

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on January 27, 2014 in the Hammond City Council Chambers.

Council President Michael Opinker presided.

City Clerk Robert J. Golec facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.

ROLL CALL

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

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Kalwinski, moved to accept the minutes of January 13, 2014 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to approve the claims from January 8, 2014 through January 22, 2014. Claim #467 through and claim #798, inclusive.

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

#799	Universal Attractions	Mayor's Gaming	\$ 1,500.00
800	Clear Channel	Mayor's Gaming	7,500.00
801	H.A.S.T.	Mayor's Gaming	306,542.79
802	Community Development	Common Council	200.00

Councilman Higgs - That last claim that Councilman Markovich's for the homeless count and they're gonna be doing that in the next couple of days so that's why I was trying to expedite that in trying to get them some fun. However, I don't think the check is gonna be cut til this weekend but if anyone is willing to give any monetary donations or gloves, or socks, or anything, deodorant, you can submit that to Redevelopment and I think Darryl Ammon is handling that in Redevelopment.

ROLL CALL VOTE (amendment)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

CLAIMS AMENDED

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS cont.

ROLL CALL VOTE (as amended)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

CLAIMS APPROVED  
(as amended)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Higgs discussed communications received regarding Bethany Childcare center.

Mayor McDermott discussed his involvement in the Bethany Childcare Center situation.

Councilman Emerson read correspondence regarding the resolution which was passed regarding prohibiting discrimination by sexual orientation or identity in the city of Hammond.

Mayor McDermott - I know we're speaking on Communications, and I was reminded by Clerk Golec, anybody that was at the Executive Session today got to see an Executive Session that I've never seen in all the time I've been doing government. We literally negotiated a Fire Department contract during Executive Session today. It still has to be put in formal offer from the city but we agreed to the terms at the Executive Session earlier. I'm gonna follow it up with a formal letter to Mr. Lomeli, the Union President tomorrow and we were assured, the Hammond Council and the Mayor were assured that as long as we give the offer that we told them we would that they would approve it. So, a lot of people who are tuning in today, I imagine, and came here expecting to see a big fight between firemen and the city of Hammond, and instead what they saw in Executive Session was a negotiation continue with the Hammond City Council. I want to thank the members of the City Council for acting as a mediator. That was the first negotiation I had that was a failure. That went past the time when we were supposed to finish it. However, I think that we reached a deal today and I think it's a fair deal for the city. I think it's a fair deal for the firemen. It's gonna result in an immediate increase of staffing of firemen per day. The firemen agreed to sacrifice some days off in order to increase those levels. Truck 1, which has been talked about a lot lately, is back in service for the duration of the contract. Which I know Councilman Uylaki is happy to hear. I think it was a great deal and like I said, you know, the Council, all of you, I want to thank you personally because that was a very acrimonious negotiation, and I think you guys helped out a lot. So thank you very much. I didn't know if anybody had any questions about that but the fact that you were there, like I said in Executive Session, the next time my wife and I get into a fight I'm gonna bring her in here and we're gonna fight it out in front of you guys because I think you can solve it.

COMMUNICATIONS cont.

Council Atty. Berger - Mr. Mayor, just to correct the record. I don't believe it was an Executive Session because the public was present and invited.

Mayor McDermott - Thank you for pointing that out. It was not an Executive Session. It was just a Council Caucus. It was a Council Caucus that was open to the public. In fact there was a reporter in there and lots of members of the public so anybody who got here early got to see a treat, in my opinion. But, again, for the members of the Council, I think you guys did a great job today and I appreciate it as the Mayor.

Councilman Higgs read a press release regarding the celebration of African American Veteran's during Black History Month.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilman Kalwinski - Brought out 14-01 and 14-02.

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

14-01 An Ordinance Repealing Ordinance 7983 and Ordinance 8022, also known as Section 33.02 of the Hammond Municipal Code

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

Mayor McDermott - Because of the deal that we struck with the Hammond Firemen, this action that you're taking right now, as we described it in the caucus earlier that this is like a reserve chute. This is, if all else fails, these are the rules that we would operate by with the Hammond Fire Department and the city of Hammond. One of the problems we had when we lapsed our contract was we didn't know how to treat the firemen who work 24 hour shifts. Our employee handbook is written for employees that work eight hour shifts not for firemen who work 24 hour shifts. So the changes that are pending before you today were gonna be our union contracts if we didn't strike a deal. We did strike a deal, it appears, with the Hammond Fire Department so the only way these work rules will matter is if for some reason this deal that we struck breaks down. If it breaks down, this will be the rules that we operate by, the employee handbook. And if there's any other labor strife into the future, because you're creating an ordinance here, and some situation between the Hammond Fire Department and the city of Hammond breaks down in the future, at least future councils and future mayor's will have rules to operate by which we didn't have. So, I think it's important you pass this ordinance today and it shouldn't even matter because we have a deal with the Hammond Firemen and it appears we have a deal struck. So, I'd ask that you pass this for 3<sup>rd</sup> and final reading.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

