

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on June 8, 2020 in the Hammond City Council Chambers.

Council President Dave Woerpel presided.

Council Coordinator Carmen I. Balboa facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.

Invocation by Councilwoman Venecz

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Rakos, Woerpel

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

Council President Woerpel- Before we get to item number three on the Agenda, Marty Wielgos from the Sanitary District would like to address the public.

SANITARY DISTRICT MANAGER ADDRESS

Marty Wielgos, Sanitary District Manager - Thank you, Mr. President, I wanted to come to the Council meeting today on Zoom, it's been almost three weeks since the rainstorm, the heavy rainstorm that we had that caused a lot of basement backups. I thought it was about time that I give a report to the Council so all of you had a good idea where we stand and what we're doing as of today. Closing date ended past Friday. Anybody to make a claim and inspection. As of yesterday, we have 1700 verified citizens that had some type of backup in their home. So we have 1700 inspections that we have done and I just wanna say that right now, the next process is that we are calling each and ever one of those residents and they come in to fill out additional documentation. There could be some HUD money and grant money that we may be eligible through for CDBG, we wanna take advantage of that. If that is possible, so that's the reason why we are having folks come in to get some further documentation. It's also to verified that they're actually the homeowner, that the program did not cover tenants or landlords. So that's the other reason for the paper verification. I can tell you we started issuing checks last week, unfortunately, there's only about a hundred that went... so what I have done is I brought in more of my staff to help Owana and her department be able to do the interviews and move the process along even more quickly. But it's gonna take some time with that many claimants. It's not gonna happen overnight. But we are working diligently to get that done as quickly as possible because I know these folks already had their inspections and they can surely use a \$500. Lastly, I just wanna say that, you know, I can't say enough about my staff, I can't say enough about Jack's Sewer Department, they worked diligently, and you have to remember that this is a small department, along with getting help from the Code Department to increase the man power for the inspections, that got done quickly. And with the work of the mayor and the mayor's staff were able to add more bodies to be able to do the inspections as quickly as possible. So I just want to thank, not only the mayor and the city, and the Inspections Department that helped us out, but specifically my staff, they're working 13-14 hour days through the holiday, by the way, because of the fact that we knew we had a small window to be able to get this done. So they all did a great job. Sanitary District is doing everything it can to move the process along and I just wanted the City Council to know, at least have an update from me as far as where we are with everything. So I'll open it up to questions, if anyone has questions for me.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

SANITARY DISTRICT MANAGER ADDRESS cont.

Council President Woerpel- I've been asked, in fact, I had someone that I visited on the night of the flood and install one of them back flow preventers. And can you run us through the process real quick about the program there?

Marty Wielgos- So, the back flow preventer is something that we do offer up to a \$1000 dollars reimbursement. It's actually like a flapper valve that goes on your lateral line that goes out to the streets that connects to our sewer in the street or alley, depending on where you live. So what it does in a very heavy rainstorm like we experienced and I just wanna say this rainstorm that we experienced, what the federal government calls a 180 year storm, meaning that it will only happen, with all the statistics, once every 180 years. That's how intense this storm was. But the flapper valve actually let's sewage and debris out of your home and then shuts it if it starts to back up in your lateral line coming back to your home. So there's two ways to install, it can be outside in the lawn or the backyard, depending on where your lateral line hooks into our main, or in your basement in the floor. I highly recommend that anyone installing those install it in your basement on the floor, only because of the fact it needs regular yearly maintenance, or you take the cover off you clean it make sure the flapper valve doesn't have anything that would cause it to stay open or close either way.

Councilman Emerson- So, what's the range or total cost, Marty?

Marty Wielgos- Usually, depending on the structure of the home and other things, that ranges \$2,500 to \$3,000.

Councilman Emerson- Okay.

Council President Woerpel- I had a resident that actually went and had that put in already and it was right around \$3000 and she was questioning me on the process of getting that reimbursement, was the question I had, Marty.

Marty Wielgos- Yeah, so in order to get the reimbursement, you have to contact us. We have to verify that you actually had basement back up, one time or the other, which we keep all those records, that puts you on the list. Usually I budget \$50,000 a year for that program. Unfortunately, it is never utilized and maybe we do one a year, if that, so we are well prepared and it's well funded. And what they need to do is they need to contact us even though she's had it done already, she can still contact us. We will get the verification and as long as she had a Hammond licensed plumber do that we can show that she did have basement back up somewhere within the last 10 years or longer, she could qualify for up to a \$1,000 dollars. And I know Councilman Kawlinksi had it done in his house, I think a year ago, or two years ago.

