

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on March 11, 2019 in the Hammond City Council Chambers.

Council President Robert A Markovich presided.

City Clerk Robert J. Golec facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.

Invocation by Councilman Higgs

ROLL CALL

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

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to accept the minutes of March 11, 2019 and place on file. AYES: ALL

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Council Higgs, moved to approve the claims from March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019 through March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Claim #1214 through #1506, inclusive.

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved to amend in claim:

#1507	Indiana Department of Transportation	Engineer/Citywide	\$ 18,635.06
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ROLL CALL VOTE (amend in claim)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 CLAIMS AMENDED

ROLL CALL VOTE (claims as amended)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 CLAIMS APPROVED  
(as amended)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Higgs- I would like to send my condolences to the family of the United States Marshall that died in Rockford Illinois.

Councilman Higgs- Read a letter addressing the property at 907 Ames Street, for tree removal that will be completed after the Harrison Park Project.

Councilman Higgs- A community meeting will be held on March 19, 2019 at Douglas Point.

Councilman Higgs- A meeting is being held tonight on the rate increase from NIPSCO.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council as Whole Committee- Councilman Woerpel- Brought out 18-33 and 19-04

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

Fri., Mar. 15; Community Watch will meet Silver Birch 2 p.m.

Tues., Mar. 19; East Hammond Pullman Crime Watch Ophelia Steen 6:30 p.m.

Thur., Mar. 21; Hessville Crime Watch Jean Shepard 7 p.m.

Wed., Mar. 20; Lafayette Neighborhood Watch Lafayette School 6:30 p.m.

Thur., Mar. 21; South Hammond Crime Watch Hammond Housing Authority 7:00 p.m.

Thur., Mar. 14; Whiting Robertsdale Crime Watch Calumet College 6:30 p.m.

Council President Markovich- Announced 2019 Hammond Common Council committee list.

Council President Markovich- City Plan Commission, I made an appointment but that person refused.

Council President Markovich- Any volunteers to be on City Plan Commission?

Councilman Higgs- The meetings are normally during the day, am I correct?

Council President Markovich- I am not sure.

Councilman Torres- The meetings are usually at evening.

Councilman Higgs- I will discuss it with you out after the meeting.

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Council Higgs, moved to accept the committee assignments.

COMMITTEE REPORTS cont.

ROLL CALL VOTE (accept committee assignments)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MOTION CARRIED

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

18-33 An Ordinance of the City of Hammond, Indiana Concerning Removal of the City of Hammond Water Works Department from the Jurisdiction of the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission.

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilman Higgs, moved for passage.

Councilman Woerpel - This Ordinance was moved from 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reading on December 12, 2018, two public hearings were scheduled. One for February 21<sup>st</sup> which nine people showed up and the other hearing on March 6, at Sportsplex which two people showed up and a third one came. We are trying to save money by opting out of the IURC out of the 400 communities in Indiana, there are 360 that don't belong to the IURC.

Councilman Higgs- My concern was the high interest rates that were actually attributed to the longevity of the process dealing with them and it really cost the city astronomical dollars in regards to interest rates and prolonged the process. IDEM has a responsibility that it needs to do. We have a 5 member board that the Mayor appoints to govern the Water Department. My Concern is saving the City, money so I would hope that we opt out of the IURC.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

ORDINANCE NO. 9433 PASSED

19-04 An Ordinance Reclassifying Certain Lands in the City of Hammond for Zoning Purpose and Amending Ordinance No.8514 (An Ordinance Establishing a Zoning Plan for the City of Hammond including the Regulations and Maps to Administer the Zoning Plan in Order to Provide for Orderly Growth and Development within the City all in Accordance with the Comprehensive/Land use Plan as Amended) for Property Commonly known as 712 Highland Street, Hammond, IN 46320

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for passage.

Councilman Higgs- I want to thank Swanel for being a great partner with the City of Hammond, and always giving back to the Community as well.

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

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

Mayor McDermott- I want to Thank the CEO, Ed Roviario, for starting a business in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District and reinvesting in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District, bringing more jobs and investments to the community. Swanel is showing that they are investing in our City and I think that is a real positive thing so I want to congratulate Swanel and the 3<sup>rd</sup> District, we appreciate it.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

ORDINANCE NO. 9434 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

19-07 An Ordinance to Appropriate Funds in the Hotel/Motel Innkeepers Tax Fund for the Hammond Park Department.

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved the proposed Ordinance to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reading and referred it to the Finance Committee with a public hearing on April 8, 2019. AYES: ALL

Councilwoman Venecz- This Ordinance is to appropriate funding from the Innkeepers tax balance a total of \$16,112.70 appropriated to the hotel/motel fund for advertisement for the Festival of the Lakes.

19-08 An Ordinance to Appropriate Funds from the Operating Balance for the Hammond Park Department

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved the proposed Ordinance to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reading and referred it to the Finance Committee with a public hearing on April 8, 2019. AYES: ALL

Councilwoman Venecz- This is appropriating \$ 62,000 from the Operating Balance to Special Events, and also Key and Cleanup Refunds within the Park Department. Special Events is \$ 55,000 that is for the summer Recreation Programs, Cinco De Mayo, Halloween, Valentines Day, events of that nature and \$ 7,000, is for Key and Cleanup Refunds. AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Spitale, made a motion that the rules be suspended to introduce 19R-08  
AYES: ALL

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RULES SUSPENDED

19R-08 Resolution Opposing Large Increase in Utility Charges

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

Councilman Higgs asked City Clerk Golec to read the Resolution in its entirety.

City Clerk Golec read 19R-08 in its entirety.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R08 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Council President Markovich- Just for information on the Resolution passed on NIPSCO, they have a meeting going on right across the street. You might want to go over and see how these rates are going to go.

Councilwoman Venecz, I just wanted to congratulate the Hammond High Basketball Team for a fabulous job this weekend. I have to admit I don't follow highschool sports but this was too exciting not to follow. I was able to watch the game Saturday morning and boy it was sure fun to watch them kick butt by 20 points. My husband graduated from Hammond Tech, back in the day, Tech had a horrible basketball team it was always Hammond High, he always commented on he knew Hammond High's Fight song better then he did his own school. He was singing the Hammond High Fight song to those basketball games this weekend. So Congratulations again.

Council President Markovich- Well I was at the games this weekend me and Paul Walker, he took plenty of pictures when they won the Sectional. They beat Griffith, in the first game it's nothing like being there instead of watching it on TV. The only problem is watching on tv there is no one in the stands, the kids would like to see bodies in the stands. I beg to differ I went to Hammond Tech, we won the Sectional in 67, and 68 where I was a member of the team and we beat Hammond High.

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilman Higgs- I made a second request that graffiti be removed from 912 Drackert Street, I am asking that Gary Gleason send me a memo letting me know the graffiti was removed. I also gave him a name and number of the Property owner.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

George Stoya- Once again I am asking to get an official action whether this Council would consider hiring a Local Utility Consumer Counselors position or office.

Alvin Cheeks- Swanel, has done a great job in the community, just want to thank them for all they do. I also would like to thank the Mayor for stopping the politics that were in the Hammond Police Department.

Anne Herbert- I make it no secret that I am a stage 4 Breast Cancer Survivor, and I welcome anybody to give my testimony. The lie you told about me had nothing to do with Cancer and I think you owe me an apology.

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

AYES: ALL

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Robert A. Markovich, President  
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:

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Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 6:40 p.m.  
dw

Minutes approved at the Common Council meeting of March 25, 2019.

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*