

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on December 16, 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 November 18, 2019 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Rakos, moved to approve claims from November 13, 2019 through December 11, 2019. Claim #6436 through claim #7158, inclusive.

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

#7159	New Community Church	Common Council	\$200.
#7160	Hammond Boys and Girls Club	Common Council	\$200.
#7161	Hammond Elderly Apt.'s	Common Council	\$200.
#7162	Mt. Zion Pleasant View Plaza	Common Council	\$100.

ROLL CALL VOTE (amendment)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 CLAIMS AMENDED

ROLL CALL VOTE (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)

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC HEARINGS

19-26 An Ordinance Creating a New Fund (Fund #243) and to Appropriate Funds Within the Hammond Police Department Grant Fund for 2020.

19-27 An Ordinance Creating a New Fund (Fund #244) and to Appropriate Funds Within the Hammond Police Department Grant Fund for 2020

No one spoke.

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Higgs honored Richard Hatcher, former Mayor of the city of Gary, Indiana, who served Gary with proudness and he was a humanitarian for the entire nation. He will truly be missed.

Councilman Woerpel announced that the Hammond Parks Foundation is having an annual dinner on January 25, 2020 at 6 p.m., \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door. The organization is looking for new and fresh blood.

Councilman Torres announced that the Hammond Elderly, 5111 Sohl Avenue, are having a Christmas Party on the 19th and are asking for donations.

Councilman Higgs thanked the outgoing Mayor of Gary, Indiana, Karen Freeman-Wilson, for naming a street after Malcolm X.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee - Councilman Woerpel - Brought out 19-31.

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilman Woerpel - Brought out 19-26, 19-27, 19-32, and 19-33.

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Upcoming meetings:

Tues. Dec. 17; E. Hammond Pullman C.W.; Ophelia Steen Center; 6:30 p.m.

Tues., Jan. 7; Harrison Park C.W.; VFW; 6:30 p.m.

Hessville C.W.; Thur., Dec. 19; 7 p.m.; Jean Shepherd Center

S. Hammond C.W.; Thur., Dec. 19; Hammond Housing Authority; 7 p.m.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

19-26 An Ordinance Creating a New Fund (Fund #243) and to Appropriate Funds Within the Hammond Police Department Grant Fund for 2020

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

Councilman Higgs asked to be added as a sponsor.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

Councilman Spitale - This 2020 Grant is a comprehensive highway injury reduction program. The amount of money granted to the city of Hammond is \$159,500.

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. 9455 PASSED

19-27 An Ordinance Creating a New Fund (Fund #244) and to Appropriate Funds Within the Hammond Police Department Grant Fund for 2020

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

Councilman Higgs asked to be added as a sponsor.

Councilman Spitale - This is a Lake County Drunk Driving Task Force Grant. The amount for this is \$80 thousand given to the city of Hammond.

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. 9456 PASSED

19-31 An Ordinance Fixing the Salaries for Elected Officials for the City of Hammond, Indiana Commencing January 1, 2020

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved for passage.

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. 9457 PASSED

19-32 An Ordinance Authorizing the City Controller to Transfer Funds from One Line Item to another within various City 2019 Budgets

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved for passage.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Councilman Woerpel - This is basically what some refer to as the clean up ordinance. No extra money is being spent, it's just re-appropriating end of the year funds throughout the department.

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. 9458 PASSED

19-33 An Ordinance Enacting Proposed Amendments to the User Fees for the Operation and Maintenance of the City Storm Water System

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved for passage.