Council President Woerpel- Is anybody else have any questions?

Councilwoman Venecz- Yes, Marty, I don't have a question but I do have a comment. I wanted to compliment the Hammond Sanitary District through this whole situation. You guys were awesome the night of the event. Afterwards, you were, all of your people were, very attentive to the residents and I got several calls complementing you. So I just wanted to pass that along to you.

SANITARY DISTRICT MANAGER ADDRESS cont.

Marty Wielgos- Thank you, we do appreciate that. I was actually out there with my staff that night because I wanted to be able to personally talk to the residents about the devastation they just experienced and I wanted them to know, at that time we didn't know what we're gonna offer, because it just happened, but I wanted them to know we weren't shying from what took place. I wanted them to know this was an act of God that it had nothing to do with someone not turning on a pump or something as silly as that. Everything was running. Every single station was running. We had no failures. We had 300 million gallons of water coming through the plant. 300 million gallons, you can just imagine, we're rated for 48 million so we had 300 million coming into the plant. It stressed the plant but our guys did well, they didn't panic and everything ran as best as we could, nothing was down. So I'm very proud of my staff, the operators, the laborers, the sewer department. Jack Smith put in probably over 300 hours in the last three weeks, being out there with his guys, so they just weren't feeling they were out there alone, and I wanna thank the city too.

Council President Woerpel- Marty, I just wanted to thank your staff, and especially Jack, because that Sunday morning at 6:30 I had called Jack and he took me and showed me the whole system and how it works, and where it all goes. He's made the offer to anybody on the Council and whenever you wanna see it, he'd be glad to take you around. And, I mean, I saw on that Sunday morning, half of that department over there on Sherman Street. You guys did an excellent job. Does anybody else have anymore questions?

Councilman Tyler- I have a question. Marty, I know that you guys are still swamped and trying to catch up, but out of the 1700 inspections, do you know how many people have received checks already? And I know you all said the process will take about two weeks but it seems like maybe there's a little bit of delay, just given the increase in how many people submitted for reimbursement, can you touch on that?

Marty Wielgos- Yeah, so far we have issued a hundred checks and I decided that wasn't satisfactory to me because of the total number that we have that have to go through the process of the interview and so I've actually added on over the last three days, more of my internal staff at the plant and then also utilizing more people from City Hall that are actually coming to the plant to be able to do the phone calls and set up the appointments and do the interviews. So Planning and Development is very... I love Owana to death, she does a great job, but she has limited people and personnel. And for this type of number that we are dealing with, she just doesn't have enough help. So I sat down with her late last week and I said, "Owana, we need, I just know because I've been through this before, you know, we need to do more and what do you need me to do to help you?" and she said, "I need more bodies." So we did that, and now, we've added, probably added, another six people to her staff that are doing calls all day long. I've expanded the hours so that people can come and pick up their checks til 7p.m. And I'm out there with my staff, Monday through Friday, so that Owana's people can go home and get the rest they need and then we pick up passing out the checks and making it convenient for the residence for 5 to 7.

Councilman Kalwinski- Do you have numbers on out of the 1700, how many were residents? How many might have been business or commercial?

Marty Wielgos- So far these were all residents. We didn't do inspections on anything other than residents. The program is designed for residents only, not tenant occupied, and that's what the verification process is, that's

SANITARY DISTRICT MANAGER ADDRESS cont.

Marty Wielgos - why we have to do the interview, because we actually have to have the residents show documents showing that they have a homestead or have anything other thing that we can verify that they are actually the owner of that home and we then have the inspection report that we've matched to that and then the check process, as soon as that interview is done, the checks are usually done within a day.

Councilman Kalwinski - Thank you, Marty. And the flooding event was it in the 3rd, 5th, and 6th, or others?

