

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on April 27, 2026 in the Hammond City Council Chambers and was available to be viewed at gohammond on Facebook, gohammond.tv live and per Zoom.

Council President Janet Venecz presided.

City Clerk Robert J. Golec facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.
Moment of silence was observed.

ROLL CALL

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

ELECTRONICALLY PRESENT PER ZOOM: None

ABSENT: Alexander, Woerpel

TOTAL: 7

Council President Venecz- I know there's two more coming, so right now, 7 present and 2 absent.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor McDermott- It's good to see you all. This is my report for April 27, 2026. I know it's a busy council meeting today so I'm going to go through my items and I'm going to stick around today. I'll talk about a couple of the other things we have coming up, I know you guys are ready to move forward with. First off, I met with Bill Gustafson, President of the Horseshoe Casino in Hammond, regarding upcoming plans for the casino, as is most Hammond residents. They're watching particularly close. I think it has a big effect on their future plans for Horseshoe Casino, should we become home to the Chicago Bears. I met with developers interested in developing the old St. Margaret Mercy site in Downtown Hammond. I took a tv interview with Jaylen Jamond from the Hammond Area Career Center at their tv studio in the ACC. I met with the Chiefs and Captains of the Hammond Police Department for our regular monthly meeting. I met with the Hammond Building, Code, and Fire Officials to discuss vacant Clark High School as well as the Vacant Hammond Gavit High School. Both schools are vacant for all intents and purposes. The Hammond School Board has been made aware. The Hammond City Officials are prepared to move forward with the demolition orders if not presented with a plan as to what the School City plans to do with these vacant buildings. They had no response by the time we set a deadline. I'm willing to take questions on that right now if you guys want to. We all discussed this here. We gave the School City of Hammond in mid February a deadline of March 31st for them to get back to us with a plan. They didn't get back to us at all, so they have no plan at all. I think, they think, it's just going to go away if they keep annoying it, which seems to be their plan and if we keep doing that, we're going to keep getting complaints from residents that are worried about broken windows, vacant buildings, people hanging out. God forbid, you know there's other cities that have had this problem and crime started occurring in these buildings. They're not monitored, there's no power, there's no water, and there's no plan from the School City of Hammond. We have to move forward on this or else we're complaisant with this failure. I'm not sitting back. We're issuing demolition orders immediately. We're marching forward. The School City, like I said, for those that are listening, failed to respond. They haven't given us any word whatsoever about what the plan is. I think, so lucky for us, there's school board elections this year and I think we should take the streets and ask the

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS Cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.-candidates when you see them applying, what's your plan with Gavit High School? What's your plan with Clark High School? Those are just the high schools, what's your plan with these vacant city buildings across the City of Hammond. We can't just let them sit there. That's the plan. There's supposed to be a process the School City goes through when they have empty buildings. They're not going through that process. That's a violation of State Law. We've asked them nicely. They've blown us off. I don't know what else to do. If anybody has any question on this, I still have stuff I want to hit, but that's very frustrating because the Fire Department, the Building Department, the Code Enforcement, they're responsible for building codes in the city and School City is in violation of building code.

Councilman Salinas- So, Mr. Mayor, what does the time line look like if we're issuing these orders to them if they continue to ignore the orders, what does that look like?

Mayor McDermott- I'd only be speculating, it'll be months I imagine still, but we have a process we have to go through. I imagine that there could be a litigation as a result of this because I'm pretty sure the School City is supposed to put these buildings up for a charter school to bid on. That's State Law, this isn't Tom McDermott Law, it's not City Ordinance, it's State Law. I don't think they're following State Law. I know they're not following State Law. If we do a demo order on the building, and we come in and we get ready to knock it down, that's a violation, you know. I think the School City is going to have to say, hey wait, we have to go through this process first, but this is a process they could have done 5 years ago, they just haven't. They don't want to. They're afraid, maybe a charter school will pick it up. Instead they just want to sit on the buildings and we get to look at them slowly dilapidate away and there's people that live there. There's people that live right by Clark High School. There's people that live right by Gavit, and they're concerned.

