do a press release shortly, but that happened within the last couple of days. I should have written it in my notes, so. Any other questions?

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Salinas, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to accept the minutes of September 8, 2025 minutes and place on file.

AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, move to approve the claims from September 4, 2025 through September 17, 2025. Claim #8082 through #8571, inclusive. In the amount of \$28,853,620.91.

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

NAYS: None ABSENT: None Motion carried

9/0/0

CLAIMS APPROVED

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Tyler - I just want to announce that the Hammond Fire Department is hosting their Fire Prevention Open House on Saturday, October 11th from 10 .m. top 2 p.m. This event is free and open to the public. It is located at Fire Station #2, which is located at 2403 Calumet Avenue.

Councilman Salinas - I also wanted to make an announcement that the Excel Center, located at 3438 169th Street is offering classes geared towards learning English. For people that have little to no English in their current vocabulary are welcome to come out and take some classes. They're offered at various times throughout the week. I know they offer some free childcare as well. A lot of that information can be found on their website at www.diplomaforme.com.

Councilman Rakos - I'd like to announce the HC3's Movies in the Park. It will take place on October 4th at 7:30. The screen will actually be right by the Little Red School House. In fact, the last couple of years it's turned out to be a well attended event. This year the double feature will be "It's a Great Pumpkin Charlie Brown" and "The Nightmare Before Christmas". Show time is at 7:30. Free admission. Bring your own chairs and snacks.

Council President Woerpel - Realtors breakfast is Thursday, September 25, from 9-10:30 p.m. City of Hammond updates by Mayor Tom McDermott. It's hosted by Scott Miller. Oh, he's the Master of Ceremonies, let me put it that way. That is at Lost Marsh Golf Course. Emerald Green. We have a Vision of Health luncheon, Tuesday, October 28th, at Dynasty Banquets. Individual admission is \$40, a table of eight is \$300, and the guest speaker that night is Mayor McDermott. Finally, just to clarify what we do when someone is electronic. I was handed the rules by the Clerk's Office and there are two parts highlighted, just so the public understands. Electronic meetings are the statutory authorization that are required. "A member of the governing body of a public agency who is not physically present at a meeting of the governing body may participate in a meeting by any electronic means of communication that does the following: 1) A governing who participates in a meeting by electronic means of communication shall be considered present for the purposes of establishing a quorum. But it may require, to participate in any final action taken at the meeting only if the member can be seen and heard." A lot of times, like Councilman Tyler explained, there's a delay when we are taking a roll call and when

COMMUNICATIONS cont.

Council President Woerpel cont. - the Clerk's Office turns around and looks at me, they're looking for a live picture of the person voting. And I know there is a delay with the Zoom and all that, but the way I'm taking this is the person in order to be considered present for quorum purposes doesn't need the require ... I mean, he can do that by phone, correct? As long as it's audible during a meeting. But if you want to vote on anything, it has to be by electronic means where you can actually see the person when they place the vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BOARD - Councilman Salinas - I want to announce that the Capital Improvement Board met on September 15th, and during that meeting we had three Funding Allocations:

Funding Allocation 281 - Quiet Zone Administrative Fee - Norfolk Southern Railroad -\$26,500.00 This amount is just a fee to evaluate the Quiet Zones. In total we are requesting nine crossings throughout Hammond. Four near the Downtown Hammond location and four in Hessville.

Funding Allocation 282 - Electric Vehicle Charging Stations at City Hall and the Sportsplex - Midwestern Electric - \$106,300.00. This is the quote that was accepted to install EV Charging Stations. Four in total. Two at City Hall and two at the Sportsplex. One at each location will include rapid chargers.

Funding Allocation 283 - Summer Street Reconstruction - Change Orders 8 and 13 thru 17 - INDOT Rieth and Riley Construction - \$15,567.94. This is part of an 80/20 split.

Council President Woerpel - Councilman Salinas, just to add one thing. It's my understanding that the Charging Stations were also a part of a grant.

