

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on November 10, 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

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller- Good evening, Council. On behalf of the Mayor, I want to wish everyone a happy Veteran's Day for tomorrow. Being such, City Hall will be closed. Thank you specifically Councilman Emerson, and Councilman Spitale for your service. I appreciate that very much. Report over some of the past 2 weeks, Mayor and I met with Rob Hart and they're the developers from the bank to hear progress on how things are going there. They have basically leased out the entire property at this time and they're excited to do more work, so they came in to talk to us about what's next. They're looking at down town and finding another under utilized building and continuing to move forward. Had a meeting with Councilman Tyler on the Man of Steel in Harrison Park and trying to get it renovated. If you've been by there recently and actually taken a good look at it, you can see it's in need of some love, but the good news is we have some interested partners that are willing to help fund raise for this, so it shouldn't cost the city anything to get it redone and looking nice again. Attended the Hammond Trunk or Treat at the police department. We had several hundred people come through there. Big shout out to our police department for taking up that initiative and continuing to show that they're a trusted resource in our city. The sportsplex had a trick or treat event on Halloween to reach out for young people with disabilities. It was very well attended and then afterwards, they had a party where they had several hundred people show up at the sportsplex afterwards as well. Both events were very successful and we plan on having them again next year, as was our annual Veteran's Day Parade, again, we're the only community in the area that takes time to celebrate our veterans in that fashion., again, lots of people coming out, some good reflections on that day. I met with a group called the Lazarus Project, led by Bishop Grant. They're looking at partnering with Family Christian Center who purchased the building on 7147 Kennedy. It's right there on the North West side of the park and right now it's painted white, but they're going to be turning that into not just a food pantry, but it's going to be all resources there, clothing, household items, and that should be ready within the next few months. As you might remember, Steve Muncie's father opened up his first church on that location a long time ago, so Family Christian Center bought the building, they're currently renovating it, and it should be open to serve the community, like I said, within the next few months. We held a for champs promotion boxing event at the civic center on the 1st of November. We had a moderate crowd out there, but we're going to continue to work on having events at the civic center all through the fall, winter, and spring. We had our monthly meeting with the

*Prepared by
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Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS Cont.

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller cont.- police department. One of the things that we discussed, that some of you may have seen, is that we had a party on Kennedy Avenue a couple weekends ago that overflowed into the streets where we had a whole bunch of young people. It got a lot of views on social media, and I just want to let everybody know too, that the owner of the property is the one that called the police because the tenant, the one who rented the birthday party place, misrepresented how many people were going to be there, so when he saw that all these other kids were showing up, he called the police to come and get extra support. We are still following up on those things. We always do when things happen like that, you can rest assure that Mayor doesn't rest on those things. He was already texting that evening about what we were going to do about it. We followed up with Code. We follow up with our Fire Inspection. We follow up with our police going to meet with the owners, and we make sure that things like this, the chances of them happening again are limited. Moving right on though, we also along the same way, we are continuing to meet on our used car task force, and that's an initiative from the Mayor to straighten up all the used car lots around Hammond that may be out of compliance. You may see junk cars out, things like that we're attacking them and in the past few weeks, we've had multiple meetings on most specifically, we did the 2nd and the 3rd, we're going to be moving on to the 4th District and continue to work on the used car lots. We had a meeting with new hires. Marcus Holland was promoted to Craftsman at Public Works, and we had 4 new correctional officers starting in the jail. I know we have our hiring freeze, but these are critical positions for the city to move forward. I just want to mention just in general, redevelopment continues to be really hot in the city. Just in the past 2 weeks, we've had meetings about the property on Calumet Avenue where we thought a Starbucks was going to go, we already have 3 interested parties for that property. We had one interested in State Street, that's over on Stateline, west of the Strack and Van Til's, that empty lot there. We had interest in the former NIPSCO building on 5265 Hohman. We had interest in the old public aid office on 4803 Hohman, that's the one that's kind of on Hoffman Street. I gave a tour over there. We continue to move forward on Rimbach plaza. We had another meeting on 1175 State Street. A lot of these are under non disclosures so I can't tell you exactly in a public meeting who was looking for it, but that's all in the last 2 weeks we've had meetings on all those different properties, so like, Hammond is very popular right now as far as development and a big reason I think is the community we built here, and basically the taxes compared to Illinois. People want to come here. Just a few upcoming events. We have the Sportsplex expansion ribbon cutting on Thursday, November 20th, at 11 a.m. I'd like to invite all the Council there. The day after, on November 21st, we have the Mayor's Commission on disabilities, lunch and learn. That's from 10 a.m.- 1 p.m. that is also going to be held at the sportsplex this year. Lastly, we have a paint and sip at the Jean Shepherd. They're going to be painting a lighthouse at dusk. That's on November 20th in the evening from 6-8 p.m. You do have to RSVP, and there is a minor cost for that, but if you like to do like a wine and canvas, we're doing that out of the Jean Shepherd on November 20th. That concludes all of my updates and announcements. I am happy to answer any questions.