Councilman Kalwinski- Has Code Enforcement gone in those buildings and cited for violations?

Mayor McDermott- No sir, not inside. That will be next, but we do know that there's no water or utility. We do know there's no power. That was admitted to us. I think the School City wants us to believe they're intrical to the School City Operations, and they're not. They're just failing to follow State Law. That's it, and we get to live with the repercussions and it's unacceptable. I'm going to keep you guys in the loop on this unless you have anymore questions.

Councilman Salinas- Well it is unacceptable, because we also have, not just the 2 high schools, but we also have Kenwood, Lafayette, there's a number of other schools that are sitting there vacant.

Mayor McDermott- I agree with you, Councilman. We started with the high schools, and I totally agree with what you're saying, that we started with the high schools, but this is a problem in the School City. When a school goes vacant, they're supposed to, so Kenwood, so technically if Kenwood is in the same condition, I haven't verified that, I know Clark in Hammond are without water, without power, they're vacant, ok? I'm pretty sure Kenwood may still have power and water, I don't know, but still, there's no plan. There's no plan for Kenwood, so technically the School City is supposed to put Kenwood up for sale to a charter school, and if no charter school takes it, then we can buy it in the City, and I could put houses there, or other things, so the School City doesn't want to go through that process. They're afraid maybe somebody will buy it, and then what, we've got a charter school were Kenwood used to be. So instead, they say, I'm just going to sit on it. We're not going

MAYOR'S ADDRESS Cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.-to do anything with Kenwood forever. You guys can just sit there and watch Kenwood fade away. That's the answer. It's unacceptable, Councilman. It's unacceptable. I've seen with my own eyes what happens when cities ignore vacant schools. Dead bodies get stored there, crimes are committed there, arsons are committed there, it's not going to happen in our city while I'm the Mayor.

Councilman Salinas- Ok, thank you, please stay on it.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you, I promise I'll stay on it and I'll keep you all in the loop.

Councilman Woerpel- After we discussed this at the last meeting, I overwhelmingly heard from the residents around the Gavit area and they're glad that we're taking a proactive approach on this.

Mayor McDermott- You know who else is proud? Purdue Northwest, they have a legitimate use for Gavit High School. They want it, but as long as the School City of Hammond is sitting there doing nothing, even Purdue can't move forward with this. We're all at a stalemate. This is going to be a continuous stalemate unless we prompt, which is what I'm trying to do, poke it. We can't sit here, we have to keep poking it. What's going on guys? What's going on, until they move forward or we beat them when they run for School Board. We beat their butt, and we put people in there that are going to move forward. That's the answer. It's one or the other.

Council President Venecz- Mayor, thank you. Thank you for doing that. It is such a disservice to our community and our students for these buildings to be vacant, not even make an effort to get children in those schools. It's pathetic.

Mayor McDermott- We'll stay on it together, all of us. I'll keep on bringing it up to you and we can keep talking about it and like I said, lucky for us, there's school board elections this year. This should be a high issue on what they're dealing with, still I have a few things, I'm sorry. I attended NIRPC full commission meeting. I held a ground breaking ceremony in Downtown Hammond, for the new Downtown Hammond Train Station attended by hundreds of excited region residents. That was a really big announcement, I appreciate Councilman Salinas, the host Councilman that day. I appreciate all the Councilmen that were there. That was really cool. There had to have been a few hundred people there at that ceremony. I met with 30+ executives from the City of Hammond, The Chicago Bears organization, as well as representatives from Governor Braun's administration, including numerous consultants to discuss the possibility of the Chicago Bears locating their new stadium to Hammond's Wolf Lake neighborhood. That has been widely covered by the newspaper so I didn't feel like I couldn't report that to you. It was obvious that they took a picture of me and Kevin Warren heading down the stairs, so that's still happening. Illinois is still scrambling. We're still the only city with an offer on the table. The Bear's are not going to be playing in Chicago any longer. It's either going to be in Arlington Heights , Illinois or Hammond, Indiana. That's period, so hopefully they choose Hammond. I threw the first pitch out at Hessville Little League's opening day. I appeared on WJOB's morning show with Jed to discuss Hammond happenings, a lot of Bear's talk, believe it or not. I know that's not very surprising. I participated in Hammond's annual, Bring Your Children to Work Day. It was very well attended by lots of kids. There was lots of things for the kids to do and the Hammond Firefighter's Local 556 grilled hotdogs. It was really cool. I appreciate everybody that participated. I saw a lot of kids there. A lot of people worked really hard, all the different departments that brought vehicles out and cleaned them up really nice for the kids. Alex and Kristie in my office worked really