Councilman Salinas - Yes, the grant itself covered just the equipment. That was the equipment cost that the grant covered. This fee that we are talking about, Number 282, is the actual quote for the installation of the equipment.

COMMUNITY AND CRIME WATCH COMMITTEE - Councilwoman Venecz - Upcoming meetings:

Wed., Oct. 1; Edison Community Watch; Edison School; 6:30 p.m.

Harrison Park Crime Watch; Tues., Oct. 7; 6 p.m.; VFW on Hohman Ave,

Hessville Crime Watch; Thurs., Oct. 16; HC3 Community Center;

Irving Community Watch; Tues., Oct. 14; 9:30 a.m.; Art Room at Irving School

Whiting-Robertsdale Crime Watch; Thur., Oct. 9; 6:30 p.m.; Calumet College.

I do want to acknowledge two crime watch meeting s that occurred this past week. One was the Jefferson Crime Watch. Not very well attended but great information and we're trying to get the word out there for when the next meeting is announced. So, anyone who lives in the Jefferson School area, please come out. Formerly Indi-Illi, which is now the South Hohman Avenue Neighborhood Watch, that's always a mouthful for me. They met last Thursday at Trinity Church on Hohman Avenue. It was very well attended. Great information once again. So, please come out to the Crime Watch meetings. Find out what's going on in your neighborhood. Not only in terms of occurrences, such as crime, but also things that are happening in the neighborhood. At the South Hohman meeting we talked about the train and the construction projects. At the Jefferson meeting we talked

COMMITTEE REPORTS cont.

COMMUNITY AND CRIME WATCH COMMITTEE cont.

Councilwoman Venecz cont. - about, because it was the first meeting, we talked about safety measures in the neighborhood. So, please come out. Learn about what's going on in your neighborhood. Because community is not just about me, it's about us.

ORDINANCE THIRD READING - FINAL PASSAGE None

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

25-18 An Ordinance Creating New Funds (Fund #3397, Fund #3398, Fund #4683) for the Municipal Food and Beverage Tax Funds
Sponsored by Janet Venecz

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved for 1st and 2nd reading by title

Councilwoman Venecz- I am not calling for a committee meeting because it's simply establishing line items at the request of the Controller for the food and beverage tax

AYES: ALL

25-19 An Ordinance Creating New Funds (Fund 2249, Fund 2250) for the Municipal Excise Tax and Concurrent Wheel Tax Funds
Sponsored by Janet Venecz

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved for 1st and 2nd reading by title

Councilwoman Venecz- Once again I am not requesting a committee meeting because this is at the request of the Controller line items for the wheel tax.

AYES: ALL

25-20 An Ordinance Creating New Funds (Fund #2493, Fund #2494, Fund #2495) for the FY2026 Comprehensive Highway Injury Reduction Program (CHIRP) Grant Funds Sponsored by Janet Venecz

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by, Councilwoman Alexander, moved for 1st and 2nd reading by title

Councilwoman Venecz- This is called the CHIRP grant, and I will explain that, in the amount of \$51,750. The line items that we're requesting is for, I'll just read what was given to me by Police Department via our Controller. The line item #2493, that line item, the goal is the prevention and reduction of traffic injuries and or fatal crashes, through seatbelt enforcement, speed enforcement, and impairment driving enforcement. This covers, overtime, FICA, PERF, and the line for federal grants. The line item #2494 is under save and that, the goal is to aid in the safe transportation of school age pedestrians at school pick up and drop off locations by making sure drivers do not go around stop arms, and once again, there's overtime, FICA, PERF, and the line for the federal grant. Pedestrian bike, the goal is to increase safety of pedestrians and bicyclists by reducing the

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES cont.

Councilwoman Venecz cont.- injuries and/or fatalities, and once again the line items are for overtime, FICA, PERF, and the federal grant.

AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

None

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Council President Woerpel- I am reminded that our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 14th, because Monday is the holiday, and at that time, the budget will be introduced and under the guidelines that I read off for being present on Zoom, you must be in attendance to vote on the budget.

