

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on August 12, 2013 in the Hammond City Council Chambers.

Council President Michael Opinker presided.

Council Coordinator Carmen Balboa facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.

ROLL CALL

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

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to suspend the rules to introduce Hammond's Little League team, the Bulldogs. AYES: ALL

INTRODUCTION OF HAMMOND'S LITTLE LEAGUE TEAM "BULLDOGS"

Councilwoman Venecz - Before the young men come in I would just like to say that I have been out to a couple of the games and it is so exciting to have an event like this in the city of Hammond. From the banquet that they had the other night that Darryl Chaney spoke a heartwarming and inspiring speech for not only the ball players but their parents. We're very proud to have this World Series here in Hammond and we're equally as proud of the Bulldogs and the job that they have done. You guys warm my heart and you just have given me such excitement. So thank you very much young men.

Council President Opinker - Welcome to the City Council Meeting Bulldog members.

Mayor McDermott - I just want to introduce everybody on the team and thank you all for all the strong support and thank you all for all the strong support the Hammond Council's given to the World Series. For us to be able to get this in Hammond is a huge honor. As you all know we have ten teams from all over the United States of America. Some from as far away as Hawaii, actually they're playing right now against Crown Point. A lot of times the host team is not supposed to do very well because we didn't earn our way into the World Series but this Bulldog team is different. We put these guys together two years ago. Told them two years ago you guys are gonna be in the World Series and we've been training for two years. So to see how well the boys are doing, 2 and 0 after two games against tough teams, one of them from the Bronx, New York and one of them from North Dakota. Just very proud of these young men. They're playing really hard. We have a game tonight actually against Opp, Alabama at 8 o'clock so hopefully the council meeting won't be long and you guys could come out and watch these guys in action. But our pre-game ritual has been to hang out in the Mayor's Office and we watch gohammond.TV and we watch the game so we've got gohammond.tv on the big screen in my office. We got pizza that was donated to the boys from the Horseshoe Casino and it was just neat that we had a council meeting at the same time we were doing our sequester.

Bulldog team members each give their names and positions.

INTRODUCTION OF HAMMOND'S LITTLE LEAGUE TEAM "BULLDOGS" cont.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

13-28 An Ordinance to Create a New Section of Title VII, Chapter 72 to Regulate Parking in City of Hammond Parking Lots

Atty. Carla Pyle - Atty. for AquaVor Night Club - Against 12-28.

This ordinance will basically restrict all parking that the club has access to. AquaVor has never had a private lot. It's always utilized municipal parking. The claims that this is creating a nuisance is not in the police reports. There were many more problems with Horseshoe Casino than with AquaVor. There needs to be some type of allowance for businesses.

Atty. Joe O'Connor - Have been in Downtown Hammond since I took my oath. I have witnesses a decline of Downtown. Many cities in the State of Indiana have declined. This issue is a needle in the haystack. The private sector is going to save Downtown Hammond. All it takes is some time, thought and deliberation in commitment. Restrictions only lead to avoidance of the area.

Janie Gamez - For 12-28.

I live behind the club. They are taking care of the club inside but need to take care of it outside. They need to take care of the people that come out drunk. The police department does a good job. My grandchildren are scared.

Enrique Balerini - Against 12-28.

There hasn't been a police report that involves a shooting at AquaVor Night Club. There is another nightclub within walking distance to AquaVor. We have off duty police officers that patrol our area. It seems the finger is always pointed at us. No neighbor has contacted us with complaints. Off duty officers are checking the people that come in. We are now 25 and older and have a dress code. We are now closed. Also, excise dismissed the marijuana charge. We do go out and clean up any mess.

Rev. Santiago Gamez - For 12-28.

Some of the things said are lies. We have to clean their mess. It's a nuisance. They are loud. They urinate on my property. Maybe there wasn't a report about shooting but there has been shooting. This is uncalled for. We're not here to run business out but we have to make sure what type of business comes in. You have to take care of your residents. I feel the council should put a stop to this.

David Mueller - Against 12-28.

