



Hammond Economic Development Commission

Meeting Minutes – February 18, 2015

A meeting of the Hammond Economic Development Commission was called to order at 9:00 am on Wednesday, February 18, 2015. The meeting was held at the new offices of the Department of Planning & Development at 5925 Calumet Avenue, Hammond, IN 46320.

Members Present

Richard Blastic, President
Bonnie Henry, Vice President
John Vezmar, Secretary
Monica Rubio, Member
Victor Franco, Member

There was a quorum.

Others Present

Africa Tarver, Director of Economic Development
Phil Taillon, Executive Director of Planning and Development
Anne Anderson, Recording Secretary

I. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Richard Blastic at 9:00am.

II. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

III. Communications

There were no communications.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Vice President Henry to approve the minutes from July 21, 2014 meeting; Commissioner Rubio seconded it. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

V. Old Business

There was no old business.

VI. New Business

Up for new business:

The Commission introduced and welcomed its newest member, Victor Franco. Mr. Franco resides in the Water Gardens area of Robertsdale and finally completes the 5 member Board of the Economic Development Commission. Welcome, Commissioner Franco!

The Commission also elected its officers, with Richard Blastic continuing as President and Bonnie Henry continuing as Vice President. John Vezmar will also continue as Secretary, as well as Anne Anderson as the Recording Secretary. Thank you, Commissioners, for all your dedication to Hammond.

Director of Economic Development, Africa Tarver, then gave the Commissioners an update on the previous year's economic development highlights and also touched upon upcoming events and news. Ms. Tarver spoke of the Lear Career Fair scheduled for the next day, February 19th, at the Civic Center. It was co-sponsored by the Mayor's Office of Economic Development and was expected to pull many people in, searching for up to 200 jobs, open at Lear's Hammond and Portage plants.

Also discussed were many companies building, expanding and moving into existing buildings in Hammond:

- **Buffalo Wild Wings** (\$2.5 M investment, 60 employees) and Hampton Inn (\$12.5 M investment, 35+ employees), both located in the Oxbow Landing Development
- **Walmart Super Center** (\$200 M investment, 300 employees), opening spring 2015 in out lot near Cabela's
- **Potash** (\$80 M investment, 225 temp. construction jobs, 60 full time jobs), 163,000 square foot distribution Intermodal center
- **Munster Steel** (\$6 M investment), located in Westpoint Industrial Park, 123,000 square foot new construction
- **Root Brothers** (\$1.6 M investment, 50 employees), purchased 649 and 651 Conkey Street, centralizing their distribution center from IL into a 86,000 square foot building
- **American Stair** (\$3.8 M investment, 135 employees, with 45 additional jobs in the next 3 years), relocating their operations from IL to 72,000 square foot building
- **JJS Recycling** (\$1 M investment, 25 employees), future expansion may double workforce

- **Unilever** (\$20 M investment over 5 years), upgrades include improvements to water waste systems, new technology, construction and equipment
- **Lincoln Lake homes**, located in Robertsdale, Hammond Redevelopment Commission purchased vacant apartment building, torn it down and created 5 new lots, 4 of which house new residential homes.

Executive Director Phil Taillon then spoke in depth about the upcoming road improvements in North Hammond, along Indianapolis Boulevard and new retail construction around the existing Walmart.

There was no more new business.

Public expression

There was no public expression.

Adjournment

A call for adjournment was made by Vice President Henry. Commissioner Franco seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0). The meeting of the Hammond Economic Development Commission adjourned at 9:38am.

Approved and signed this _____ day of _____ 2015.

RICHARD BLASTIC, PRESIDENT

JOHN VEZMAR, SECRETARY

ANNE ANDERSON, RECORDING SECRETARY