Council President Woerpel- A couple things, as far as the used car lots go, one of the places that started all of that was Cooper Tire, right?

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller- It was, yeah.

Council President Woerpel- and because of the task force and some pressure that was put on, we've got them to come into compliance, is that my understanding of it?

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS Cont.

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller- Yes, absolutely. You saw before and after pictures. That task force has been in effect for a year now. So much so, that we were able to take some properties off the list, like Cooper's Tire that we're on to monitoring status now, and we added a bunch more properties on. Words getting out there about it.

Council President Woerpel- Just in my neighborhood alone, because I live right behind there, that was a huge success from the first night we drove by there and saw some animals running from the parking lot there, and then I know that the Mayor and I discussed this briefly one night, and I've had a conversation with you one night, about the possibility of trying to go paperless citywide within the next couple of years. I know when the Mayor and I talked, and I talked to you, we can start it with the Council if you guys are open to it next year of going to the ipads and we'd be trained on it, according to the Mayor. I know there's a couple of Dinosaurs on here like me that don't know how to turn an ipad on, but have we opened anymore discussions on that or no?

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller- We've had some internal discussions. I've talked to I.T. about it. Getting new ipads is not a problem. Now, what the implications are for everybody's processes, we need to meet and get some clarification on how that's going to be.

Council President Woerpel- Well the conversation started because of Councilman Tyler asking about getting the packets online, and if it's that easy to do it, there's no reason why we've gotta have all these papers. So just a heads up to the Council too, there has been a couple of initial discussions on it. I know when the Mayor and I talked, that we'd like to do something about it before the budget of next year, at least, as far as ipads and as far as the Council Office goes. If everyone would give input on that, it'd be appreciated. Anybody else have anything to add?

Councilman Kalwinski- Can we put agendas and ordinances on the internet now?

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller- So, what I see when I go on there is, once the Council approves the ordinances in the final version, and any resolutions, you can go onto the gohammond and get the final versions. Clerk Golec, or anyone, did you want to provide anymore detail to that?

Clerk Golec- All of it goes through I.T We provide the information, and it's up to I.T. whether it's published.

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller- The agenda is required now, ok.

Councilman Kalwinski- I was referring to agendas and agenda items before the meetings.

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller- I agree with you and, Mayor, he's on board with having that.

Council President Woerpel- The discussions that I've had with Councilman Tyler, I.T. and the Mayor, I don't think anyone is opposed to that going online, it's just a matter of what day will it be up at what time? I know that our stuff is usually on Wednesday, and it might take a day to get it up online, so if we'd have like a drop dead date of it'll be up on Friday before a meeting or whatever, that's all we basically need to work out.

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller- Yeah it all kind of goes together with the initiative of going paperless too though, if

MAYOR'S ADDRESS Cont.

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller cont.- you can just have everything in a digital format. There's platforms that can do all of that pretty simply. Not to bring up my past, but at School City, they converted all the way back in 2014 to everything going online, so the technology exists. It can certainly be done if the will is there.

Council President Woerpel- That's what I think we got the Friday idea from, was you said the School City does it by the Friday before the meetings?

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller- Mhm.

Council President Woerpel- I don't think anybody's opposed to that either as far as I'm aware of.