Representing private sector. Our family has been in business in Downtown Hammond since 1887. I'm doing my best to stay. We converted from a hardware store to an art gallery. We established Thursday night as an open stage night for musicians, poets and other performers. We have 60 to 90 people every Thursday. Sometimes we extend to after midnight. When I close up I ask everyone left outside to leave. If a curfew cuts into my hours I will become less able to meet my financial obligations. I hope you take this into consideration.

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Higgs reads correspondence from NAACP regarding their Annual Luncheon on Saturday,

*Prepared by
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September 14th from noon to 3 p.m. at the Dynasty Banquet Hall.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Brought out 13-28.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

13-28 An Ordinance to Create a New Section of Title VII, Chapter 72 to Regulate Parking in City of Hammond Parking Lots

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

Councilwoman Venecz - I regret that this ordinance has focused on the AquaVor business. The purpose of this ordinance is to eliminate some of the on goings in our municipally owned parking lots. There is loitering. There is littering. There is damage to some of our ball parks. This is a quality of life issue for our residents plain and simple. It is not about AquaVor. I would like to say that with response to the people that spoke in the public hearing. In due respect, the attorney for AquaVor does not live in Hammond. Does not have any idea of the challenges that we have in Hammond with regard to this. Saying that there were no tickets issued for the AquaVor business with regard to drugs, there was an excise citation. She said that it was dismissed, it was there none the less. I saw the report. There was a huge cloud of marijuana and the police could not identify were it was coming from. Everybody dropped whatever they had on the ground. So I understand that being dropped. Mr. O'Connor you have been in business for a long time in Downtown Hammond. You understand the challenges that we have in Downtown Hammond as do I. This ordinance is not directed to Downtown Hammond alone. This is directed to the residents of the city of Hammond as a whole. Not just Downtown Hammond. Mrs. Gamez you spoke to the quality of life. That is what this ordinance is about, the quality of life and the safety of our residents here in the city of Hammond. It's not about a bar. It's not about a particular business. It's not about a particular area. This is about Hammond as a whole. Mr. Mueller, thank you to you and your family for being in Hammond for as long as you have. Thank you for continuing to make a go of it. As I said before, this ordinance is targeted towards the senseless damage, vandalism that goes on in our municipally owned lots. This is a tool for our police officers to stop someone who is in any municipally owned after the hour of 11 p.m. So, as the result of the conversations that I've had with several people that have businesses here in Hammond that also reside here in Hammond, I would like to amend this ordinance.

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved to amend this ordinance to read 12 midnight to 5 a.m.

Councilman Higgs - I need some clarity on this particular amendment. What are you saying, between the hours of 12 p.m. and 5 a.m.? And what are the requirements?

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Councilwoman Venecz - 12 midnight. This would restrict parking in any municipally owned lot. This is

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baseball fields, our parks, the Civic Center, the Jean Shepherd Center, any municipally owned parking lot.

Councilman Higgs - The amendment sounds good but the reality of it is most bars don't close until, and particularly this bar, say they bring a major artist and they need parking, which there are some questions I still have but just to answer this particular question, it still wouldn't provide adequate parking for them for a reasonable time because most bars close around 2 a.m. So that's the issue with it. If I get a little more in depth I guess my question would be probably as it relates to when they initially came in they knew at some point they were gonna need parking so where were the zoning and where were the people to make sure that this was adequately attended to during the business hours. Because from what I understand AquaVor is only open three days a week so Friday, Saturday and Sunday are the only days they are open so that's the only time they have an opportunity to really generate any revenue for their business. So I understand the reality of not having parking in municipal lots from a certain period of time but you've got to at least be a little bit more fine tuned in regards to ... because some businesses are gonna be hurt by it. The reality of it is, and I don't know, I won't say it's Councilwoman's intention to shut you down or whatever but the reality of it is is that in order for the business to maintain and be equipt they're gonna need some security, maybe that needs to be, and I don't know if we have the authority, Atty. Berger could probably be more clear and precise as it relates to that particular issue, but the reality of it is that they're open until 2 a.m. so we need to try to at least accommodate the business and then something needs to be worked out in terms of addressing the needs of the residents that live in that vicinity so that they're not being felt like there's no resource that they have to turn to. If they're gonna park on the lot then there needs to be security on the lot and at that point there's more revenue so do we say hey and we get somebody out there and start charging these people to park. When you go Downtown Chicago you got to pay to park and it ain't no \$4 or \$5, you gon start at \$15 and on up. So those are some things that maybe need to be looked at before we say yay or nay. But I agree, if these things are occurring on municipal lots they need to be addresses and dealt with. But I don't want to see a business be gone from Hammond because trust and believe I want to see as much development in my city and more jobs come here as possible and Woodmar, trust and believe, I really want to see that developed. Whatever they need to do, TIF, get the businesses here.