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR's ADDRESS Cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.-hard on this. I thought it was great, honestly so I appreciate everyone that participated. I was interviewed by the Chicago Morning Answer at 560 am WIND Radio Show about the possible Bear's relocation to the City of Hammond's Wolf Lake area. I was interviewed by Channel 5 NBC News Roe Schmidt at the Lost Marsh about the possible Bear's relocation to the City of Hammond's Wolf Lake area. I attended the Hammond Optimist annual Smelt Fry this weekend. Hundreds of people there from all across Northwest Indiana. They did a great job. Thanks Scott Rakos, and the Hammond Optimists. It was a super cool event. Last but not least, I ended up in the 3rd District at the Hammond Civic Center to watch armored MMA. We had 1,000+ people at that event, so busy times in Hammond. That's my report. I know I'm going to be here for the stuff that's coming out of committee unless you all have questions.

Council President Venecz- Clerk Golec, will you please record that Councilman Woerpel, and Councilwoman Alexander are in attendance now?

City Clerk Golec- So noted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Salinas, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to approve the minutes of April 13, 2026 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved to approve the claims from April 14, 2026 through April 22, 2026. Claim #2928 through claim #3368, inclusive. In the amount of \$8,948,434.38.

ROLL CALL VOTE (claims)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

CLAIMS APPROVED

PUBLIC HEARINGS

26-10 An Ordinance of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana, Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of Bonds of the City of Hammond, Indiana to Finance the Costs of Certain Public Safety Equipment and Related Costs, and the Issuance and Sale of Bond Anticipation Notes in Anticipation of the Issuance and Sale of such Bonds, Appropriating the Proceeds Derived From the Sale of Such Bonds and Bond Anticipation Notes, and other matters related thereto

Council President Venecz- Anyone wishing to speak on 26-10 please approach the podium. Anybody wishing to speak on 26-10? Anyone wishing to speak on 26-10? Mayor?

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC HEARINGS Cont.

Mayor McDermott-Just real quick, just to remind everybody, just in case they're just tuning in. This is a public safety bond in the amount, not to exceed \$6 million. We think it's going to be closer to \$5.2 million. It's there to purchase police and fire radios which are 12 years old and outdated including a new fire engine. We estimate the interest to be around 6%, 5 year term, annual payments of about \$1.2 million, the first payment being in 2027 and the repayment source is going to be from water sales revenue that is currently being used for the Station 2 debt. That's falling off of our budget, and once that falls off if you all approve this, we're going to slap this into it's place, so we won't increase the tax rate or anything like that, ok? Our police and firemen obviously deserve to have great radios. This is going to replace every single radio on police and fire and give us a new fire engine. I think it's a great deal.

Councilman Kalwinski- I want to thank the police and fire for being at the meeting and giving us some information. The radios they have now, have an 8 year life and they're in their 12th year so they are obsolete. They're unable to get parts for them and the new radios will have a 7-10 year life span and will also have a built in gps. It's a good upgrade and it's more than high time to get those to them for their safety.

Council President Venecz- And a wifi capability.

Councilman Salinas- And a 5 year warranty.

Council President Venecz- Yes. Alrighty, anyone else wishing to speak on 26-10? Anyone else? Anyone else wishing to speak on 26-10?