Marty Wielgos - I can tell you, just to give you an idea, the 1st district, your district, had less than an inch of rain as compared to the southern part of Hammond, specifically Hessville, we got 3 inches of rain within a half hour. It was just unbelievable, you couldn't even see outside, you couldn't even see your hand in front of you. And that rainstorm, it was coming down, I use to live in the Virgin Islands for three years, and these are the type of storms that they get on a regular basis and that's why they're tropical, because it's a tropical island. These are not the type of storms that we've ever experienced, ever, and I can only tell you that we all have lived here a long time, our winters have changed, they've become more mild, our summers have become warmer and more tropical with rainstorms, and the rainstorms are kind of smaller but heavier intensified in smaller parts of the city. So years ago, if I was in South Hammond and it was drizzling and I went up to North Hammond, all the way up to the Lake it was still drizzling. That's not the case anymore, these storms have changed dramatically and so we understand that, we know, at least, what to try to do to help and that's some of the things, you know, with the federal government, in our long-term control plan or consent decree, that I keep talking about, that the government wants us to spend \$300 million dollars in more improvements, some of the things that will include will help, not gonna cure these heavy tropical storms, but will in the near future.

Councilman Emerson - Marty, I had some people call and for that money that's to be given out, does that help out for people who lost their hot water heater and things like that?

Marty Wielgos- Actually, they can use the \$500 dollars any way they want.

Councilman Torres- I've been trying to get on. When we were in the process of complementing the various departments for their good work during the storm and after the storm. There's a gentleman that sent a letter, not a letter, an email, to the Mayor's Office. And I just wanna read it quickly, here it is. "I was at home affected by the recent flood, although I am very upset this block always floods every time it rains, I'm sending this to give compliments to Dave Hein, who is a City Inspector. I have lived in Hammond on Sherman for five years with my wife and two kids, and we rent. Mr. Hein and I had a conversation today while he inspected my home, so my gas could be turned back on. After talking to him, he gave me information on buying a home in Hammond and contact me with info with the city to assist in buying a home here. I'm taking him up on it, and I want you to know Mr. Hein is a pretty damn nice guy. My compliments to him. I just want to say kudos to the Inspector, he's from the Code Enforcement Department, but my compliments to him for doing a good job." We obviously had a satisfied customer. He also provided additional information that might be helpful, Mr. Hein. So when everybody was talking about the good job the city departments did, they did bust their tails. And he's from Sherman Street, so that's why I wanted to put that in. Thank you.

SANITARY DISTRICT MANAGER ADDRESS cont.

Councilman Emerson- Yes, the fluctuation of payment, you know, I had said to some people that called me the city would give \$500 in some cases. The gentleman called me back and said he got \$300. He was very appreciative of the \$300, he had furnace and water heater and some damage from water coming up through his drain. But, Marty, there can be a fluctuation, so we just don't tell people it's automatically once you inspect, \$500?

Marty Wielgos- Well, it is \$500, we don't give anything less, as long as they meet the requirements we give them a check for \$500. So, I'm not sure what he's talking about \$300, it's a full \$500.

Councilman Emerson- Okay, so I don't know why he said that.

Marty Wielgos- Maybe he meant \$500 and just said \$300, I would think, but we don't discount, it's a full \$500.

Councilman Emerson- Okay.

Council President Woerpel- I guess I should've checked my basement, but my wife went down there and she hasn't said anything and I don't smell nothing. So I don't know if we got water or not.

Marty Wielgos- Well, the crazy thing is, you know, I built this home here in South Hammond probably about 18 years ago and of course I have overhead sewers, and I was always told by Stan Dostatni, the guy we all miss so much, that you will never have basement back up if you have overhead sewers. Well, guess what, I had basement back up and I was shocked, but it came through my overhead sewers. That was the intensity of the storm. I mean, it actually was so strong, and I know there were wind bursts, there's no doubt about it. I mean there's no other damage other than the water, but it came down so quick, so heavy, that it even came into my house and I have overhead sewers.

Councilman Emerson- I would just add to that, I got water up through the stand pipe. I took it out momentarily just to see what was going on cause I had a little seepage too. I've never gotten that in 27 years in this house. That was the first time. I put it back in and just bailed out and put it in laundry tubs.

Marty Wielgos- Yeah, a lot of people the stand pipe usually works, but for this storm, it was coming out of the stand pipe, for those folks that put stand pipes in their basement, that's how intense this storm was.

Council President Woerpel- It was the worst storm I've seen and I've been in hundreds of storms and that was bad. It was. Does anybody else have questions?