Councilwoman Venecz- I'm not opposed to it, however, just as we have in our packet right now, the minutes, and it has draft on it, I think whatever document we put online, should have draft on it, so no one is under the impression that it's etched in stone.

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller- I think that's a good idea that before the final version gets done, it could say draft for sure and then once the minutes have been approved the Council at the following meeting, then you can upload the final version of the minutes.

Council President Woerpel- That's, if I'm understanding correctly, it's got to do with sometimes we have an ordinance or a resolution in the packet that doesn't get introduced and that's what I think you're referring to is?

Councilwoman Venecz- No, I was referring to, as the minutes right now it has draft on it, and whatever goes online, I would like to see draft on it, because it hasn't been approved.

Chief of Staff, Scott Miller- That's not a problem.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Salinas, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to accept the minutes of October 27, 2025 minutes and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Rakos, move to approve the claims from October 22, 2025 through November 5, 2025. Claim #9759 through #10129, inclusive. In the amount of \$6,452,048.19.

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

CLAIMS APPROVED

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Tyler- This weekend I had the pleasure of attending the 30 year anniversary of Reverend Polk at his church, New Hope Missionary Baptist Church. I just wanted to say congratulations to him and his First Lady, Mrs. Martha Polk on 30 years of serving our community, being advisors of so many different leaders across our city. I think their reach expands outside of Hammond, and outside the State of Indiana. I just wanted to congratulate him, once again on 30plus years of leadership here in the city. I also wanted to announce that this year our drive through turkey giveaway will take place on Saturday, November 22nd, at 9 a.m. in the Ophelia Steen parking lot. As of right now, we will be giving away 200 turkeys. We're also in the process of trying to partner more deeply with the food bank and other organizations to see if we can provide additional food items for families in need too. If anybody out there would like to donate, please reach out to me or Councilwoman Alexander. Thank you to the Council people who have already supported that initiative. I'll be releasing more information, but thank you for your sponsorship and support. Once again, it's Saturday, November 22nd, at 9 a.m. in the Ophelia Steen parking lot. Thank you.

Councilman Rakos- I have a question in regards to that. Does it go through The Greater Hammond? The checks, the sponsorships go to?

Councilman Tyler- The sponsorships go to the Food bank of Northwest Indiana.

Councilman Rakos- Ok, thank you.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Wed., Dec. 3; Edison Community Watch; Edison School; 6:30 p.m.
Harrison Park Crime Watch; Tues., Dec. 2; 6 p.m.; VFW on Hohman Ave,
Jefferson Crime Watch; Wed., Nov. 12; 6 p.m.; Jefferson School
Hessville Crime Watch; Thurs., Nov. 20; IIC3 Community Center; 6 p.m.
Irving Community Watch; Tues., Nov. 11; 9:30 a.m.; Irving School
Whiting-Robertsedale Crime Watch; Thur., Nov. 13; 6:30 p.m.; Calumet College

Councilwoman Venecz- I wanted to announce that we are in the process of the Ring Doorbell program. We have had many applications. We have 175 doorbells to give away. The flyer is online on gohammond, it's also online at Edison Community Watch on Facebook, and fill out the application, supply the appropriate information, and we will have a drawing on November 25th at the police department. The Community Affairs officers will be drawing the names. I don't want to touch them. This is just a great opportunity for you to protect your property and protect your neighborhood. Just so you know, I've seen some of the comments online, like oh yeah this is big brother watching and the police department will be able to watch whatever is going on on your camera, that is not true. The police department will request that they can view your video. They will not automatically get into your ring doorbell. Please be the eyes and ears of your neighborhood for your neighbors, and our police department, because community is not just about me, it's about us.

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Hammond City Clerk*

COMMITTEE REPORTS Cont.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BOARD - Councilman Salinas - I want to announce that the Capital Improvement Board met on November 3rd, and during that meeting we had 1 Funding Allocations:

FUNDING ALLOCATION #294- Summer Street Reconstruction Change Order #18- INDOT/Reith-Riley- in the amount of \$1,626.39

COUNCIL AS A WHOLE COMMITTEE - Councilman Kalwinski - Brought out 25-30 and 25-31.