Councilman Hinojosa - I had a couple words in the back about how it affects my district in the 6th District in Hessville. It's mainly the area where the old Caldwell School is and is now the Hessville Little League. That is a problem area that we've had for years and years as far as cars parking in the lot and what I said earlier is there's thieves that go out there, they're not gonna park in front of your house and then go rob your house while other neighbors are looking, they're gonna park somewhere where they're not gonna be seen and this is one of the areas where they were parking and then going into the neighborhood to go thieve. But I'd like to make a point, I mean this is about all parking lots in the city of Hammond. So the attorney for AquaVor can write some notes down, I'm gonna ask this question to Councilman Opinker, President Opinker, that I think I asked him before and he said no, about a couple months ago, after the last big incident that they had where I think 40, 50, 60 police officers were in the whole Downtown area because of the destruction that happened after 2 in the morning at AquaVor. We sent a letter, the council unanimously sent a letter to AquaVor requesting information as to what kind of security they have at the place and what were they gonna do to make sure this incident doesn't happen again. President Opinker, did we get a letter back from AquaVor?

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Council President Opinker - No, we did not, Councilman Hinojosa.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

Councilman Hinojosa - So the attorney from AquaVor we never received anything, I never received anything.

Atty. Pyle - I sent a letter within two days of receiving that letter.

Councilman Hinojosa - Hopefully, maybe we can get another copy and see this letter.

Atty. Pyle - I'll send it tomorrow.

Councilman Hinojosa - Also, since this was introduced and the first and second step, AquaVor has had a month and a half to look for an empty building or look for an empty lot that is for sale that they can get their own parking. I mean there's a lot of empty buildings that ain't worth very much where you can tear down. I mean I don't know the entire area but there's got to be something downtown that you can probably buy. I'd also like to know how AquaVor opened up their business in the first place? How did the liquor board approve something like this when you didn't have adequate parking? Now it was said that you had adequate parking because the city was gonna give you, let you use their parking spaces, was there anything in writing? Was there anything verbal? And by who? That's what I would like to know. Who gave permission that you were going to be able to use private property to satisfy the AquaVor. Like I said, I'm all for business but when you open up a business, I mean I know a lot of people that own bars and I've hears comments already and when you open up a bar there's so many bar stools, so many seats, and you got to have adequate parking. Who gave permission for you to use city property? Was it in writing? Was it verbal? That's what I would like to know.

Councilman Emerson - Like Councilman Hinojosa, we have three parks in the 4th District, quite a few baseball fields, all of them are sitting in the heart of residential areas. If the parks close and they do by ordinance at dusk, I see no earthly reason for people to be parking in these parking lots. Especially since houses are usually within 100 to 200 feet, residential homes. The other point is, I don't know if I heard Councilman Higgs right or not, are you considering we pay for security for bars. I will never be able to vote for that unless I'm having an extremely phased out day. You weren't suggesting that. I'm putting that out there. I can't do that.

Councilman Higgs - Just for clarity, no. My suggestion was that the business owner comes up with a solution as to addressing the needs of the community versus, you know, we're not responsible for paying for someone to park on a municipal lot. What they should be doing is paying, maybe we need to have someone monitor the lot and get the revenue.

Council President Opinker - That's how I understand it, Councilman Higgs.