Councilwoman Alexander- Um, Marty, can you just remind the residents about the application process cause I know there's been some things going around saying things were based on income and things like that, if you can give clarification and also with the application itself?

Marty Wielgos- Sure, so the reason we need to have the residents come in after they've been verified, we will call them, but just as a reminder we have 1700 verified basement backups, so the process is going to take longer than just a few weeks, but we will call them, because we have their information. Basically, they come in, we tell

SANITARY DISTRICT MANAGER ADDRESS cont.

Marty Wielgos cont. - them the information that they're going to need to bring with them and we set up an appointment. Now, everyone qualifies. The reason why we're doing the application for HUD is because that's where we may be able to recoup some money back based on income. So that's the only reason why we're doing the income verification is because of fact that there is money out there through the federal government and it could be up to about \$200,000 and so if you do the math, at \$500 times 1700, we're are close to a million and the Sanitary District is fortunately in a spot where it can afford to do that. But if we're able to recoup \$200,000 back now, it's only costing the District \$800,000. So, yeah that's the reason we're doing the income verification. But at the end of the day, anyone who had back up, that we have on this list, and they own their home, will get the \$500.

Councilman Woerpel- Thank you Marty.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to accept the minutes of May 26, 2020 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to approve the claims from June 1, 2020 through June 3, 2020. Claim #2545 through claim #2648, inclusive.

ROLL CALL VOTE (claims)

AYES: Alexander, Spitale, Venecz, Kalwinski, Torres, Tyler, Emerson, Rakos, Woerpel

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

CLAIMS APPROVED

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Economic Development Committee - Councilman Tyler - The monthly Economic Development Commission meeting for June has been cancelled and the next one is scheduled for Monday, July 3rd at 9 a.m.

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - We had a virtual Crime Watch meeting in May and it was well participated and I think that may be something we're doing in the future in addition to our neighborhood meetings.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

None

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

None

RESOLUTIONS

None

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Torres - Is there anybody here from the Mayor's Office? I understand the Mayor's on vacation. My point is on the money that was returned, I'm still not sure whether the money from 2019 was returned for our spending projects or not. Can anybody answer that.

Council President Woerpel - Councilman Torres, I do know that I had some projects for 2019 that got delayed to 2020 and the money was there from 2019 and a P.O. was written on the 2019 money. So, as far as I know it was there.

Councilman Torres - What I'm talking about is I have \$500 thousand from 2019 that was unspent and I would like to know. But, I'll address the Mayor's Office. As to when can we start submitting projects to spend that money. I have at Irving Park, at the southern end, the streets at the southern end, there's about three streets that lead to it, about 1/4 block that needs to be paved, the south alley, which is the border of Irving Park needs to be paved. The Park Department, with the money allocated to them, they ran out of money, so I was gonna use some of that 2019 money to finish that southern end of the park and I want to know when we can submit to get those projects started. But if there's nobody from the Mayor's Office I guess address it another way.

Council President Woerpel - Just as a reminder, the meeting on the 22nd will be in the Council Chamber, so the public is aware. They are invited. The restrictions stay on the social distancing. We will be back in the Council Chambers as well as zoom, for those that are not comfortable yet.

Councilman Torres - I just to let you know now, include me in the Chambers. I don't like this Zoom stuff so make some space for me in the Council Chamber.

Council President Woerpel - That works for me too because talking into my phone, it's kind of weird having meetings like this.

Councilman Kalwinski - As some of you know, I have been out of town most of May and all of June so far with some personal business. So I've missed a lot of activity in Hammond. I want to begin with my condolences to Scott Rakos for the loss of a family member. I know how difficult that can be and my prayers and wishes go out to him and his loved ones during those times. Secondly, It appears like the ground from underneath us is shifting these days. So much has happened since March. We're in a ninety day crisis related to Covid, health and medical and also economic from that, and recently a political socio-justice policing crisis. So, we're in a