26-11 An Ordinance Vacating a 125 Foot Portion of an East-West Alley South of 175th Street in the 7500 Block of Linden Avenue, City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana

Council President Venecz- Anyone wishing to speak on 26-11, please approach the podium. Anyone wishing to speak on 26-11?

Mayor McDermott- This is a 125 foot portion of the East-West Alley of 175th Street in the 4th District, 7500 Block of Linden Avenue, this is basically the old gas station on 75th and Columbia. It's the alley behind the old gas station including the homes that used to front 175th. This alley is being vacated so that we can build our future Firehouse, Station #7 at that location. We are in the process of designing the new Station #7. It's getting real close to being complete, and then after that, once we identify a funding source, we will be building a fire house on this location. This is just site preparation work that we're asking you to consider.

Council President Venecz- Anyone else wishing to speak on 26-11? Anyone else wishing to speak on 26-11? Public Hearings is now closed.

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Woerpel- I don't know if this falls under communications but I would like to congratulate the Mayor on becoming a grandfather again. I think you'll understand what I meant when I said, it's a shame you can't have your grandkids first, but congratulations to you, and your wife, and Lindsey on the baby today.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

COMMUNICATIONS Cont.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you, Ezra.

Council President Venecz- Wonderful. Any other communications?

Councilman Salinas- I'd like to just remind everyone that Hammond's 21st annual Cinco De Mayo Fiesta is this Friday, May 1st, at the Hammond Civic Center from 5-8 p.m. Thank you.

Council President Venecz- Any other communications? (X3) Communications are now closed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE COMMITTEE- Councilman Woerpel- brought out 26-10 and 26-12

STREETS AND ALLEYS COMMITTEE- Councilman Salinas- brought out 26-11

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BOARD - Councilman Salinas- The Capital Improvement Board did not meet.

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

East Hammond Pullman Crime Watch; Tues, May 19; 6 p.m.; Ophelia Steen Center
Edison Community Watch; Wed. May 6; 6:30 p.m.; Edison School
Harrison Park Crime Watch; Tues. June 2; 6 p.m.; VFW on Hohman Ave.
Hessville Crime Watch; Thur. May 21; 6 p.m.; HC3 Community Center
Irving Community Watch; Tues. May 12 ; 9:30 a.m.; Irving School
South Hohman Avenue Neighborhood Watch; Thur. April 30; 6:30 p.m.; Trinity Lutheran Church
Whiting/Robertsdale Crime Watch; Thur. May 14; 6:30 p.m.; Calumet College
Jefferson Crime Watch; Wed. May 27; 6 p.m.; Jefferson School

Council President Venecz-As usual, I encourage everyone to go to a crime watch meeting and learn what's going on in your neighborhood and safety tips for you and your family because community is not just about me, it's about us.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE- Councilwoman Alexander- Just from Scholarship Committee, the applications are now available, and I'll give each one of you a copy today as well. They're gonna go out, but I did have a question for all of us, the meeting that would typically be the meeting that we would do the drawing is Memorial Day so we would need to make a switch for the May 25th meeting to hopefully May 26th and that's something that I put on the application as well.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE- Councilman Tyler- The Economic Development Committee is in the process of scheduling a meeting for May, so I'll keep everybody posted on when we land on that date.

Council President Venecz- Any other committee reports? (X2) Committee reports is now closed.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

ORDINANCE THIRD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

26-10 An Ordinance of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana, Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of Bonds of the City of Hammond, Indiana to Finance the Costs of Certain Public Safety Equipment and Related Costs, and the Issuance and Sale of Bond Anticipation Notes in Anticipation of the Issuance and Sale of such Bonds, Appropriating the Proceeds Derived From the Sale of Such Bonds and Bond Anticipation Notes, and other matters related thereto

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved for final passage.

Councilman Spitale- The money for the new radios for the Hammond Fire Department, and also the police officers, also going to replace the engine #8, which is on the Hessville engine

Councilman Salinas- I would also like to be added as a sponsor to this ordinance please, thank you.

Council President Venecz- You got that, Clerk Golec?

City Clerk Golec- Yes, we do.

Council President Venecz- Ok, thank you.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 ORDINANCE NO. 9705 PASSED

26-11 An Ordinance Vacating a 125 Foot Portion of an East-West Alley South of 175th Street in the 7500 Block of Linden Avenue, City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana

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

Councilman Emerson- There will be a closing of an alley in order to build the new station, and it's enclosed in the ordinance 26-11. I am very proud to sponsor this ordinance 26-11 for final passage.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 ORDINANCE NO. 9706 PASSED

26-12 An Ordinance of the City of Hammond to Amend and Adopt Certain Sections within Title III, Chapter 37, of the Hammond Municipal Code as it Pertains to Travel Rules and Regulations

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved for final passage.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

ORDINANCE THIRD READING- FINAL PASSAGE Cont.

Councilman Woerpel- This updates the ordinance pertaining to travel by City Employees and Elected Officials. It's my understanding, the ordinance hasn't been updated since I was 40. It just brings it up to modern cost.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 ORDINANCE NO. 9707 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

26-13 An Ordinance Creating New Funds (Funds #3384, #3326, #3327, and #3343) for Municipal Food and Beverage Tax Monies

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilman Salinas, moved for 1st and 2nd reading by title.

Councilman Woerpel- Contrary to what people believe on the internet, this has nothing to do with raising the food and beverage tax. This creates 4 new funds that are requested by the Controller to distribute the food and beverage tax money we've collected which we passed on June 24, 2024 to specific projects, I believe one of them was the Sportsplex, the other one was the Downtown Hammond Station. I think there might have been a 3rd one in there, but it creates 3 funds, or 4 funds. (Fund #3384, the food and beverage dsr-mm account; Fund #3326, the food and beverage redemption account; Fund #3327, food and beverage rebate fund; Fund #3343, the food and beverage depository) Like I said previously, this doesn't raise any new taxes. There's no new funds being discussed. It's just creating accounts for the money that's already been appropriated into to go into, so there is no need for a public hearing or a committee hearing on this. We're just creating the accounts for the money to go into.

Council President Venecz- So it's the distribution of funds as they come in.

Councilman Woerpel- We've done this on several different issues.

Council President Venecz- Exactly. Based on the recommendation of the Controller and the State Board of Accounts.

Councilman Woerpel- Yes.

ROLL CALL VOTE (1st and 2nd reading)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 MOTION CARRIED

RESOLUTIONS

26R-07 A Resolution Ratifying the City of Hammond (through the Hammond Redevelopment Commission) Making a Good Faith Offer to Purchase Pursuant to §32-24-1-5 and Authorizing the City of Hammond (through the Hammond Redevelopment Commission) to file a Condemnation Lawsuit Pursuant to §32-41-1 ET SEQ

Councilman Salinas, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved for adoption.