Councilman Woerpel - As most people are aware of, we've made it perfectly clear throughout the year that come 2020, basically what we call the Sewer Department, I know it's Storm Water System for the city, but it was gonna be unfunded by the budget. So, these are the proposed rate increases for residential single family, duplex and three units, which there are 23,641, the monthly rate is going from \$5 to \$7.75. Which is an annual increase from your tax bill of \$33. Commercial buildings, which there are 1,276, is going from \$35 to \$90, which, again, will go to the tax bill. Industrial, there's 260, going from \$35 to \$162.75. Commercial apartments, four through nineteen units, there are 319 of them, and they're going from \$15 to \$62.50. The state assessed utilities, there's 233 of those that we re taxed at \$25 and are going to \$116.25. As we stated in the caucus, and as we stated when this bill was introduced, these rates, as is, will fund the Sewer Department, which again, will go unfunded under the 2020 budget. Without the Sewer Department it would basically, we'd be left with broken sewers that would go unfixed or have to use Council dollars to do it. I had a situation in the 5th District where a sewer clogged up and they were about there about seven or eight days, around the clock, unclogging it from a back up from a business. The point is, this raises the department funding of \$4,750,000 and it still keeps us as one of the two lowest communities rates in our area.

Councilman Higgs - I think in caucus what was discussed as it relates to this particular ordinance is that other communities and towns have already increased and so it's needed in this particular department, so that is the reason for the increase and certainly we don't want to have situations come up where they can't do the necessary repairs throughout our city. So, for my constituents, that's why I'm voting in favor of it.

Mayor McDermott - The Sanitary Sewer Dept.'s the department that goes from north to south in our city. Where they start up at the casino and work their way south going through the storm sewers, it takes them about ten years to get the entire system done. They go through and do preventative maintenance, they televise the sewer to make sure there's no problem and if they find them they fix them. Sometimes there's problems that pop up in your districts and we don't call up Councilman Rakos and say, "Hey, Councilman Rakos, we had a storm sewer collapse in the 6th District. It cost \$150 thousand, we need to take that from your gaming revenue." We have a fund set aside for emergencies like this that come up every single year and it's funded out of this account. This

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

Mayor McDermott cont. - account, when the property tax caps passed, literally zeroed out, this account. It's an important department, but more importantly it's the revenue we use when we have emergency sewer collapses which happen every single year. So, without this department not only would we have to approach the district council people whenever we had issues like this pop up, we also wouldn't have the manpower that we need to start that ten year process of televising and inspecting all 300 miles of our storm water system. So, this is important. We all knew that when the property tax caps kicked in that this department would go unfunded. We've been talking about this for the better part of a year. This is the proposal that was submitted to us by the Hammond Sanitary District. The part that was important to me was looking at the homeowner portion, which is 25 thousand of our customers are paying this, it goes up \$2.75 per month. That's it. It's a cup of coffee at Starbucks is what we're talking about. Once per month. It's payable twice per year on each tax bill that's due. So, I hear people talk about percentages, "This is going up a certain percentage." It's like, I get it, it's going up a certain percentage but it's going up \$2.75 per month. That's what we're talking about, for by far the majority of repairs are gonna be affected, \$2.75 per month. If you own a building, if you own an industrial property, it's a different number for you. However, if you're a homeowner, which is 90% of the issues that we're worried about, \$2.75 per month, payable twice per year.

Councilman Spitale - A much needed department for sure. How many trucks do they have for this sewer, when they do their lines.

Mayor McDermott - This is Jack Smith, he is a Department Head in the Hammond Sanitary Sewer Department. He could give us more detailed answers about his department. How many employees do you have? I know it's a \$4 million budget we're talking about. Three quarters of the budget are for emergency repairs. To give you an idea, last year in the 2nd District we had a storm sewer collapse between Columbia and Michigan, that was \$391 thousand. It was down for the better part of a month. We didn't approach Councilman Torres and say, "Bad news Councilman, we had a storm water sewer collapse in your district." We covered it with the emergency fund.

Jack Smith - I have a total of sixteen employees. I have four Vactors. Two employees per truck. That's eight right there, not including our locate guy. We have four guys on repair. Four guys on repair takes care of the whole entire city of Hammond. From all the way from South to North and from East to West. We have a total of 400 city miles of sewers.

Mayor McDermott - 400 miles, okay. Was I right on the ten years?

Jack Smith - We've got it down to seven.