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Kalwinski cont. - boatload of turmoil, stress and crisis, which leads to a lot of pain right now. Crisis and pain also lead to movement and momentum and to change. I can speak to being in Washington, D.C. for these days and on Saturday evening attending a vigil for George Floyd on 16th Street and thousands of people lined the streets as far as you could see in any direction for that Saturday evening vigil. People coming together of all genders and races and spending time reflecting for the 8 minutes and 46 seconds as bells rang across the sea. It was a moving demonstration of unity by people of Washington, D.C. ON Sunday I attended a webinar that had to do with incremental steps to re-imagining public safety. Several of the Minneapolis Council persons were on that call before they took their vote that evening and all kinds of case studies came across during the webinar related to reforming and transforming public safety and there are even tool kits that municipalities can get through this group. I was inspired by so much momentum, not only just the demonstrating, not only just the protesting but also movements in systems to make systemic changes. Then on Monday morning, the Congressional Black Caucus, with it's leaders, penned a policy that the House of Representatives introduced just this very Monday morning and it's the Justice in Policing Act of 2020. It bears a summary so that we know what kind of movement is occurring in the Capital related to responding to the most recent events regarding policing and social justice.

Councilman Kalwinski read, "Fact Sheet: Justice in Policing Act of 2020". A copy is attached to the minutes.

Councilman Kalwinski - The two page fax sheet, this bill that was introduced to the House of Representatives today and I'm just bringing it forward because it's not just demonstrating and protesting but response to that but a systemic problem with a systematic approach to those problems. And I do want to say that our Hammond Police Department (unclear) in how they maintain the peace and how they protect us. This is not a reflection on them but just information that I think the public needs to have, and the Council needs to have. I will share this paperwork with the Council and I will give Carmen a copy as well to put in to the minutes. I think this just represents the best in all the people and the people who penned this, the chairs are Booker and Harris and Chair Natler, these are the people that introduced the Justice in Policing Act of 2020 that I briefly gave you. The bill is actually over 100 pages long. Thank you for taking the time to listen to this and I will present the paperwork to the rest of the Council at a future time.

Council President Woerpel - Just to add to what he said as somebody that the day after I graduated I had been walking up to peoples doors everyday for a long period of time. I have faith in what I actually saw in Hammond and the leadership, the Police Department, everybody from the Police Department, the Mayor, the Council members. I'm very proud to say that maybe something is gonna be different (unclear) finally change instead of sweeping it under the rug when it's over with and acting like it never happened. What I saw out of the city I live in is community, leadership and the Police Department all come together and not let a bad situation get worse and for all the Council members and the Mayor and the Police Officers that participated in it defuse what could have been a very, very, bad situation. I'm proud to say that I'm proud of my community (unclear) and I thank you for it.

Councilman Torres - I just would like to express my condolences to Councilman Rakos for the loss of his father to all of his family. I know Bob Rakos was a colleague of mine on the Police Department. He was also a



FACT SHEET: JUSTICE IN POLICING ACT OF 2020

The Justice in Policing Act is the first-ever bold, comprehensive approach to hold police accountable, end racial profiling, change the culture of law enforcement, empower our communities, and build trust between law enforcement and our communities by addressing systemic racism and bias to help save lives. The Justice in Policing Act would: 1) establish a national standard for the operation of police departments; 2) mandate data collection on police encounters; 3) reprogram existing funds to invest in transformative community-based policing programs; and 4) streamline federal law to prosecute excessive force and establish independent prosecutors for police investigations.

The Justice in Policing Act of 2020 will:

Work to End Racial & Religious Profiling

- Prohibits federal, state, and local law enforcement from racial, religious and discriminatory profiling.
- Mandates training on racial, religious, and discriminatory profiling for all law enforcement.
- Requires law enforcement to collect data on all investigatory activities.

Save Lives by Banning Chokeholds & No-Knock Warrants

- Bans chokeholds and carotid holds at the federal level and conditions law enforcement funding for state and local governments banning chokeholds.
- Bans no-knock warrants in drug cases at the federal level and conditions law enforcement funding for state and local governments banning no-knock warrants at the local and state level.
- Requires that deadly force be used only as a last resort and requires officers to employ de-escalation techniques first. Changes the standard to evaluate whether law enforcement use of force was justified from whether the force was “reasonable” to whether the force was “necessary.” Condition grants on state and local law enforcement agencies’ establishing the same use of force standard.

Limit Military Equipment on American Streets & Requires Body Cameras

- Limits the transfer of military-grade equipment to state and local law enforcement.
- Requires federal uniformed police officers to wear body cameras and requires state and local law enforcement to use existing federal funds to ensure the use of police body cameras.
- Requires marked federal police vehicles to have dashboard cameras.