ORDINANCE NO. 9241 PASSED

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

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

14-02 An Ordinance Amending Ordinance's 6049, 7472, 8620, 8638, 8669, 9181, 4611, 7593, 7931, 8537, 4977, 7931, 8537, 4977, 7931 and 5000, also known as Sec.'s 37.020, 37.025, 37.027 and 37.028 of the Hammond Municipal Code as it pertains to Employment Policies for Hammond Firefighters

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

Councilman Emerson, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to amend in 14-02A in its entirety.

Councilman Higgs - There should be some sections added to that. Am I correct?

Council President Opinker - Yes, 14-02A is superseding 14-02. You should have 14-02A.

Councilman Markovich - 14-02A was handed out in the caucus and after a lot of discussion. I just have a question on a couple of things here. I know the mayor brought up that there was a lot of days taken away and so forth for vacation and duty pay, or whatever. But under vacations I have a question, a couple questions, it says here, "forty hour employees equivalent to the above in calendar days as one equals three". If I think the way I read that is the forty hour employees work Monday through Friday, 8:00 to 4:30, which is forty hours. When a fireman works he get 24 hours. He works one and then he's off two, works one and he's off two. So when they get their vacation day they're getting a full day of 24 hours. I think maybe I need to be educated or maybe there's a mis-print or I don't know how this works. But if a guys only working eight hours a day, forty hours, why would we pay him triple time to take another vacation day, you follow me? We're giving him 16 extra hours off when their normal schedule is only eight hours a day.

Mayor McDermott - You're talking firemen?

Councilman Markovich - I ask the question, there's nine, like the chief, deputy chief, inspectors, they work straight days and weekends off so when they work their shift is eight hours.

Mayor McDermott - Got you.

Councilman Markovich - So now what we're doing here, and I don't quite understand it ....

Mayor McDermott - So you're saying how do we treat the non shift working firemen.

Councilman Markovich - We're giving them an extra sixteen hours of pay when in actuality they're only working eight hours.

Mayor McDermott - I'm not sure how that works, I'm not a fireman. But I want to point out I think there's nine out of 155 that are not on shift, so you're talking about nine out of 150.

Councilman Markovich - But we're gonna pay them extra nine times 16.

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

Mayor McDermott - I'm not sure how that works, I'll be honest with you, Councilman.

Councilman Markovich - If there's just... just talking holidays, there's thirteen holidays times sixteen hours. So that's 208 hours times nine, that's 1,872 hours that we're paying extra for people that aren't even at work. Let's just say if you take that at \$30 an hour, that's \$56,160, that's just for the holidays. I don't know too much about the vacation days and duty days but you know if somebody's got one weeks vacation, that's twenty four hours...

Council President Opinker - Councilman Markovich, if you want to sit up here I can explain that because I'm a day worker.

Mayor McDermott - We have two day workers in here, Firemen. We have my Deputy Chief behind me and we have the Chief Inspector.

Councilman Markovich - I understand that but they're working forty hours only but why would we pay them triple time to take a day off.

Councilman Higgs - If you could please, I would relinquish my seat for you to explain it.

Councilman Markovich - Usually you have the Vice President.

Mayor McDermott - I just want to point out that a firefighter, if he gets one day off, I mean normal firefighters aren't shifts, they get 24 hours on, two days off. So if they take one vacation day it's a twenty four hour shift, they get three days off, okay. So if you take 24 hours off you really get 72 hours off. Because you're a fireman and your next duty day isn't for four days.

Councilman Markovich - All I'm saying is when they get a day off it's a complete full shift of twenty four hours, but when a day worker takes a day off it's only eight hours. Why are we paying him an extra 16 hours?

Council President Opinker vacates the chair, Vice President Spitale assumes the chair.