Councilman Spitale - You're doing a heck of a job.

Mayor McDermott - I don't know if you have any other questions but this isn't ... I realize that there's people watching that this is new to and people in the audience haven't heard about this but I know that the nine of you and the administration have been talking about this for the better part of six months, five months, so this isn't a

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - surprise to you but I realize we're talking to an audience as well. I don't know if you have questions you want to eliminate for the audience but I think the important parts that I want to highlight is, we're one of the lowest rates, even after, if this rate is approved, we're one of the lowest in the region for sure. There's only two communities lower than us and they are both in the process of raising their rates. The two communities, funny enough, are Lowell, who doesn't have nearly the storm water capacity that we have, the storm sewers. The other community is Gary and I think that Gary's probably gonna be looking at changes in the way they do business. So, I would be surprised if we weren't the lowest before long.

Councilman Higgs - The sponsor of this ordinance, you said for commercial property, how much would the increase be?

Councilman Woerpel - Commercial buildings and apartments with 19 units would go from \$35 to \$90.

Mayor McDermott - So, Councilman Higgs, to try to justify this, is my house, I have a front yard that absorbs storm water and I don't send a lot of storm water. Before this all happened, I own a commercial building. It's the building where Schoops is located in South Hammond, okay, my commercial building paid the same as my house for storm water fees. Yet, I have a big parking lot at Schoops and we send a lot more water to the system than my house does. It doesn't really make a lot of sense for an industrial piece of property and a commercial piece of property and my house to pay the same rates for storm water fees. So what we did was, using that rationale, we moved the home owner up \$2.75 per month, and then we moved the commercial buildings up a lot more. So for my commercial building I'm gonna be paying hundreds more per year, being honest with you. Then industrial properties, which I imagine use even more water and put it into our system. They raise a lot more. So, for my commercial building, for instance, I'm gonna get a tax bill for next year where my property taxes are gonna drop hundreds of dollars per year, maybe even a thousand per year because the tax caps kicked in. Then it's gonna raise the amount of this rate. So it may raise a couple hundred bucks but it's gonna drop by thousands. My homeowner bill next year is gonna drop by hundreds of dollars for sure, and then it's gonna go up \$2.75 per month. Okay. Nobody likes doing this kind of stuff but let's keep it in perspective what we're talking about. We're talking about for a homeowner, \$2.75 per month. Commercial property owners, they have a different complaint. I'm one of them by the way and I'm one of them that's gonna pay more next year under this plan and I realize that. But, it's hard for me to justify why the building that houses Schoops pays the same storm water fee as my house. That made no sense, and an industrial piece of property, and that's what we're changing with this ordinance, if it's approved.

Councilman Higgs - I guess my question would be, do you know how many commercial properties we have total in the city of Hammond?

Mayor McDermott - It's on that list, Councilman. Councilman Woerpel, how many pieces of commercial property?

Councilman Woerpel - Okay, there's commercial building and apartments greater than 19 units, there's 1,276. Then there's commercial apartment buildings of four to nineteen units, which there's 319 of them. Then there are 23,641 residential.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Mayor McDermott - Those 23,641 are getting \$2.75 per month increase.

Councilman Woerpel - Which comes to \$33.

Mayor McDermott - Exactly. The majority of Hammond residents rare gonna be affected to the tune of \$2.75. The few people that own commercial property, or apartment complexes, or industrial property, they'll have more complaints about this than the 23,641. By the way, these numbers went through a lot of iterations. I mean, a lot of changes to finally settle upon ... we knew what we needed to raise and we were trying to figure out the fairest way so that the home owners got hit the least, and the commercial properties carried a little bit more, and of course, the industrial properties carried the burden. Because they create way more waste than a house does.

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. 9459 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

19-35 An Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 8514, Being: An Ordinance Establishing a Zoning Plan for the City of Hammond in Order to Provide for Orderly Growth and Development within the City All in Accordance with the Comprehensive/land use Plan for Purposes of Addressing Conflicts of Interest

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading by title and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a committee meeting on January 13, 2020 at 5:15 p.m. AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

19R-32 A Resolution Appropriating Money from the Clerk's Perpetuation Fund

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

Councilwoman Venecz - This is a fund that receives deposits of fees. The Clerk can use the money in the fund for improvement of record keeping systems and equipment. The Clerk's Office is requesting to move \$14,370 from the Perpetuation Fund that allows him to use the funds for record keeping and equipment.

Councilman Higgs asked to be added as a sponsor.

RESOLUTIONS cont.

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. R32 ADOPTED

19R-33 A Resolution Authorizing the Hammond Fire Department to Apply for Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG)

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

Councilman Rakos read the resolution in its entirety.

Councilman Higgs asked to be added as a sponsor.

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 RESOLUTION NO. R33 ADOPTED

19R-34 Resolution of the Hammond Common Council in Support of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and the Dream Act

Councilman Torres, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved for adoption.

The entire council was added as sponsors.

Councilman Higgs - Just for clarity, and I hope the Times and every other news cast is here. Initially, when I introduced this particular DACA to the Council I couldn't even get a second. So all of a sudden now it's on the agenda. I congratulate all of my colleagues for stepping to the plate and supporting something that is so vital to the entire nation.

Councilman Torres - Yes, Councilman Higgs, we appreciate that and you were the first sponsor of this resolution. Some councilmen felt that the language was not appropriate at that time so it needed to be changed. You are welcome, of course, and you are a sponsor of this ordinance again. I just want to add that, of course DACA , Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, that this resolution supports DACA and also the Dream Act, which is Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors, these are young people that are brought here, usually by their parents, seeking a better life. Seeking the opportunities that this country offers, including economic opportunities. They sacrifice, this is the only country, since a lot of them are brought in in their infancy and their younger adolescent years, that they know. So if they were to be deported to their home country

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilman Torres cont. - they wouldn't know no other way of life, except the American way of life, or language. Even though Hispanics from Mexico to Central America and South America are usually right now is the main focus, there's 149 countries throughout the world that participate in the DACA program. They're from Europe, Scandinavia, Asia, Middle East, all over the world there are participants in this program. So it just doesn't affect the Hispanic population. We are able to create, not only do they enjoy the American dream and live it but they have become skilled people. A lot of them professionals, including doctors, teachers, engineers, lawyers and skilled laborers, so they contribute, the resolution says, over \$23 million a year. It is a myth that most of them are criminals, that somebody in the White House would like to have us believe. Because they know they have to be careful, to walk a fine line, because if they violate even a minor traffic violation, get cited for even a barking dog, that their chances of getting deported are greater than the normal people. So, with this I ask my colleagues to please support this resolution. I also want to thank the people that put a lot of work in this ordinance. The new language it has, including the Mayor of the city, Atty. Estrada, Linda Aquino, Mike Santos, Carl Wolf and Scott Holdsen, and I know there's others, but those, to my knowledge, are the main ones. So a lot of work went into this and now that we have, I believe, the whole support of the Council and the Mayor, I encourage my colleagues to please support this resolution.

Councilman Woerpel - He's being humble, I give him credit for staying on top of this and working with the Mayor and Alfredo, for staying on top of this and getting the language corrected that we had concerns about. Pete, you deserve credit just like the rest of them.

Councilman Higgs- Certainly, I applaud his efforts. But initially when it was presented, I wish he would have come forward and stepped to the plate and said, Councilman Higgs. Because I would have personally worked tirelessly to get it corrected if there was some language that you didn't appreciate or like in the particular one that was introduced in the beginning. However, we're here now and hopefully you will pass something that's gone be wonderful that I am totally, totally in agreement with.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you Councilman Higgs, on your help on this. We appreciate it very much. I do want to point out that a lot of work was put into this Resolution by Attorney Estrada, and I know Councilman you recognized him, but he really... I mean he wasn't billing for this either, he did it out of the goodness of his heart. I don't think he was billing... Attorney Estrada worked tirelessly on this along with the Councilmen, and took an ordinance there was some push back on and made it acceptable to the Council, and Mayor's Office. I think he's done a fine job. I also wanted to point out I'm married to an immigrant and to think that if my wife's parents made a mistake when they naturalized her that she would be threatened with deportation is horrifying to me. I can't imagine if Marissa was sent back to her homeland, she was born in Poland. Like the Councilman pointed out, she wouldn't know how to communicate with people, she's lived her whole life in America. So to think that people are afraid of this from our Government is beyond disturbing, that's why I'm very glad that we're all getting behind this Resolution, and a lot of hard work was put into this Resolution... I know that's it's up to you all. But I think that if it would be read out, I think that would be great, if Clerk Golec would read the Resolution. It was a fine piece of work done by Attorney Estrada. If that's appropriate I suggest a read, thank you.

Councilman Higgs- Certainly, I would like it to be read as well. But before it's read, I would also like to point out maybe the Human Relations Commission can start getting involved in some of this issues that effect human beings as well.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilman Woerpel- I ask that Clerk Golec read the Resolution.

City Clerk Golec reads Resolution 19R-34 in its entirety.

Councilman Rakos- As I look at the front row on that side of the thing, I've known Alberto (unclear) for about four years now, he introduced me to Martha, who is involved in the pageant we had a couple of years ago, then the next she was the one that helped the new pageant contestants, always impressed me. I found out later on that she was a DACA person, which actually never made any difference to me, she's a fine lady. I also met Alfredo and Linda and I'm very proud to be a part of the HUGS Organization, and I'm glad you guys asked me on.

Councilman Higgs- I certainly want to applaud our former President Barack Obama , and Congress Visclosky for his contribution and his efforts on making our a nation a better place. I think we all should stand for a round of applause for this.

Councilman Torres- I would like to suspend the rules. But I have a question, do I have to wait for roll call then suspend the rules to have some of the audience speak?

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilman Torres, moved to suspend the rules. AYES: ALL

Linda Angiano- We have a large number of supporters of this Resolution. I think it's a good first step.

Martha Gallegos- I am a student at Purdue University majoring in Political Science and a Minor in Public Policy. I am also a resident of Hammond, lived here almost my entire life. I came to the United States when I was 6 months old. I am a DACA recipient. As a young undocumented Latina, I live to give back to my community and I ask that you pass this Resolution.

Mara Candelaria Reardon- I am the 12th District State Representative, I rise in support of this Resolution.

Mike Swiger- DACA seems to me it's a reintegration of words that came long ago, in fact words that came before our Constitution was ratified, words that are on a copper tablet held by a lady standing in a harbor, the Statue of Liberty.

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved to return to the regular order of business.

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. R34 ADOPTED

RESOLUTIONS cont.

19R-35 A Declaratory Resolution Designating that Certain Area of the City of Hammond, Indiana Be Established as the 24 Marble Street Economic Revitalization Area to which Deductions From Assessed Value may be Requested by an Applicant to the Common Council of the City of Hammond Pursuant to Indiana Code 6-1.1-12.1

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

Mayor McDermott- I want to thank Councilman Torres for bringing this up. As everybody knows we do get a lot of interest from business in Illinois looking to come to Indiana for tax purposes. Hammond is an ideal location because they want to be as close as they can to their market. In this case, 24 Marble street is not a piece of property, I bet a lot of people in our City haven't been to, it's literally on the State Line, the only way you can get to 24 Marble street is by going over railroad tracks. I think that most people when they go over the railroad tracks think that they're in Illinois, but you're still barely in Indiana. But 24 Marble street is about as dilapidated as a piece of property as you can get. It's literally ground zero. So, when we assign value to this piece of property with the move that Councilman Torres is attempting to make, we're literally starting from scratch, which is good for purposes down the road. I support this move and I hope you guys support it as well. I think it's very realistic within the next year to see a \$ 20 million dollar company relocate into this piece of property and making a positive out of something that has been negative my entire administration. I don't think there has been anything productive done at this piece of property so this is a well executed proposal.

Councilman Torres- There has to be a follow up to this Resolution, which is called a confirmatory. I would like to set up a Public Hearing for January 13, 2020, which is our next Council Meeting.

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. R35 ADOPTED

19R-36 Reappoint Gregory Myricks to the Hammond Redevelopment Commission

Council Higgs, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for adoption.

Councilman Spitale- Greg has been on the Redevelopment Commission for nine years, and he's done a very good job. He's in the audience now, I'm sure if anybody has any questions for him he will come up and answer them.

Gregory Myricks- I stood here in December 2010, our outgoing 3rd District Councilman sponsored me for this position, and the Council so graciously appointed me. But you know, I left here that evening, I went home and talked to my wife. I was like I don't know what the hell Higgs has gotten me into, but I'm going to do my civic duty, and do it for a year. Well it's been quite awhile so, it's been an honor and a privilege to have served. I thank the Council and the Mayor for the opportunity.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Mayor McDermott- when I took over Mayor 16 yrs ago, the Redevelopment Commission has 5 members, 3 appointed by the Mayor, 2 appointed by the Council, and it was typical of every meeting, every vote that faced the Redevelopment Commission was knock down drag out, and almost every vote they took was a 3-2 vote . I swore when I took over as Mayor that I would work closer with the Council appointees. I don't know if this makes you happy or not, but most of the votes are 5-0 because they're all working together. So, I support Greg, thank you.

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. R36 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

19-36 BZA-Z-19-17 For Variance of use from Zoning Ordinance to Allow a Parking Lot for a Residential Facility in an R-1U Single Family Urban Residential District located at 5948 Park Place within the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana

Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved for passage.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 MOTION CARRIED

Councilman Woerpel, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved to reappoint Dennis Radowski to the BZA Board.

ROLL CALL VOTE (appointment)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 MOTION CARRIED

Councilman Higgs- First and foremost, I would like to thank all my colleagues that I had the opportunity to work with over the last 16 years, it hasn't been a easy ride however. God is able to keep you in the midst of it all. Secondly, I would like to thank all my constituents and all the residents of the great City of Hammond for allowing me an opportunity to represent you, cause it wasn't just about me, it was about the entire City. I will continue to fight and do what's necessary to move this City forward. God bless each and everyone of you, I wish you all the best.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont

Mayor McDermott- Councilman Markovich, I wanted to congratulate you as well on a great career. You served a number of terms on the Hammond City Council, this last year as the President. I think you handled it very well. You and I have personally had our ups and downs over the years, but I always respected you and your knowledge for the City of Hammond. I know this is your last meeting, and I know Councilman Higgs just gave his going away salutation. I wanted to stand up and congratulate you and Councilman Higgs on a great career. Councilman Markovich, you served through three Mayors, I believe my Father, Mr. Dedelow and myself, you're Hammond's longest serving Councilman at Large, so congratulations on a great career. I wish you well in the future. Councilman Higgs, I wish you well in the future as well.

Councilman Markovich- I would just like to say... so I don't get too emotional, I guess that going to happen. I guess going through 32 budget meetings, 768 Council Meetings, over a 1000 committee meetings, 1000 phone calls, but I like to say, for instance what happened on a phone call when I first got in, I get a call 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, "Is this Councilman Markovich?" I go "yea". "This is so and so, my street light in the alley is out, what are you going to do about it." I say, "Well, is there a pole number, whatever, if it's a Nipsco or City pole, give me the location and address." So, he gave it to me, then I called the Street Department, talked them about it and said it has to be taken care of. So, I called them up and asked the Street Department when it was fixed and they told me it was okay the light is on. So, I went to check myself to make sure the light was on. So, 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning I called this individual that called me about the street light, and I say this is Councilman Markovich, I just wanted to know if your street light is on. I always remember that and won't forget that. I want to thank my wife and family for putting up with me my brothers, fellow Councilmen, Mayors, the only thing is if you're a Mayor they name a street after you while you're still alive. I don't know if they're going to name a street after me, but they only name a street after a Councilmen when they die, so I hope that doesn't happen to me. So, good luck to my colleagues, citizens of Hammond, Department Heads. The next Council Meeting will be January 13, 2020, that will be my son's birthday, so at least I'll be home for that. I know I missed several Council Meetings on January the 13th in the past, where it was his birthday. I want to wish everybody a Merry Christmas. December the 13th, Friday the 13th, my mother died 36 years ago, so I just want to wish everybody a Merry Christmas, that was 36 years ago that she passed away, and I know they say Christmas is supposed to be the joyous of times. But it's also the sadness of times because when you have your Christmas meal there's gonna be people there that's not there that you will be missing. So, again I just want to thank everybody.