25-21 BZA: Z-25-14: Petition of Foreign Local Holdings, LLC for a Variance of Use from Zoning Ordinance to Allow Distribution and Food Processing in a C-1 Local Commercial District Located at 6716-18 Kennedy Avenue, within the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana Sponsored by Dave Woerpel and Petitioned by Foreign Local Holdings, LLC

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved for approval

Council President Woerpel- This is approving a recommendation of the BZA for Foreign Local Holdings LLC

Councilman Salinas- I'd like to say just a few words in support of Foreign Local Brewery. They were established in Downtown Hammond originally, and I was sad to see them leave. We tried to find them a new home downtown, it wouldn't work, it didn't work, but I'm glad that he remained here in Hammond. I met Mike personally, he's a responsible business owner and a lot of his events were fun to attend and he does make some fantastic adult beverages. I definitely support keeping Foreign Local Brewery in our city limits.

Council President Woerpel-Being in the 5th District, I support this as well. Does anybody else have further discussion?

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

NAYS: None ABSENT: None Motion carried

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BZA 25-21/Z-25-14 APPROVED

BZA: Z-25-15: Petition of Foreign Local Holdings, LLC for a Variance of Use from Zoning Ordinance to Allow a Tavern (and the like) in a C-1 Local Commercial District Located at 6716-18 Kennedy Avenue, within the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana

Sponsored by Dave Woerpel and Petitioned by Foreign Local Holdings, LLC

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moves for approval

Councilman Rakos- From my understanding, it's just a change in the permit uses for I-1 to C-1, it's a zoning difference, the way I understood it.

Councilman Tyler- Just a question, I'm guessing maybe this is for, Mr. Poland, I'm guessing there was a public hearing through your department?

Council President Woerpel- There was a public hearing in the BZA

Councilman Tyler- I'm just doing due diligence to see if there was any comments that we should know about in support or opposition of the zoning change.

Brian Poland- Well there was some comments, and people had questions, but that is why we provide you the draft set of minutes from the BZA meeting. A lot of those comments are referenced in there. I believe there was one person who was online who had some questions, and if I may just state for the record that the first one was for the distribution of food processing, the one that you still have before is for the tavern. The first one brings the industrial uses in. The second one brings the C-2 use in, to a C-1 District.

Council President Woerpel- Councilman Tyler, just to reiterate what I've heard from two residents that live behind there, and they're in full support of it, including the dog he has too, including Sylvester. Any other discussion?

Councilman Salinas- I've got one other question, Mr. President. It's for the owner Mike, when will the Ghost Chant be ready specifically?

Mike Glowacki- It'll probably be the first thing we brew.

Councilman Salinas- Thank you, Mike.

Mike Glowacki- Hopefully before the end of the year.

Councilman Salinas- Thanks a lot, buddy.

Mike Glowacki- Thank you, sir.

Council President Woerpel- Anybody else have any further discussion? Hearing none, Clerk Golec, roll call.

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

NAYS: None ABSENT: None Motion carried

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BZA 25-22/Z-25-15 APPROVED

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Mary Schoons- The meeting minutes from August 25th are not online. If you're unable to go to crime watch meetings, are the minutes available?

Councilwoman Venecz-Generally speaking, no. I know that a couple groups do take minutes for their internal purposes, but other than that, they ask that you show up.

Mary Schoons- Oh, they don't pass that out? Maybe that's something they can look at going forward if people are interested in something like that.

Councilwoman Venecz-Thank you for your suggestion.

Mary Schoons- I'm glad that the city is getting charging stations. I wanted to let folks know that Representative Carolyn Jackson is having a re-districting meeting on Saturday, October 4th, from 11-12:30 at the Laborer's Local 41, 550 Superior Avenue in Munster. It's about the state considering adding more seats to try to gerrymander the state. Come out to have your voice heard.

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

AYES: ALL

2025 HAMMOND COMMON COUNCIL ATTENDANCE RECORD OF

ELECTRONIC AND PHYSICAL PRESENCE

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

Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 6:39 p.m.

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