ROLL CALL VOTE (amendment)

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

NAYS: Higgs

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

8/1/0

AMENDMENT ADOPTED

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Councilman Markovich - In the caucus I brought up several incidences of other businesses, Walgreen's and so forth and all of that and like one attorney told me, what you say out here can come back. Because we're gonna

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get sued after this is said and gone. I hate to be passing some kind of ordinance where we're gonna get sued and we're gonna lose because I brought it up when they got the occupancy permit from the city and Councilman Hinojosa was taking my thunder already in saying who gave them this, who gave them that or whatever. I mean, hey, the city had to give them the occupancy permit for two, three, four, five hundred people. It's like the examples I gave about Walgreen. One little house shut down Walgreen from being at 119th and Calumet Avenue because one little old lady didn't want to sell her house. They wanted to go across the street. One person, Sokol Club did not want to sell. So where did they end up going, they went to whiting. The city would not give the permit to build in Hammond because they did not have enough parking. Now if we're talking these kinds of numbers, hundreds of people to park, who in the hell gave them the okay to come here in the first place. You don't let somebody spend \$2 million plus and then say you can't come here no more. I mean, I'm sorry., this ought to be tabled. We brought up about the marina, people are there after hours, that's city property, we're gonna start towing cars after midnight in the marina now? You know. Festival of the Lakes, you got cars parking there after midnight, you gonna start towing those cars? I mean, it's just common sense. If we're not targeting any specific business like they say they're not give them a pass, give them a ticket, green card, you come in here go put this on your car you're good til when we close, return it. Mr. O'Connor said something and I don't know whether he's for it or against it. I know he's got business down there. That's my only concern. I mean there's no sense making a motion to make that city lot til 2 o'clock because that's probably not gonna cover it because if they close at 2 o'clock they still got people hanging around. I would hope that we table this and have some real discussions and meet with these people and everything because what we're doing could cause us some money in the long run and I just don't want to see it. I don't want the taxpayers to defend something, we get sued enough as it is. We win some we lose some but I don't know how in the hell they got the okay to come Downtown. Why weren't they stopped from the get go and says hey, you don't have enough parking you can't come here. But it didn't happen so I'm sure that would come up in the future.

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to table 13-28 to have some discussions to come to some kind of compromise.

ROLL CALL VOTE (table 13-28)

AYES: Markovich, Higgs

NAYS: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Uylaki, Emerson, Hinojosa, Opinker

ABSENT: None

Motion failed

2/7/0

MOTION FAILED

Councilman Higgs - I just feel as though there needs to be some more discussions as it relates to this particular issue and just like Councilman Markovich said, you know there was discussion about whether we gon be get sued, you can best believe that those business owners are gon be screamin in a minute. Just get ready cause it's coming. That's all I can say.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Councilman Hinojosa - Actually we're not making an adequate decision on this vote here today until we find

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out. I think we have two people up there that we can call up to the mike and ask them who gave permission for you to use the city lot. Because here we're gonna vote on something that, you know, this is for the whole entire city but if this is affecting AquaVor and whether they have a lawsuit or not, I don't know, but I certainly don't want a law suit.

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to suspend the rules to have the questions answered by the two individuals, the attorney of AquaVor and find out who gave permission to use the parking lot.

ROLL CALL VOTE (suspend rules)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RULES SUSPENDED

Atty. Pyle - Yes, I believe the question is who gave authority for AquaVor to use the municipal lot. I do not know the exact person. But I do know whenever AquaVor was preparing to open and they had excise come in and do a thorough inspection and give us the authority to open based on occupancy and the available parking. In addition we did have inspections and approvals by the city. I know Kurt Koch gave us some approvals and he may have been the one as far as the parking. But I don't know exactly for the parking issue who to tell you but I can research that and find out.

Councilman Higgs - Initially, I guess, when initially AquaVor came to Hammond, I mean something had to be worked out so you guys would have adequate parking because I can't just see a business coming to Hammond and spend that kind of money and not have a space to park vehicles. It just doesn't make sense.

Atty. Pyle - We only, the club was only viable and able to open because of the municipal parking that we had access to and we were provided that authorities.

Councilman Higgs - What was the total investment in redevelopment at?