ORDINANCE 3rd READING- FINAL PASSAGE

25-30 An Ordinance Reclassifying Certain Lands in the City of Hammond for Zoning Purposes and Amending Ord. No. 8514 for Property Commonly known as: 3518 Sheffield Ave. And 345 136th st.

Councilwoman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for passage.

Councilman Kalwinski- This is a development in the 1st District. It's approximately 21 acres of land. 14 acres are develop able. 7 acres are wet lands that were preserved. The plan for this almost 21 million dollar development is to have a 3 story enclosed self storage building and then to have a number of buildings with a roof for R.V.'s and boat storage, and then a number of buildings, a few buildings, that will be enclosed for R.V. and boat storage. There is not adequate storage for these kinds of vehicles at this time in the area of Hammond, and the surrounds, and Mr. Patel, the developer feels very certain that this is a need that he can fulfill. This will be gated at both entrance and exit points on Sheffield, and Boy Scout Rd. Or 136th. They will also include a number of amenities such as a dog park, a dump station, and office, a lounge, and a service with a golf cart to get people from the office to the area within the facility that they're going to. If all goes well, Mr. Patel plans on breaking ground in June 2026. I had the pleasure of meeting him and taking him around our district last week and have discussions with him. He's fully on board with creating a facility that will have eye appeal on the frontage and so that 1, he's a good neighbor, but also so that people will want to bring their vehicles to that site. I'm excited about this potential development on what land used to be a lot of slag and unused. If there are any questions, I'm happy to answer them.

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. 9690 PASSED

25-31 An Ordinance Vacating a 440.06 Portion of 125th Street lying East of the East Right of Way Line of Gaspar Avenue and West of the West Right of Way Line of New York Avenue in the 1400 Block of New York Ave in the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved for passage

*Prepared by
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Hammond City Clerk*

ORDINANCE 3rd READING- FINAL PASSAGE Cont.

Councilman Kalwinski- This is a plot of land between New York and Gaspar Avenues which was designated to be a street someday, but it never happened. It is currently owned by redevelopment and so that portion is necessary to add to the other area of the colleges green space to create a practice field that will also be used for summer camps with the youth that come to those summer camps at the college. There's really not much else to say about that except that it's a long term lease through redevelopment with the college and the college is looking forward to breaking ground with some of the 15 million dollar lily grand they received to begin this process as soon as possible after passage tonight.

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. 9691 PASSED

Council President Woerpel- With the passage of Ordinance 25-30, the Intent to Consider on the agenda goes away.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

25-32 An Ordinance Creating a New Fund (Fund #4684) for the Purpose of Accounting for and Administering the Wheel/Surtax Project Funds

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

Councilwoman Venecz- This ordinance is at the request of our Controller. It is establishing a line item for project expenditures from the wheel tax funding. AYES:ALL

RESOLUTIONS

25R-22 A Resolution Ratifying the Hammond Redevelopment Commission's Good Faith Offer to Purchase Pursuant to I.C. § 32-24-1-5, and the Hammond Redevelopment Commission's Pursuing the Acquisition of the Property Through Eminent Domain Pursuant to I.C. §32-24-1, ET SEQ.

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Salinas, moved for passage.

Councilman Kalwinski- This is the ratification of the action of the Hammond Redevelopment Commission concerning the property at 1318, and 1320 Indianapolis Blvd.

RESOLUTIONS Cont.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MOTION CARRIED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Laurie Zulno- Thanked Veteran's for their service and thanked Council for the effort they have made to put ordinances online.

Brian Lawry- Thanked everyone for passing the ordinance regarding Cal College.

Mary Schoons- Expressed opinion towards Mayor at Mayor's night out and about Briar East Woods.

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	27	9	23	14	28	11	25	8	22	13	27	10			
Katrina Alexander	P	E	E	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	A	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
Dan Spitale	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
Janet Venecz	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
Mark Kalwinski	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
Alfonso Salinas III	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
Barry Tyler	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	E	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P			
Bill Emerson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
Scott Rakos	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
Dave Woerpel	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
Initials	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG			

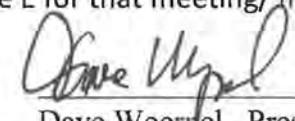
E=ELECTRONIC

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: 6:37 p.m.

mg/cb

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk