

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on May 12, 2014 in the Hammond City Council Chambers.

Council President Michael Opinker presided.

Council Coordinator Carmen I. Balboa facilitated.

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

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Markovich, Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Higgs, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

ABSENT: Kalwinski

TOTAL: 8

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to accept the minutes of April 28, 2014 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to approve the claims from April 23, 2014 through May 7, 2014. Claim #2410 through claim #2704, inclusive.

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to amend in:

Claim #2705 IN Dept. Of Transportation Engineer/ Gaming \$567,714.33

ROLL CALL VOTE (amendment)

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Higgs, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried 8/0/1 CLAIMS AMENDED

ROLL CALL VOTE (as amended)

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Higgs, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried 8/0/1 CLAIMS APPROVED  
(as amended)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Higgs - Read correspondence in regards to WKB Developer Woodmar Project Rieth Riley Construction Inc. vs. Hammond Woodmar Hammond LLC and the two law suits pending.

Councilman Opinker read correspondence from the IN Dept. of Transportation regarding a permanent fix of the pot holes on Indianapolis Blvd., State Road 152 and U.S. 12/20 and Calumet Avenue- U.S. 41.

Councilman Higgs read an editorial regarding the Supreme Court’s decision regarding prayer at meetings.

Councilman Hinojosa read a letter from the Controller’s Office concerning the 2011 to 2013 Festival of the Lakes Finance Reports and how police officers were paid.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Reports - Councilman Spitale - Brought out 14-13.

Council as a Whole Committee- Councilwoman Venecz - Brought out 14-14.

ORDINANCE 3<sup>RD</sup> READING - FINAL PASSAGE

14-13 Ordinance of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana, Authorizing the City to Issue its Taxable Economic Development Revenue Bonds, Series 2014 (Gateway Area Project), and Approving Other Actions in respect thereto

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

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved to amend in 14-13A in its entirety.

Councilwoman Venecz - 14-13A is essentially the same with the exception of the correction of some errors that were on the original ordinance.

ROLL CALL VOTE (amendment)

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Higgs, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried 8/0/1 AMENDMENT ADOPTED

ROLL CALL VOTE (as amended)

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Higgs, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried 8/0/1 ORDINANCE NO. 9251 PASSED (as amended)

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

ORDINANCE 3<sup>RD</sup> READING - FINAL PASSAGE

14-14 An Ordinance Amending Ordinance Number 8754 and 8755, an Ordinance of the City of Hammond Creating and now Extending the College Bound Scholarship Program

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final passage.

Councilwoman Venecz - This will extend the College Bound Program through the school year of 2025 through 2026. There was some discussion in caucus this evening about the attachment with regard to the College Bound Renewal Program. The community service hours that the students will be required to perform will be forty hours. They will be required to perform those forty hours of community service before December 31<sup>st</sup> of their freshmen year. This will give more community service to the city of Hammond and for its citizens.

Councilman Higgs - I think in caucus the Mayor said the funding is gonna come through the Water Department. Can someone give me a clear indication of how that's gonna work?

Councilwoman Venecz - That is correct. However, the funding will come from the proceeds of the Illinois water billing, not the city of Hammond.

Councilman Higgs - So I guess my question would be if they're gonna pay for it, so we're not gonna be responsible, so we're not at some point gonna be requested to contribute any casino dollars? It's gonna be totally funded from Illinois?

Councilwoman Venecz - That is my understanding, yes.

Councilman Spitale asked to added as a sponsor.

Councilwoman Venecz - I just would like to point out that this is such a fabulous program for our homeowners and their children and it gives so many more children in the city of Hammond the opportunity to get a college education and a more educated group of residents that we have, I think we can look for greater things in the future from our residents, so thank you.

Councilman Higgs - I guess my question would be how many of the students are coming back and returning to Hammond? I mean, true enough the program, and initially I voted in favor of it, but, again, my question was, and I posed that to the mayor, we've met on several occasions in regards to how long are we gonna have to fund the program. It's a great incentive to try to attract people, more people, to Hammond. I think economic development is a great tool to attract more businesses to Hammond. But at the end of the day, you know, we're funding college tuition for students and what are we getting in return? Are they coming back to Hammond and contributing? You know, I understand they work in the summer here but how many of them are actually returning back to Hammond and really making a difference in our city and I would like to see the stats of that. Since this program has been implemented, how many students have actually returned back to Hammond and found jobs and are doing something really to enhance our city? That's the only questions I have. Wonderful program.

ORDINANCE 3<sup>RD</sup> READING - FINAL PASSAGE

Councilwoman Venecz - I do attend the Redevelopment Commission meetings on a regular basis. I see how many young people are taking advantage of our Home Bound program. A lot of those young people who are taking advantage of that program and buying homes here in the city of Hammond are college graduates. We have one of them sitting in our audience tonight who works for the city. I just feel very strongly that we need to give our children an opportunity to get the education, to come back to the city that they grew up in, and maybe economically develop some areas in their neighborhoods or other parts of the city. I just see such good things coming from the children who are recipients of this scholarship program and I just think that there will be great things coming from those graduates.

Councilman Higgs - Again, my question, and for some reason or another I don't know why the question always seems to go around. The only question that I pose was how many of those students are coming back and returning. Certainly if there's an incentive and I can afford to buy a home in Hammond and they're gonna say hey, and I got kids and I can purchase a home and my kids are gonna get a four year ride, yeah, why not move to Hammond. If my job is local. True enough. I want to know how many of those students are coming back to Hammond and making a contribution to our city. Simple question. Is it one? Is it five? Is it ten? Or is it twenty? Who knows. Maybe someone can find that out for me and the question could be answered but I don't have an answer for that question so that's why I posed the question. And God forbid, probably if I didn't make that request it would probably never be brought up but I'm just interested to know how many students actually, once they finish college, how many of them come back and move here and live here.

Councilwoman Venecz - We do happen to have in the audience this evening LeAnne Munoz who is the College Bound Coordinator. LeAnne would you like to say a few words with regard to Councilman Higgs' questions.

LeAnne Munoz - College Bound Coordinator - Yes. We actually did a survey of the students from 2006 to 2009. We sent out about 130 surveys and we received 54 to 60 back. I believe the percentage of that was about 54% of students who have come back to live in the city of Hammond. We also did the Faces of College Bound which is a video which you can see on [collegebound.gohammond.com](http://collegebound.gohammond.com) and that shows the overall majority, I think all ten, maybe all fifteen, have purchased a home in Hammond or are currently working in the city of Hammond. So we do have a lot of students that, yes, are coming back to the city of Hammond. We actually received even more surveys after the deadline had passed but we haven't calculated that back into the figure. Also, all of the information that you had just requested is in the yearly document which was sent to all council people in December. So that information is available to you.

Councilman Emerson - I think this program from its inception was a win, win, for Hammond. People buy a home and their children's college tuition is paid for. My only regret is, being a parent of two college graduates and then some, and a homeowner in Hammond, that I didn't have an opportunity to use the program. So I hope it stays around for a long time in a housing market that nationwide is ridiculous we found a way to improve our situation in housing in Hammond and help educate our students. Thank you.

Councilman Higgs - Just so there's clarity, let me make it perfectly clear so that there's no misconception of where we're at. There's nothing wrong with the program. My question has always been, how long are we going

ORDINANCE 3<sup>RD</sup> READING - FINAL PASSAGE

Councilman Higgs cont. - to fund it? Okay. Now we have a funding mechanism that's supposedly gonna fund it. Now, my other question was, and I think she kind of clarified, to some degree of what I was requesting as to how many students are actually coming back to the city and contribute. Simple. No one said the program was bad. No one said they hated the program. Just a simple question, how many of the students are actually coming back that have benefitted from the program.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Higgs, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried

8/0/1

ORDINANCE NO. 9252 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

14-17 Designating Certain Area Within the City as Economic Revitalization Areas for Purposes of Real Property Tax Abatement - 3520 Calumet Avenue, Hammond, IN

Councilwoman Venecz, supported of Councilman Spitale, moved the proposed ordinance to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reading by title, referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee, with a public hearing set for June 9, 2014.

AYES: ALL

14-19 An Ordinance Creating a New Section of Chapter 121 to Require Motor Vehicle Repossession Agents who Operate in Hammond to Have a City of Hammond License and Follow Approved Procedure

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved the proposed ordinance to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reading by title and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee.

AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

14R-15 Hammond Common Council Preliminary Economic Revitalization Area Resolution 3520 Calumet Avenue, Hammond, IN

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for adoption.

Councilwoman Venecz - This is again regarding the 3520 Calumet Avenue property, establishing an Economic Revitalization Area.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Higgs, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried

8/0/1

RESOLUTION R15 ADOPTED

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS cont.

14R-14 Hammond Common Council Confirmatory Economic Revitalization Area Resolution  
3520 Calumet Avenue, Hammond, IN

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved for adoption with a public hearing set for June 9, 2014.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Higgs, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried 8/0/1 RESOLUTION R14 ADOPTED

14R-16 A Resolution Confirming the Appointment of Carrie Hutton as a Commissioner of the  
Hammond Human Relations Commission of the City of Hammond, IN

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved for adoption.

Councilman Higgs - There are some prerequisites for individuals that sit on this particular board, Human Relations, and one of the criteria is they need a teacher and a lawyer and so she fits in that category.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Higgs, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried 8/0/1 RESOLUTION R16 ADOPTED

14R-17 A Resolution Confirming the Appointment of Kristen Hill as a Commissioner of the  
Hammond Human Relations Commission of the City of Hammond, IN

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for adoption.

Councilman Emerson - Ms. Hill was in the caucus and I would like to just add that this position came open because of our new Controller being that she was a Commissioner of the Hammond Human Relations Commission, thus opening this appointment. I feel she is very qualified and she is an accomplished attorney and has a lot of experience in the courts as a magistrate and I think she's exactly what we want. I agree with the appointment.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Venecz, Uylaki, Higgs, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kalwinski

Motion carried 8/0/1 RESOLUTION R17 ADOPTED

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Higgs - I too, like Councilman Hinojosa, received a number of phone calls in regards to the flooding situation last night. I guess my question would be as to, you know, in the future if we could have some kind of mechanism in place so that I'm not having to make several phone calls and I can just make one phone call to my constituents. One central location to go. I do know that Frank Mrvan's office is offering buckets, bleaches and mops. But certainly if we would have some kind of information available through the city it would be greatly appreciated.

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved to send a letter to the Mayor's Office and see if we can have, in these types of instances when things occur in the city that we have some kind of mechanism in place so that we can facilitate our approach to the situation in a way that is not so complex versus having to tell my constituents, "I'll call you back". We just know that, you know, this is the action plan and this is what's gonna take place. It's makes it much more easier and simpler. So, Im just requesting a letter be sent to the Mayor in regards to the flooding issues. AYES: ALL

LETTER SENT: MAY 13, 2014

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to cancel the meeting on May 26, 2014 due to the holiday and our next meeting would then be on June 9, 2014. AYES: ALL

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to schedule an Intent to Consider for 14-15 on June 9, 2014. AYES: ALL

Councilman Hinojosa - Earlier I read the letter from the Controllor's Office on the Festival of the Lakes that they don't hold the Finance Reports from what they say. For the Festival of the Lakes for 2011, 2012 and 2013. I did find out that the police officers were paid, and they do an outstanding job, I don't care if they get paid time and half or whatever agreement they have they deserve every bit of it. But I'm gonna have to send a third notice and final notice and this one was for Pat Moore. I guess the Festival of the Lakes police officers were paid through the Henry Units, and the Henry Units are so we can have police officers out in the streets and I don't know what the law is but in my opinion that festival is supposed to make money and that money that it makes it pays for the police officers, that's supposed to be one of the expenses. If it didn't make any money then more money has to come from the Mayor's Gaming to pay for these police officers so we have adequate Henry Units on the streets. I'm hearing about maybe only one Henry Unit maybe Sunday and Monday when usually during the week, especially on the weekend we have a couple Henry Units out there per shift.

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Markovich, moved to send four letters again, or three letters. For the Clerk's Office, they're gonna be the same except I'd like to put on there 3<sup>rd</sup> notice. The first one is for Pat Moore, the administrator. Move to have a letter requesting copies of the 2011, 2012 and 2013 Festival of the Lakes overall finance reports including how police officers pay was paid by the city or by wins and losses. The next one is for Chief John Doughty, also 3<sup>rd</sup> notice, I move I have a letter sent on how 2011 and 2013 police officers were paid by the budget or were they reimbursed by wins and losses from the Festival of the Lakes. At

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Hinojosa cont. - what rate did they get paid, a flat rate or was it time and a half? Again, 3<sup>rd</sup> notice. The third one is for Bobby Lendi or replacement that we just found out who the replacement is, and it's gonna read the same, 3<sup>rd</sup> notice.