Atty. Pyle - \$2 million, I think it was a little more than that. And the owner of AquaVor has actually invested quite a bit Downtown. He owns the building across the street and would like to do more to improve downtown however he's hesitant at this point because of what's going on.

Councilman Markovich - Do you know what attorney represented AquaVor when they came to the city to do this. I'm sure you didn't represent them, right? Do you know who did? What law firm represented AquaVor when they came to the city to do this development?

Atty. Pyle - Well, I represented them for since their inception, yes.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Councilman Markovich - So it was you that represented AquaVor when they were coming there, when they first

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Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

approached the city and they wanted to open up then?

Atty. Pyle - I believe Mr. Yahne may have represented... (conversation with someone from audience).

Councilman Markovich - So, it had to be somebody else that represented AquaVor.

Atty. Pyle - It would have been me. What are you asking for?

Councilman Markovich - I'm just wondering ...

Atty. Pyle - Actually the owner of AquaVor met with the city, met with the mayor, a lot. Kevin Smith obviously was in my firm and ...

Councilman Markovich - Were you involved with all those discussions or might have been Rubino or somebody else or whatever then?

Atty. Kyle - Possibly Mr. Smith was involved in the discussions. But I believe it was mainly the discussions between the owner and

Councilman Markovich - So Kevin Smith with the law firm of Smith, Sersic or whatever ...

Atty. Pyle - No, no, he was with Rubino Rumin at that time. I don't know that ...

Councilman Markovich - So Kevin Smith may have been the attorney that was representing you guys with the city then?

Atty. Pyle - It probably would have been him or me. We were the only ones involved with Mr. Rapchak or Mr. ...

Council President Opinker - This is turning into a guessing game what attorney represented what.

Councilman Markovich - I agree with you that's why maybe we should postpone it and let's get this information.

Councilman Higgs - What would be the impact if this ordinance was to go forward? How would it affect your business and that's something that the press and everybody should know?

Atty. Pyle - The business is closed now because the signs have been up and since ... we tried to open the first weekend after the signs were up and there wasn't parking so there was nobody....nobody could come.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Councilman Hinojosa - We're still under New and Unfinished Business...

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Hammond City Clerk*

Council President Opinker - Yes, sir.

Councilman Hinojosa - After we go back into the regular order of business I'm going to put my vote as a no only because we don't have enough information. I agree with Councilman Markovich. We need to find out who gave permission to use the parking lot to make this AquaVor successful. Now it's shut down do we have a law suit or not. I mean it's already been closed for two months already. Is it a law suit? I don't know. I mean this ordinance is for the whole city of Hammond but if we the city gave permission to AquaVor to use the lot and now us the councilmen are gonna say no you can't use it, is this a law suit or not?

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Markovich, moved to go back to the regular order of business.

Councilman Hinojosa - Until we get more information on this I think we should table this to the next meeting.

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved to return this to the Council as a Whole Committee.

Councilman Higgs - We just need more clarification as how this all transpired. Certainly I wasn't at the meeting. I totally agree that some of issues that affect the residents and the issues that affect municipality parking lots is a problem within our city and it needs to be addressed. But we need to fine tune this and get some answers to some of the questions and find out exactly do we want to attract businesses Downtown or do we want to scare people from coming Downtown. That's what we have to look at and the reality of it is I don't own a business but I know people that do and our former City Corporate Council, he has a business down there as well as Atty. Yahne who has a business down there and I know whether it's night or day he wants people to ride by and see the sign. Because the more visibility the more business and that's just plain and simple. So I don't think it would hurt to just to find out more information. A couple of weeks and then maybe something could be fine tuned. Just a suggestion.

ROLL CALL VOTE (13-28 back to CAW)

AYES: Markovich, Higgs, Hinojosa

NAYS: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Uylaki, Emerson, Opinker

ABSENT: None

Motion failed

3/7/0

MOTION FAILED

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

AYES: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Uylaki, Emerson, Opinker

NAYS: Markovich, Higgs, Hinojosa

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

7/3/0

ORDINANCE NO. 9215 PASSED
(as amended)

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

13-30 Ordinance Authorizing the City of Hammond, Indiana, to issue its Economic Development Revenue Bonds, Series 2013 (Munster Steel Project) and

*Prepared by
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Hammond City Clerk*

Approving other actions in respect thereto

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved that the proposed ordinance go to 1st and 2nd reading by title, referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee, with a Public hearing on 8-26-13.