Councilman Opinker - Referring to Councilman Markovich's comment on that, I'm a day worker and when I take one vacation, actually three of my vacation days equal one vacation day of a firefighter on the floor. Because he's actually working a 24 hour period where I'm working an eight hour period. So, he's technically getting, in this new contract, I believe it's twenty vacation days, because I'm a day worker I'm gonna get triple that because I'm not working the full 24. But in getting to holidays, we're not paid, the day workers are not paid for holidays, we're just off that day. Where the guys on a shift are paid because they're working that day.

Councilman Markovich - I understand that. I'm just referring to like an industry though when it's a holiday you get the day off and if you work it you get time and a half. So I would imagine if there was something going on, if you were a day worker that you needed to work, you would get time and a half in addition to your holiday pay. But the thing I don't understand is your normal shift is only eight hours, why would you get an extra sixteen hours off with pay? It doesn't make sense. Because your actual shift.....

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

Councilman Opinker - We don't get sixteen hours off with pay. We just get the one day.

Councilman Markovich - No. According to this it says forty hour employees equivalent to the above in calendar days as one equals three. So if you get a holiday off it's saying you're gonna get three extra days off. Three total.

Councilman Opinker - No, that's not how it reads.

Councilman Markovich - All I'm doing, that's what I'm questioning here.

Vice President Spitale vacates chair, Council President Opinker resumes chair.

Mayor McDermott - I'd like to point out we're spending a lot of time on something that's quite frankly is going to be governed in about a week by a union contract. So, this is the reserve shoot as we indicated earlier. So if there is a problem in this ordinance, if there is, I'm not sure if there, but if there is ...

Councilman Higgs - I guess my question would be why didn't this come out in caucus? I mean we sat there for almost an hour.

Councilman Markovich - We were handed this thing in there and I'm just looking at this now. To me it just doesn't make sense. Maybe we need to look into it.

Mayor McDermott - I'm not sure.

Councilman Hinojosa - I agree with the Mayor. It looks like we have a verbal tentative agreement and hopefully we'll have a vote next week so that will oversee everything that's on here. I am looking at the residency bonus. I thought it was \$2,400 and here it says \$6,000.

Mayor McDermott - Oh, that's old.

Councilman Higgs - It's gonna be changed.

Mayor McDermott - That's a good point.

Councilman Hinojosa - You want to amend it? You want me to amend it?

Councilman Higgs - That was my question. Initially when I said are we making changes? Everybody was like, "Yeah, we're changing it", but this doesn't read what was discussed. So there are some changes that need to be actually made in the language so there's a binding contract. Otherwise we're going by what this says. That was the problem that I had. Now, my other question was why not just table it and allow them to go ahead and vote and then we call a special meeting and vote on it. But Bobby's thing was, he can't pay them.

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

Mayor McDermott - In response to Councilman Hinojosa, I think it was an outstanding recommendation and my initial inclination was he's totally right on this, that's why we have attorneys. I spoke to Atty. Kantar and she said what we should do, and I agree with this Councilman Hinojosa, is leave the \$6 thousand in there, this isn't going to matter unless the contract fails. If the contract with the Hammond Firemen fails we wanted to increase the residency bonus.

Councilman Higgs - This contract is going to be a binding agreement. If you don't get through and they don't vote with you Mayor and go along with it, this is binding.

Mayor McDermott - No, no, no, yeah but that's why we wanted the residency bonus to be higher than that, Councilman Higgs. So that is they fail to make a deal with us the residency bonus would kick up for Hammond Firemen who live in the city of Hammond, that's why it was written at \$6 thousand. But if you want to change it to \$2,400 I would totally agree with that quite frankly. I understand both sides but it seems to me confusing.

Councilman Hinojosa - I think we should go ahead and amend it anyway and I think we won't have to worry because the way things look right now I think we're gonna ...

Mayor McDermott - I think you should change it to \$2,400 just because it's confusing. If it says in an ordinance passed by you \$6 thousand and in the contract I signed with them it says \$2,400 I think that's confusing. I think Councilman Hinojosa's right actually. I think we should change it.

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to amend in under residency bonus, that we change it on the first sentence there, under A, from \$6,000 to \$2,400.

Councilman Higgs - If I'm not mistaken, I think that's the same as the police officers. Am I correct?

Council President Opinker - That's correct.

Mayor McDermott - Something important I forgot to mention earlier, it's Councilman Kalwinski birthday today. Did you know that? It's Councilman Kalwinski's birthday and we haven't even said happy birthday. We've been negotiating for two hours and I just wanted to recognize Councilman Kalwinski and say happy birthday. You got a heck of a birthday, Councilman.