Mayor McDermott- I appreciate Councilman Salinas for bringing this forward. This resolution has around 7 acres of vacant land that has sat unused and undeveloped for the last 3 decades. I've been Mayor for 22 years and I've never seen 1 tax dollar generated off of this land, other than what vacant land generates. It's not going forward to help us run our government, help us run our schools, it's not doing anything for the immediate neighborhood which is a beautiful neighborhood in North Hammond, a real strong area. It sits right off the Indiana Toll Road in close proximity to hotels that probably haven't been redeveloped in over 20 years, so we offered the owner fair market value for this land in 2024, not only was this offer rejected, but the land remains vacant with no plans to move forward with any development. The city would like to see this land put to it's highest and best use, things like new restaurants, hotels, class a office buildings, the kind of stuff we've done on the South side of the City, very successfully. We already did it at Oxbow on the South side. We did it at the Cabela's on the South side. We're in the process of doing it at what we call River North, which is the old haunted house. That's going to be very successful. This part of our city in North Hammond also could easily be redeveloped. This land is not being put to its highest and best use and quite frankly, finding 7 acres of undeveloped land in this city is a challenge and it's here. This resolution on tonight's Council Agenda will start the condemnation lawsuit so that we can acquire those 2 parcels. Once we acquire them, it's clean land, we'll put an RFP out on it and there will be a tremendous amount of interest in developing this land. This is a good project. It's stuff like I said that we've done on the South side of the city very successfully. There's no reason for that part of our city to not be developing the same way. Other parts adjacent to 80/94 are developing. I think if you guys move forward on this, in 2 years, we fast forward 2 years, and you'll see brand new hotels and brand new restaurants in that area and quite frankly all due respect to the people that own those hotels over there, those hotels haven't been upgraded in a long time. If we have a brand new Hampton Inn, right off the toll road, and I get off the toll road, and I want to stay in Hammond for the night, I look at the brand new Hampton Inn, and I look at the other hotel offerings there, I think a lot of people are probably gonna go with the newer hotel which may incentivise the owner of the current hotels to clean up those hotels as well and if we play our cards right, we can have a completely redeveloped area over there and I think this is the kick starter so I appreciate the council people for listening. Councilman Mark invited me to the Mohawks, I reported on it last time I was here. There was some concern in the Mohawks that this may have something to do with their building. It has nothing to do with their building. This piece of property is identified by address. What's the address on it just to be straight? 4500?

Council President Venecz- 4205

Mayor McDermott- 4205 Calumet Avenue?

Councilman Salinas- Through 49.

Mayor McDermott- It's 7 acres just South of the toll road exit off of the toll road. I don't know if you have any

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS Cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.-questions about this. I appreciate Councilman Salinas for bringing it forward. I appreciate Councilman Kalwinski. Obviously this is adjacent to his district and I think we put out some fires over there as well. I don't know if you have any questions about this.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R07 ADOPTED

26R-08 A Resolution of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana, Affirming its Commitment to Transparency, Open Government, and Public Access Through the Advanced Posting of Meeting Agendas and Supporting Documentation

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilman Salinas, moved for adoption.

Council president Venecz- Councilman Spitale and I put our heads together on this to formalize our meeting agenda and the supporting documents to be on gohammond.com hopefully by Friday afternoon. In some cases, we may have changes as we did today that happened on Monday. Hopefully this gives the public an opportunity to read the documentation that we get.

Councilwoman Alexander- I ask to be a sponsor added to this resolution.

City Clerk Golec- So noted.

Councilman Tyler- Just a quick question, I know we have been talking about this for awhile and there's been plenty of requests from the public regarding it. At one point we were talking about exploring different platforms to be able to do this, but this solves for I guess pretty much everything that we've been wanting to do in terms of uploading the documents and of course if its being presented in front of us, I'm guessing the Mayor and his administration are behind this too and feel like this is feasible for staff to be able to adhere to?

Council President Venecz- That it's feasible for what?

Councilman Tyler- For the staff to be able to adhere to, to the additional postings of the information.

Council President Venecz- Yes. There are continuing meetings so we will be able to upgrade because this is new to us.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R08 ADOPTED

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS Cont.

26R-09 A Resolution of the Hammond Common Council Approving the Development Agreement Among the City of Hammond, Indiana, The City of Hammond Redevelopment Commission, UESCO Industries, Inc. And The Bogey Club LLC Regarding 5009 Calumet Avenue, Hammond Indiana

Councilman Salinas, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved for adoption.