AYES: ALL

13-31 An Ordinance Vacating five (5) remaining Alley Sections bisecting a property situated on the corner of Columbia Avenue and 172nd Street, which property was previously know as the E.B. Hayward Branch of the Hammond Public Library

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved that the proposed ordinance go to 1st and 2nd reading by title and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee.

AYES: ALL

13-32 An Ordinance Amending Ord. 8574, also known as Section 72.016 of the Hammond Municipal Code, as it pertains to Administrative Towing Fees

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

AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

None

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to offer a prayer that the Bulldogs win tonight.

AYES: ALL

Councilman Markovich - August 12, 1914 is when my mother was born. If it wasn't for her I wouldn't be here and cause all this chaos all the time. She would have been 99 years old today. I wish you were here mom to see me in action. She died before I got to this place. Sometimes I don't know if she's yelling and screaming at me and saying dammit I didn't tell you to do that. But what are you gonna do?

Councilman Higgs - Certainly Alvin has left but this past week Alvin mother was funeralized, Ms. Hazel Cheeks, as well as we have two more funerals this week in my community, in my district. Mr. Franklin Banks, condolences to that family and also to the Edmond family who Ms. Evans was very, very instrumental in directing me as a kid and she has about a hundred and three great grandchildren. So the both of them will be funeralized on Saturday and my birthday is on Sunday, so full weekend.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilwoman Venecz - I'd like to announce a couple of Crime Watch meetings:

*Prepared by
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Hessville C.W. Thurs., Aug. 15 Jean Shepherd Center 7:00 p.m.
East Ham'd Pullman C.W. Tues., Aug. 20

Councilwoman Venecz - I'd also like to thank everyone who came out for and participated in National Night Out at the Wolf Lake Splash Pad. It was our biggest year yet and I thank you to everyone who volunteered, everyone who donated, and everyone who participated. Thank you.

Councilman Higgs - On the 24th, Saturday, at the Martin Luther King Park, I will be hosting the 12th Annual Back to School Give Away. It will be from 12 to 2, so any students that are interested in getting school supplies free just come on out to the park.

Councilwoman Venecz - At our last meeting we did not act on our appointment to the Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau. Being that we did not have a meeting before the deadline I would like now to move to appoint Raymundo Garcia as the council appointment.

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to appoint Raymundo Garcia as the Council appointment to the Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Councilman Higgs - Point of order.

Council President Opinker - We need a motion to suspend the rules.

Councilwoman Venecz - So moved.

Councilman Spitale - Second.

Council President Opinker - Motion by Councilwoman Venecz, second by Councilman Spitale.

Council Atty. Berger - I don't know why you need to suspend the rules, we're on New and Unfinished Business.

Council President Opinker - That's right, we didn't need to suspend the rules.

Council President Opinker - Okay, so we need a motion to go back to the rules.

Councilwoman Venecz - So moved.

Councilman Spitale - Second.

Council President Opinker - Motion by Councilwoman Venecz, second by Councilman Spitale. Okay we have a motion for an appointment, we had a second by Councilman Spitale, to appoint Raymundo Garcia. Is there any discussion?

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Markovich - You know, we don't know who the hell Raymundo Garcia is or whatever and we had

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Hammond City Clerk*

a problem with the last one because they weren't qualified and now just to bring this up all of a sudden. I would think they ought to put it in a resolution form and put it in the packet so we can have it. I think we should go ahead and let it be known that we are looking for an appointment and from what I understand is Tourism Board went ahead and appointed somebody on their own without even consulting us because the deadline went by. So I would think that as a council as a whole not just have somebody bring up somebody that they want and just table it and put it in there, not table it but put it in the packet like we normally do for a resolution if they want to appoint somebody and let's just do it that way not just some spur out of moment thing here or whatever's going on. You know, it's quite possible that this guy, if it's the same one I'm thinking of, already announced that he's running for 2nd District Councilman. So, you know, what are we doing here? You know. And there was a thing saying that he was gonna run and have an apartment in Downtown Hammond and I'm gonna move there, if it's the same one and that I don't know. That's all I'm saying, let's put it in the packet if you want to nominate somebody. Because I don't think it's fair to the rest of us. I mean somebody else, maybe there's somebody from the 1st District or whatever that wants to be appointed to this Tourism Board, that's all I'm asking.