Councilman Higgs - Not to mention that the Mayor apologized to me in caucus so thank you so much mayor.

ROLL CALL VOTE (amending in 14-02A)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

AMENDMENT ADOPTED

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

ROLL CALL VOTE (amending residency bonus)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

AMENDMENT ADOPTED

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage of 14-02)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

ORDINANCE NO. 9242 PASSED  
(as amended)

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

14-03 To Appropriate Monies into the 2014 Gaming Fund

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved that the proposed ordinance go 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 on 2-24-14.

AYES: ALL

Councilman Higgs - This particular ordinance allows us to spend the money that was left over from the previous year. Each district councilman gets a percentage of casino dollars and the money that's left over has to be re-appropriated the following year for expenditures.

14-04 Amending Ord. 9230, also known as the Salary and Wage Ordinance for Police and Fire

Councilman Uylaki, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved that the proposed ordinance go 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-03 Regarding a Certified Deduction Application for the Citywide Housing Infill Program

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final adoption.

Councilman Higgs - Can you give me a general idea what this grant is gonna do for our city? The sponsor that is, Councilman Kalwinski.



RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilman Kalwinski - This is in line with what we've been doing in previous meetings regarding the CHIP programs and now we have an application submitted for the location at 2041 to abide by the ten year tax abatement. So this has to do with the application for that ten year tax abatement with the graduated scale that's found in your packet along with the application made by the individual or the couple..

Councilman Higgs - Is there a particular property that this is gonna assist with?

Councilman Kalwinski - The resolution indicates it's 2041 Lake Avenue.

Councilman Spitale - On these properties that are incremented for ten years for tax abatements, once you've purchased the property, after you build it, the first year you start that, not after you buy. You have one year to build on the property. That's throughout the city. That's just not in the 1<sup>st</sup> District, it's throughout the city. I guess it was passed, Clerk Golec, maybe you can tell when that ordinance was passed when you were a councilman yourself. Any idea, back in the seventies, the eighties, or what?

City Clerk Golec - Let's not go too far back.

Councilman Spitale - I have a couple of those as a realtor that I did know that existed having the ten year abatement. But throughout the city that was passed by a council in the past.

Councilman Markovich - Looking at the Statement of Benefits for 2041 Lake, are they saying that property is worth \$271 thousand?

Councilman Spitale - Total assessed value on that property is \$23 thousand. It was purchased for \$23 thousand one year ago by the gentleman that put in his bid on it.

Councilman Markovich - Are they planning on building another apartment building there?

Councilman Spitale - It looks like it's zoned for residential from what I found, what I see here. I got this off the Assessor's website. It's all for single dwelling. It's .17 acre for this property.

Councilman Markovich - Under the statement of benefits where it says section 3, it says current number, it says 15, what does that mean?

Councilman Spitale - Where is that at, Councilman?

Councilman Markovich - On Statement of Benefits page one, section 3.

Councilwoman Venecz - Section 3 does say estimate of employees and salaries as result of proposed project, current number 15. As I understand this program, this program was initially set up for vacant properties throughout the city of Hammond. If an individual does purchase a vacant property and builds a single family

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilwoman Venecz - home they are entitled to a ten year tax abatement. It is single family home, owner occupied, for the ten years that they receive the abatement.

Councilman Markovich - But I'm just asking what's current number 15, it says current local market rate. It doesn't say it's a single family home. If they're gonna build a house for \$249 thousand there, \$271 thousand- \$272 thousand after it's built. Somebody's gonna build a house there for \$272 thousand.

Councilwoman Venecz - The building that was on this property was a multi unit dwelling. Councilman Markovich, I saw you at the fire scene when this building burnt down. There were several illegal apartments in that building and it is quite a sizable piece of property. So it's very conceivable that someone could build a home for roughly \$250 thousand on that property.

Councilman Markovich - Yeah I was at that fire, but what I'm asking is it says current number 15. Is that the fifteen units that was listed there?

Councilwoman Venecz - It says estimate of employees and salary as result of proposed project.

