

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 12, 2016

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on September 12, 2016 in the Hammond City Council Chambers.

Council President Janet Venecz presided.

Council Coordinator Carmen I. Balboa facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.
Invocation by Councilwoman Venecz.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Markovich, Spitale, Kalwinski, Higgs, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos, Venecz

ABSENT: Torres

TOTAL: 8

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to approve the minutes of August 22, 2016 and place on file.

AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Markovich, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved to accept the claims from August 17, 2016 through September 7, 2016. Claim #5261 through claim #5648, inclusive.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Kalwinski, Higgs, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos, Venecz

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried

8/0/1

CLAIMS APPROVED

PUBLIC HEARINGS

16-22 An Ordinance to Appropriate Funds in the Hotel/Motel Innkeepers Tax Fund for Economic Development Purposes (\$10,894.84)

Alvin Cheeks - My hope would be that the council explore putting a hotel into the 3rd District and adding some more hotels to our large inventory in the coming years there are going to be some large events in the city of Chicago, the Air Show and things that we could take advantage of. More hotels would bring in more commerce for our Hotel/Motel Tax.

COMMUNICATIONS

None

MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL cont.

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilman Spitale - Brought out 16-22 for passage.

Community & Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Announced upcoming meetings:

Tues., Sept. 20; East Hammond Pullman Crime Watch; 6:30 pm; Ophelia Steen Center

Thur., Sept. 22; Hessville Crime Watch; Jean Shepherd Center; 7:00 pm

Wed., Sept. 21; Lafayette Neighborhood Watch; Lafayette School; 6:30 pm

Thur., Sept. 15; South Hammond Crime Watch; 7:00 pm; Hammond Housing Authority

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

16-22 An Ordinance to Appropriate Funds in the Hotel/Motel Innkeepers Tax Fund for Economic Development Purposes (\$10,894.84)

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

Councilman Spitale - Every year \$10,800 is given for Economic Development. This year if you noticed it had \$10,894.84 that \$94.84 was left over from last year. They're gonna use the money for Economic Development purposes for the city of Hammond through the Innkeepers taxes for advertisement materials (unclear) and promotional events and various other costs associated with preparation for businesses and events.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Kalwinski, Higgs, Emerson, Woerpel, Rakos, Venecz

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried

8/0/1

ORDINANCE NO. 9350 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

None

RESOLUTIONS

None

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Higgs, supported by Woerpel, moved to set the Budget Hearing on September 24, 2016 at 9:00 am here in the Council Chambers. September 26 there will be a public hearing at the council meeting and the Introduction of the Budget. The final adoption of the Budget will be on October 11, 2016 at the Council meeting.

Councilman Higgs - I guess all the department heads need to be notified it's a first come, first serve, basis for the introduction of the budget on the Budget Hearing on September 24th at 9:00 am in the Council Chambers.
AYES: ALL

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved that the meeting scheduled for October 10, 2016, which is a holiday, be scheduled for October 11, 2016 here in the Council Chambers at 6:00 pm.
AYES: ALL

Councilman Emerson - This is, you know, something I was thinking about, given what's been going on in East Chicago with the lead being found in the area over there and the subsequent evacuations and the closing of the school. I was wondering if, particularly in manufacturing areas of Hammond, if we regularly test, and if we do that's fine, I'm not saying anything other than, I'm just inquiring, for lead or other things in the soil and I'm thinking of south of the Roxana area on Michigan Avenue up there where that chemical plant is and any other areas. If we do that it's fine. But I want to be sure we're proactive so that we don't one day discover a whole neighborhood is not kosher. I'm just inquiring. Maybe we do. Randomly testing for those kinds of problems that East Chicago's having. The water, we do get reports, I know, in our packets all the time. The water is great at the point of, I guess, distribution. But I'm not an authority on this so I don't know. In other words, I have old lead pipes in my house and if the water comes out with lead in it the city is, obviously, not responsible for that. But coming into my house, do we know, not coming from the water plant, but do you know what I mean? There's so many questions that I think we should at least be proactive in getting to the answer. But, yes, letter to Ron and maybe the Water Dept.