Councilwoman Venecz - It's extremely unfair to Raymundo Garcia to speculate as to where he lives, where he's going to live, what he's going to do. Nobody has declared a candidacy for anything just yet. The election does not come up for two years. Raymundo Garcia, as everyone knows, is the busboy at El Taco Real, according to his commercials on WJOB. He is very visible in our community. He has been at El taco Real for years and years, his family has owned the business. Everyone is well aware of who Raymundo Garcia is and his activities in the city of Hammond. I think he would be an excellent appointment to the Convention and Visitors Bureau. Not only from his restaurateur background but also his activities in the city of Hammond that I might add extend beyond the city of Hammond. I renew my motion.

Council President Opinker - Councilwoman Venecz made the motion to appoint Raymundo Garcia to the Southshore Convention Visitor's Bureau, do I have a second?

Councilman Spitale - Second.

Councilman Markovich - Sometimes when Councilwoman Venecz speaks she forgets to put all the information in that's needed. If you can recall when they had the special election to put Councilman Uylaki in there was all kinds of names being thrown out there. Mr. Garcia was one of them. Our mayor got on the radio and said, "Hey, we had somebody from" What's the guys name, White, Secretary of State that went to jail saying that he was living in in one area and voted someplace else and he's in a heap of trouble. I mean, Mr. Garcia was saying he's all ready for running for 2nd District Councilman that he had an apartment above some building on Hohman Avenue and I'm sure he's probably the one to talk to you that he wanted to extend it to 12 o'clock because he wants to open a restaurant if people go to the Towle Theatre, you know, that they want to go to his restaurant and have something to eat and drink after. So that's why that was moved to 12 o'clock. But, irregardless, everybody knows Mr. Garcia lives across the street from Mayor McDermott on Knickerbocker and he was gonna run for this 2nd District thing here. Mayor McDermott got on the radio and said, "Hey, I'm not getting involved in it." Flatly told him, "Hey, you live over here, what you're gonna do two years from now. You want

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Markovich cont. - to move and put an apartment above your restaurant if you do open and all that,

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Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

that’s your business.” But, you know, let’s not try to jam something down our throats and the peoples throats all in one night and blind side us and come up with a name. We’re all councilmen. Let’s take the best candidate or whatever. I’m sure that there’s other people that want to get involved and everything. I have nothing against Mr. Garcia or anything but this just seems too coincidental, I’m running for 2nd District Councilman and then, doing this and doing that, now I want to be on the Tourism Board. Let’s put it out there. Let’s get the best possible candidate that’s out there that’s involved in tourism, has a business. Mr. Garcia, everybody knows that his father is the owner of that business. You know, Raymundo may be running it but his father owns it. That’s all I’m asking and if you have the votes to do it, god bless you. But I don’t like being blind sided like this and what’s happening.

ROLL CALL VOTE (Garcia to Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau)

AYES: Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Uylaki, Emerson, Opinker

NAYS: Markovich

ABSENT: Higgs, Hinojosa

Motion carried

6/1/2

RAYMUNDO GARCIA
APPOINTED TO THE LAKE COUNTY
CONVENTION AND VISITORS
BUREAU

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

William O’Connor - Couldn’t help but notice the usual search for a scapegoat, who gave AquaVor permission to open? You just gave them permission to operate until midnight. Do you think this will give the pastor any comfort? Many factors should be considered. No one is a criminal for not residing in the city. That attitude is for the stone age.

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to adjourn.

AYES: ALL

ATTEST:

Michael Opinker, President
Hammond Common Council

Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 7:30 pm
cb

Minutes approved at the Common Council meeting of August 26, 2013.

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Hammond City Clerk*