Councilman Markovich - All I'm saying is usually when we have current employees when we do this in the past with industrial, that means the current number of employees gonna be retained after the project is over with. So my question is are they gonna say is it 15 employees that work on the project or is it gonna be 15 apartments that are gonna be put back in there. That's my question and that's what I'm just asking for so make sure what it says here. I've never seen this before where we're asking for Statement of Benefits. Right, we do have a ten year tax abatement for single family homes but I don't understand why it says current number 15 and then current local market rate for employees and salaries. We never usually list what the trade people are gonna be there. This is what we do for Jupiter Aluminum or something. If we give them tax abatement they're gonna have 90 employees then it's gonna have 90 employees. But I've never seen this before on a single family home that's why I'm just questioning are they gonna build a fifteen unit apartment building there. I'm taking that current number as 15 is 15 units.

Mayor McDermott - Could we bounce this til the next council meeting?

Council President Opinker - We're gonna do that right now.

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved to table 14R-03.

AYES: ALL

14R-04        A Resolution in Opposition to House Joint Resolution 3

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

Mayor McDermott - I want to thank the City Council for hearing this resolution. I know it's no secret that the state of Indiana two years ago filed something called HJR6, House Joint Resolution 6, which started the process

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - to put a ban on gay marriage into the Indiana Constitution. The Indiana Constitution is written so that the only way to make constitutional amendments is to pass it through two General Assemblies and if it passes identically through two General Assemblies the bill is submitted to the people for a referendum, alright. This is the second reading of HJR6, which has now been changed to HJR3 but the content of the bill is exactly the same. If one word is changed it buys us two more years. A lot of focus is on the second sentence of HJR3 which would basically say that Indiana would not recognize civil unions of another state. So if we had a couple in Hammond that were legally married in Illinois and they moved to Hammond they would literally not be welcome if HJR3 is passed in its current form. There's been a lot of back and forth down state about whether or not this is wise for Indiana to pursue but if they do pass it through the general assembly in the current form, it will be on the ballot November for the voters, and if the voters say yes we're gonna have a part of the Indiana Constitution that says basically we're not a welcoming state for homosexual couples and I think that's a travesty. I know for a fact we have a large gay population in the city of Hammond. I'm great with that. In fact, I was saying earlier in caucus that we had a gay couple that moved here and told me literally the reason they picked Hammond is because Hammond is a progressive city and it's friendly. Quite frankly, that's one of the reasons they wanted to live here. So I think this type of resolution shows our constituents and shows people across Indiana how we feel about this issue and I promise you if you pass it I will sign it and I will make sure it gets in legislator's hand. Because they need to hear how you feel and how we feel about this issue. It's embarrassing that we're even talking about this.

Councilman Emerson - The opposition to HJR3 in my view hinges on unfair treatment of specific groups violating their due process and equal protection principles. HJR3 will have a negative social and financial impact as was mentioned just now by the Mayor. Finally, HJR3 proposes to add an amendment to the Indiana State Constitution. The Constitution by the way that we were all sworn to defend when we were sworn in and if you're in the military you defend the U.S. Constitution with your life. In closing, I thought of every year Hammond participates in the naturalization ceremony, it used to be at Harrison Park now it's at the Pavilion at Wolf Lake. New citizens from around the world are sworn in after studying and passing Constitution tests and historical facts about our country. I'll speak for myself, I probably couldn't pass that test as well as they do. They really study for it. You know, it's a great day. There's a Federal Judge there, the Mayor's been there, there's a Congressman there. They're all there with their families and our Legion Post passes out little American Flags and there's flowers and everybody really enjoys it. So I would like to invite all the representatives to vote yes on HJR3 to this ceremony this coming year, if it does wind up in our Constitution, and then I would like as we welcome the new citizens of this country for them to explain to all these new citizens in Indiana that their right to due process and equal protection has been denied. Thank you.

Councilwoman Venecz asked to be added as a sponsor.

Councilman Hinojosa asked that the whole council be added.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION R04 ADOPTED

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS cont.

14R-05            A Resolution Authorizing the Fire Dept. to Accept Funds Awarded to Hammond under the 2013 Safer Grant

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final adoption.

Mayor McDermott - Just to summarize, Senator Joe Donnelly awarded Hammond and two other cities in Indiana with a \$450 thousand annual grant for two years that will cover firemen. Part of the grant application process is we have to maintain a staffing of 155 firefighters. We are currently at 154 about to go to 153 so I authorized my Fire Chief this morning to start the process and hire two firemen. That would be eight firemen we hired in 2014. So I thank Councilman Hinojosa for bringing this up. I want to thank Senator Joe Donnelly for bringing \$900 thousand to the city of Hammond to help pay for our firefighters.