Councilman Woerpel - If we're gonna send a letter, I think it would have to go to IDEM too wouldn't it. The Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

Council President Venecz - It's your pleasure. I would think that we would start at the local level and he would, Mr. Novak, would then contact the state level. That's just my opinion.

Councilman Woerpel - Just so I'm clarified on this, you're not talking about going in everybody's house and testing their water are you?

Councilman Emerson - No, Councilman. That's our responsibility for our part. What I'm saying is up to the buffalo box in the alley or the front or wherever it happens to be, the city, I think, then it becomes their responsibility. I'm sure, the reports I've seen say the water is fine. I'm more concerned about what happened in East Chicago. But we're just being proactive. If everything is good then everything is good. You know, just throwing it out there.

Councilman Woerpel - My only request would be if we're gonna send a letter, we should send one to IDEM too.

Council President Venecz - Is that in the form of a motion?

Councilman Woerpel - I guess.

Councilwoman Venecz - Is there a second?

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Emerson - I'll second it.

AYES: ALL

LETTERS SENT: SEPTEMBER 13, 2016

Councilman Emerson - The Veteran's Appreciation Day Parade and Concert will be Saturday, November 12. The parade stepping off at 10 am at Olcott and 173rd Street. The concert will be at the Civic Center at 6 pm featuring M&R Rush and The Dancing Noodles. Veteran's are free and it's \$10 for non-military people they say here.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Mary Ellen Slazyk - Speaking of Environmental concerns, that hill behind the train is where they pile all the old railroad ties from the railroad yard and stuff. That soil is heavily contaminated with arsenic. The school city proposed building a new school in that pathway. They did soil samples, it's like oops. Hopefully that will not leak into our water system because we do have a pretty good water system here in Hammond. Regarding the Fair Housing meeting, part of the problem is we're tearing down too many houses, indiscriminately. Some need to be torn down but some of them are not. 505 Highland does not need to be demolished. They have done repairs and the taxes are all paid.

John Czulno - We're holding a Budget Hearing on the 22nd and Public Expression will be on the 26th. When will this budget be available for the public to view in order to express something during the Public Expression two days later. We do not have agendas listed anywhere prior to the meetings. We do not have the minutes of the meetings from the prior meetings listed before the next meeting. There's nothing for the public to review in order to ask questions.

George Stoya - There is no transparency. There is no basis to offer any meaningful public input and there's a lot of things around here that we don't get to look at.

Alvin Cheeks - Rev. Jon Parrish was a council person in the city of Hammond for over 12 years, there's not a street, not a picture, not a sign that represents Mr. Parrish. Another councilman died on the floor of the Hammond City Council and there is no picture of him up either. We need structure in terms of the public hearings in the city of Hammond. I heard the Maywood and Edison pools will be closed and would like some validity in regards to that. We need a better plan for loose dogs in the city of Hammond and dog attacks.

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved to return to New and Unfinished Business.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Markovich, Spitale, Kalwinski, Higgs, Emerson, Woerpel, Venecz

NAYS: Rakos

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried

7/1/1

RULES SUSPENDED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Markovich - September 22nd a Thursday, that's when we get our packets so I would imagine the Controller will have that budget in there then and that's when it'll be available. What other ways that they're

gonna make it available, whether they're gonna do a disk, put it on line or so forth, but we can make copies here if somebody would request it. Probably the Clerk's Office would have copies of that. Then Saturday at 9 am on Sept. 24th there's gonna be budget hearings. It'll be introduced on Monday the 26th for a public hearing and final passage and adoption will be October 11th. So, I mean, we're gonna try to make it as transparent as much as we can.

Councilman Higgs - What was discussed as well in the caucus is that according to the new state law that they don't have to publish the budget, it's by Gateway.

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

AYES: ALL

Janet Venecz, President
Hammond Common Council
ATTEST:

Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 6:30 pm
cb

Minutes approved at the Common Council meeting on September 26, 2016.