Councilman Torres- I too would like to congratulate you. It's hard enough getting elected for one term, to get elected for 8 consecutive terms, that's almost half of your life time. It's quite an accomplishment, so congratulations. Councilman Higgs, same thing to you. You served 16 years, and I know you always spoke up for your District, and doing what you thought was best. So congratulations and I wish you the best.

Councilman Kalwinski- The first District appreciates your fortitude, participation and service to all the people in our District. You're going to be missed. We appreciate your willingness to get out there, speak your mind, take the hits, and continue to move forward. Your resilience is just outstanding. Thank you for your service.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Woerpel- This goes to the both of you and Councilman Higgs, to do what you guys have done, number one, for 32 years, and know what you're getting into. I did something for 37 years and I swear that there's no way I'm ever going to regret leaving this place, and that happened about 3 days after I left. But all 3 of us have not always seen eye to eye, but you guys have been nothing but gentlemen with me and my dealings with you. I commend you both on your service to the City of Hammond.

Councilman Spitale- I would like to say the same thing. It's not easy sitting up here folks, we have to made decisions for things. Everybody has a different personality. I want to wish them both the best and it was good serving with them.

Councilman Emerson- Again, Councilman Higgs and I have worked together on some projects and I will never forget the night I won my election, I got letters from Congressman Visclosky, and everybody wishing me well. The only person to call me on that night was President Bob Markovich, and I never forgot that, and it's been good working with you both.

Councilman Rakos- Good luck to the both of you. I would also like to announce that January 1st at 11 a.m. at the Sportsplex there will be a swearing in ceremony for Katrina Alexander, Barry Tyler, and myself. All are welcome.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Duncan Murphy-I would like to see my City move towards the future with a Solar Initiative project.

Tim Ramian- I was going to talk about people talking on cellphones but I don't think it's appropriate for this forum. I will talk to the police on Thursday at the Jean Shepard.

Elizabeth Palacio- I wanted to talk about a gun resolution that has passed in other cities. I wanted to know if Hammond can get on board?

David Turpin- I've been authorized by the UBM to express our support. I wanted to stand and say thank you for passing Resolution 19R-34.

Carl Wolf- I do want to thank the Council and the Mayor for passing this Resolution 19R-34.

Mike Santos- I want to thank Councilmen Woerpel, Rakos, and Torres for sponsoring this Resolution 19R-34. Glad to see it finally pass.

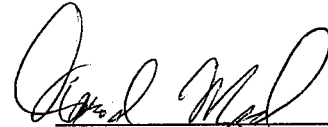
George Stoya- I agree with Duncan , I think it's a good idea.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

Linda Anguiano- I'm very, very happy that the Resolution passed. What I want is bold action. I want to get more Latinos to vote.

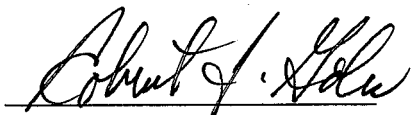
Councilman Higgs, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to adjourn.

AYES: ALL



Dave Woerpel , President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:



Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 8:00 p.m.

dw

Minutes approved at the Common Council meeting of January 13, 2020.