Councilman Salinas- This is a \$25 million investment and in exchange this company will be receiving a 10 year 100% real estate tax and personal property tax abatements. The tax abatement is subject to the annual imposed fee of 15% per year. Again, this is a \$25 million investment. This project is supported through a combination of State, Local, and Federal programs, including new market credits. This is exactly the type of project that these programs are designed for. Driving investment into communities and creating real economic impact. This project brings real careers, not just jobs to Hammond. I personally met with the owner of UESCO and he is committed to long term growth and stability for our residents. The company is committed to hiring locally and training from within creating opportunities for people to enter the workforce and grow. They offer a structured training program with multiple levels allowing employees to continue build skills and advance. Employees receive regular raises tied to skill development and performance creating a clear path and a rewarding career path. These are accessible, family supporting jobs with strong wages, full benefits, and long term stability. This project is an investment not just in a building, but in people, workforce, and the long term growth of Hammond.

Mayor McDermott- I appreciate Councilman Salinas' introduction. I agree wholeheartedly. This is, for those of you that are unaware of what we're talking about, this is basically the 5000 block of Calumet Avenue on the East side of Calumet Avenue, just South of 150th Place. This is a \$25 million investment, 100 new jobs, 70,000 square foot industrial building. It's going to manufacture cranes, distribution and the national headquarters is going to be located in Hammond, Indiana which is wonderful. This is 7 acres of under utilized parcels on the Southeast corner of 150th and Calumet. This is land that basically, again, since I've been Mayor, hasn't generated a single penny because basically it was owned by the Sanitary District and we stored equipment there and Jack Smith and his Sanitary District Sewage Department, that's where they met in the morning and we've used it that way for decades in Hammond. We ran into a space crunch if you all remember when Hammond's Riverside School came in and there was 2 competing proposals for that site, the old Spohn School, Hammond Riverside School was one of them, and the other was UESCO Cranes and we all at the time, made the decision to go with the school at that location, since it was zoned a school, and we started getting creative with the space across the street. We talked to Jack Smith, talked to the Hammond Sanitary District, to see if they could do something with the men and women that report to that building every morning and we relocated it to the Sanitary District plant and freed up all this property and then Brian Poland in Planning Department got together and started subdividing this property and UESCO stayed with us through this whole process. This is a great project. We're asking for a 10 year tax abatement and the value of the land through a forgivable mortgage. This is an unusual request because these guys stuck with us, so we stuck with them on the incentive package. It's more lucrative than we would normally take here, we're asking for 100% tax abatement as part of the incentive package. These guys could have left us and gone to other cities. They stayed with us. I don't like doing 100% tax abatements. We're asking you to please consider this one because it's such a good project and they could have bailed and they didn't. They stuck with us. It's great for Hammond to bring 100 new jobs to this corridor along Calumet Avenue, and like I said, even though they won't pay property taxes under this for 10 years, in year 11, by that time, it's probably a \$35 million company paying a full load of taxes on property that's never

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS Cont.

Mayor McDermott cont.- generated taxes before, so even though it's delayed by 10 years, it's still a great project for Hammond and we're asking for your consideration, Council, thank you.

Councilman Salinas- Thank you for mentioning that. It's important to know that they did stick with us, because they could have easily turned around and thought (inaudible)

Mayor McDermott- There's multiple communities that would love to have this business, Councilman.

Councilman Salinas- I'm glad to see this development.

Mayor McDermott- I am too. We actually won x2 in this, because not only did we get the Hammond Riverside School, we also got this huge development right across the street.

Councilman Woerpel- Just for a point of reference, this is across from the fire station, correct, and it's the old Hammond, at one time, it was the old Hammond Distillery plant?

Mayor McDermott- Yes, sir, back before prohibition, and then when prohibition came, they shut it down. I can't tell you what's been used at that piece of property since then. It might have been Jack Smith's guys going there. It hasn't generated a penny of property tax since I've been Mayor, I can tell you that.

Councilman Kalwinski- Do we have a projected start date to get dirt dug and (inaudible)

Mayor McDermott- I don't, I'd be guessing. I could tell you that they're antsy. They were antsy on the first iteration, and then when we passed them up, going back to what Councilman Al said, we thought we might lose that development. Thankfully we kept them around. All I can tell you is, once we clear this up, Councilman, I imagine, they're going to be working this summer. That's my guess just from talking to the developers. 219 developed it too an they're a very successful development company. They've been doing multiple projects throughout the region and in Hammond in particular. They're based out of Hammond.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R09 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Tyler, supported by Councilman Salinas, moves to suspend the rules to introduce 26-14.