Councilman Markovich - You know that that whole are is under the RDA Project and maybe you should send a letter to the Port Authority. Maybe they might have some information on it.

Councilman Hinojosa - Okay, if we can on the one for Pat Moore, if we can include that also to the Port Authority.

Council President Opinker - All those in favor? All against?

AYES: ALL

LETTERS SENT: MAY 13, 2014

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved to send a letter to Redevelopment and Economic Development and the Mayor's Office in regards to the property on Columbia Avenue. It's been vacant for a number of years and see if can get a environmental grant to get it cleaned up. As well as if we can try to attract some new businesses in the KFC building and if the Burger King building is not gonna be developed why is people staying there on a regular basis. We need to either find out whether they're gonna move forward or what's going on with the building.

LETTER SENT: MAY 13, 2014

Councilwoman Venecz - What are the addresses of those properties?

Councilman Markovich - The 5800 block of Calumet Avenue.

Councilwoman Venecz - But what about the one that needs to be environmentally cleaned?

Councilman Higgs - You're a Councilwoman at Large, Councilwoman Venecz, if you ride down Columbia Avenue it's been vacant. Cintas sits behind it. It's been vacant for a number of years. I'm sure you're aware of it.

Councilwoman Venecz - I'm certainly aware of it.

Councilman Higgs - You and Ms. Hubbard are over there all the time.

Councilwoman Venecz - I had a conversation with Africa Tarver about that property when we found out that the RDA was going to give grants to help remediate some brownfields I enquired about that property. That property is owned by Redevelopment. It is currently for sale. That property does have some environmental issues but they are not critical. Something can be built on that property as long as there is not a basement. I've looked into this

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilwoman Venecz cont. - because I was curious why Kenny’s Ribs from years ago didn’t go there and why the property is still vacant. It is for sale. It is being marketed. That’s what I know about it.

Councilman Higgs - My request was to send those letters to those department heads. I know it’s vacant and I know its environmental issues on the property because I was born and raised in the area. So, in saying all that, it needs to be cleaned and it’s been on sale for a number of years. Just like you attract other businesses to other parts of the city, why not try to concentrate on the 3<sup>rd</sup> District? That’s my question.

Councilwoman Venecz - As I do at every Council Meeting, I’d like to read a list of upcoming crime watches. It will be a little bit lengthy being that we are not going to meet for a couple of weeks but for those of you who are interested in knowing what’s going on in your neighborhood and you’d like to do good in your community.

May 14	Woodmar C.W.	Nat’l Guard Armory	
May 15	Hessville C.W.	Jean Shepherd Center	7:00 pm
May 15	S. Ham’d C.W.	Ham’d Housing Authority	7:00 pm
May 19	Columbia C.W.	Columbia School	6:00 pm
May 20	E. Ham’d Pullman	Ophelia Steen center	6:30 pm
May 21	Lafayette Neighborhood	Lafayette School	6:00 pm
May 27	Pulaski Park Neighbor. Assoc.	American Legion	6:30 pm
May 28	Jefferson C.W.	Jefferson School	6:30 pm
May 4	Harrison Park C.W.	American Legion	5:30 pm
June 4	Edison Comm.	Edison School	6:30 pm
June 6	Irving Comm.	Irving School	9:15 am

Councilman Emerson - I would just like to remind the reason we’re not here is Memorial Day. The Hammond Mohawk’s Parade will be stepping off at 10 am, May 26<sup>th</sup> at the Cavalier Inn and take the kids out and watch the parade.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

George Stoya - Regarding the repo men, Atty. Berger said they didn’t need a permit. Was that resolved?

Alvin Cheeks - In Clayton Potter’s memory there will be a plaque erected in North Hammond. The property on Columbia Avenue is not selling because it is overpriced.

PUBLIC HEARINGS cont.

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to adjourn.

AYES: ALL

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Michael Opinker, President  
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:

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Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Minutes approved at the Common Council Meeting of June 9, 2014.

Time: 7:00 pm  
cb