Councilman Higgs asked to be added as a sponsor.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION R05 ADOPTED

14R-06            A Resolution Authorizing the Hammond Fire Dept. to Apply for a 2014 Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) Grant  
Sponsored by Michael Opinker

Councilman Hinojosa, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for final adoption.

Councilman Hinojosa - This \$4 thousand grant will update the city of Hammond's rescue rope for emergencies, that's used throughout the city for emergencies.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION R06 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Hinojosa, moved to send a letter regarding pole lights. 6000 block of Tapper Street, 094880; 6200 block of Monroe, pole #42886 is out; 900 block of Carroll, 017764 is out; and the property at 838 Carroll Street needs to be demo'd. I make a motion that we send letters to Engineering, NIPSCO and to Code Enforcement. AYES: ALL

LETTERS SENT: January 28, 2014

Councilman Markovich - I just wanted to say for us to take that action all you have to do is call the Engineering Dept. and give them that pole number and they'll put it on the computer.

Council President Opinker - It works a lot faster.

Councilman Higgs - I can assure you that I've done that on several occasions. I've had to even take off work and appear at the Board of Works meeting. There have been times where I have repeatedly given pole number here as well as followed up and called and there are properties within my district that have been sitting there for two to three years that I've requested to be demo'd. So, the more letters, the more I put it on the record, the more results I get.

Councilman Markovich - All I'm talking about is the NIPSCO lights. Because I've had one in my area that they can only really check it at night whether the photo cell is working and they'll come and work on it at night but sometimes it'll be on, sometimes it'll be off, and now it's been on for the next week or so but you know it can go out anytime. All I'm saying is if you call the Engineering Department they'll put it online and it'll be there and it's up there for just follow up to see if it's working after that.

Councilman Higgs - I applaud Councilman Markovich's endeavors in trying to give me direction but I think I know what I'm doing in regards to these particular issues and he's more than welcome to take a ride through my district seeing that he is a Councilman at Large and look at all the lights that are out on a regular basis and report them. That will give me a lot of freeway to work on some other things in the community.

Councilman Markovich - I welcome Councilman Higgs' invitation but yes as Councilman at large I'm responsible for six districts so if I start in one district the other ones will feel slighted then.

Councilman Hinojosa - I applaud Mr. Higgs, if this is the way he wants to do it, it's his district and I applaud you for it.

Councilman Kalwinski - Just a quick announcement. The Pulaski Park Neighborhood Association meeting is cancelled for tomorrow due to weather.

Councilman Higgs - The County will be closed tomorrow so no need to ..... well the County period is closed.

Council President Opinker - County what, the County's a big ....

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Higgs - That means the East Chicago, Gary and Crown Point offices are all closed tomorrow.

Councilwoman Venecz - For those of you who are interested in knowing what is going on in your neighborhood, I urge everyone to attend a community and crime watch meeting in your neighborhood. Some upcoming meetings are:

Wed., Jan. 29 <sup>th</sup>	Jefferson C.W.	Jefferson School	6:30 pm
Wed. Feb. 5 <sup>th</sup>	Edison Community Watch	Edison School	6:30 pm
Thur., Feb. 6 <sup>th</sup>	Edison Community Watch	Golden Manor	6:00 pm
Wed., Feb. 5 <sup>th</sup>	Harrison Park C.W.	V.F.W.	5:00 pm
Fri., Feb. 7 <sup>th</sup>	Irving C.W.	Irving School	9:15 am

This is where you can bring your concerns. This is where you can find out what is going on in your neighborhood and I urge everyone to attend.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Cpl. Antonio Daggett - Gladdened by the results of the caucus. Negotiations should have started earlier and dealt with better.

Alvin Cheeks - Has gone to NIPSCO seven times in regards to 6000 Morris. There is a gentleman floating around the 3<sup>rd</sup> District wearing a white hockey mask robbing people. He pops up around churches in the evenings. Thanked Mayor for working with the Bethany.

Dale Parrish - Gives a little history on the Bethany. Looking for some help with the Bethany Childcare Building so that something positive could come from it. The building has been inspected and is safe and secure.

Ola Smith - At Calumet & Becker there is a huge car lot and the cars are just sitting there. They're not being sold, they're immobile. It's an eyesore. Would like them to be cited because it is affecting the neighborhood. In caucus, some of the comments made to each other were very rude. We're all adults and should respect each other.

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

AYES: ALL

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Opinker, President  
Hammond Common Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Minutes approved at the Common Council meeting of February 10, 2014.

Time: 8:47 pm

cb

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*