ROLL CALL VOTE (Suspension)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MOTION CARRIED

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS Cont.

26-14 An Ordinance Recognizing the Burns Family for their Contributions to the City of Hammond and Designating the 100 Block of Mason Street as "Honorary Thomas J. Burns Street"

Councilman Tyler, supported by Councilman Salinas, moved for 1st and 2nd reading by title.

Councilman Tyler- I would ask that Clerk Golec reads the ordinance in its entirety please.

City Clerk Golec reads 26-14 in its entirety.

Councilman Salinas- I would like to be added on as a sponsor to this as well.

ROLL CALL VOTE (1st and 2nd reading)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MOTION CARRIED

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilman Tyler, moves to suspend the rules to motion for final passage of 26-14.

ROLL CALL VOTE (Suspension)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MOTION CARRIED

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilwoman Alexander, moved for final passage of 26-14.

Councilman Woerpel- I would just add that unfortunately in 2024 I had 2 unexpected deaths in my family and the Burns family handled both of them. It was my mother and my son, and they treated us with dignity and class.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

ORDINANCE NO. 9708 PASSED

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilwoman Alexander, moved to return to regular business AYES: ALL

Councilman Tyler, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved to suspend the rules to allow Mr. Burns to speak.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS Cont.

ROLL CALL VOTE (Suspension)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MOTION CARRIED

Thomas Burns- Thanked the Council and told them about his life, family history, family business, and inquired about Harrison Park.

Councilman Tyler- Mr. Burns, I just wanted to say congratulations, and thank you for all your family has done for the city, and to answer your question about Harrison Park, we're expanding, and deepening the pond so that it is remnant of circa 40's, 50's, 60's and we're going to put a liner in it as well so that it actually retains water and we can stock it with fish so people can go fishing there once again.

Thomas Burns- I used to bring the toads there that I would find in my yard. I'd leave them there because I figured they would eat the mosquito larvae because I didn't want to kill them. Thank you again for your time.

Councilwoman Alexander- It's a blessing to be able to give someone their flowers while they're actually here to see it. A lot of times when we do those honorary street names, it's because the person is already gone, so it's a beautiful thing to be able to see him here and to be recognized.

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilman Salinas, moved to return to regular business AYES: ALL

SPECIAL ZONING ACTION ADOPTED UNDER I.C. 36-7

None

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Laurie Czulno- Thanked the Council for putting the agenda and supporting documents online.

Jim Ocurzo- From the S.B.A, and came to give information to business owners about economic injury disaster loans.

Mary Schoons- Expressed opinion against tax abatements, expressed opinion against the Governor's Parkway overpass, would like to have a pedestrian bridge on Grand Avenue instead.

George Stoya- Has concerns about tax abatements, would like to know what was offer was regarding 26R-07.

Ken Rosek- Expressed opinion against Governor's Parkway overpass, would like to have a pedestrian bridge on Grand Avenue instead.

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

AYES: ALL

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

2026 HAMMOND COMMON COUNCIL ATTENDANCE RECORD OF
ELECTRONIC AND PHYSICAL PRESENCE

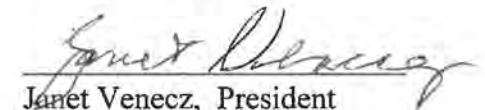
	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec	
	12	26	9	23	9	23	13	27																
Katrina Alexander	P	P	P	E	P	E	P	P																
Dan Spitale	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																
Mark Kalwinski	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																
Alfonso Salinas III	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P																
Barry Tyler	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																
Bill Emerson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																
Scott Rakos	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																
Dave Woerpel	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																
Janet Venecz	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.


Janet Venecz, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:



Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 7:20 p.m.
mg

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*