Hold Police Accountable in Court

- Makes it easier to prosecute offending officers by amending the federal criminal statute to prosecute police misconduct. The mens rea requirement in 18 U.S.C. Section 242 will be amended from “willfulness” to a “recklessness” standard.
- Enables individuals to recover damages in civil court when law enforcement officers violate their constitutional rights by eliminating qualified immunity for law enforcement.

Investigate Police Misconduct

- Improves the use of pattern and practice investigations at the federal level by granting the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division subpoena power and creates a grant program for state attorneys general to develop authority to conduct independent investigations into problematic police departments.

Empower Our Communities to Reimagine Public Safety in an Equitable and Just Way

- This bill reinvests in our communities by supporting critical community-based programs to change the culture of law enforcement and empower our communities to reimagine public safety in an equitable and just way.
- It establishes public safety innovation grants for community-based organizations to create local commissions and task forces to help communities to re-imagine and develop concrete, just and equitable public safety approaches. These local commissions would operate similar to President Obama’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing.

Change the Culture of Law Enforcement with Training to Build Integrity and Trust

- Requires the creation of law enforcement accreditation standard recommendations based on President Obama’s Taskforce on 21st Century policing.
- Creates law enforcement development and training programs to develop best practices.
- Studies the impact of laws or rules that allow a law enforcement officer to delay answers to questions posed by investigators of law enforcement misconduct.
- Enhances funding for pattern and practice discrimination investigations and programs managed by the DOJ Community Relations Service.
- Requires the Attorney General to collect data on investigatory actions and detentions by federal law enforcement agencies; the racial distribution of drug charges; the use of deadly force by and against law enforcement officers; as well as traffic and pedestrian stops and detentions.
- Establishes a DOJ task force to coordinate the investigation, prosecution and enforcement efforts of federal, state and local governments in cases related to law enforcement misconduct.

Improve Transparency by Collecting Data on Police Misconduct and Use-of-Force

- Creates a nationwide police misconduct registry to prevent problematic officers who are fired or leave one agency, from moving to another jurisdiction without any accountability.
- Mandates state and local law enforcement agencies to report use of force data, disaggregated by race, sex, disability, religion, age.

Make Lynching a Federal Crime

- Makes it a federal crime to conspire to violate existing federal hate crimes laws.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Torres cont. - very dedicated Police Officer. I find he was a very funny man with a wry sense of humor. I really appreciate the years, we never worked together in the same division but I worked around him and he was a very dedicated Police Officers.

Council President Woerpel - My condolences as well.

Councilman Emerson - I too would like to express my sadness to Scott. I've been there with my own dad. You're in our thoughts and prayers. It's always tough and I know that. Secondly, I'd like to thank Councilman Kalwinski for attending that meeting and sharing his information with us. In my opinion we're in a see change moment in our country and the majority of protests, even in our city, have been peaceful and I think the other folks try to de-focus when they talk about looting all that other and they never talk about the key situation, that this has been going on too long and I support anyone ... as a matter of fact as we speak they are peaceful protesting all around the country and I just think we're at a see change moment and I hope that we don't give lip service, as someone said, to this and that there's real change involved.

Councilwoman Alexander - (unclear) my condolences to his family (unclear). But as we (unclear) talk about change (unclear) and I'm proud to see (unclear) so many of us were out in support (unclear) talk about these changes (unclear) we need to get with our residents and (unclear) without making those necessary changes (unclear).

Councilman Kalwinski - One last item from me and that is the Pulaski Park in North Hammond has a monument on the corner dedicated to Casimir Pulaski who was the originator and designer of the American Cavalry, of Polish decent, and we have a monument on the southeast corner of the park. It was sprayed with graffiti last week with some wording that I won't mention here. It was reported to the city and I am glad to say that today the city came out and cleaned it. That did take five or six days to happen with the vulgarity on the monument until then. But my thanks to the city and the department that helped with cleaning off the monument. I can't wait to see it and see if it was full restored. So, thank you for that.

Councilman Tyler - I just wanted to acknowledge that on Saturday several Council members were present for the ... there was a peaceful march led by the Ministerial Alliance on Saturday morning from City Hall to the Police Station and there were close to 100 or more residents that marched with us. I think the most powerful piece of that was afterwards a small group of us got together with Chief Doughty, Cpt. Alcox and Sgt. Mickey and several other members of our Police Force that had a brief conversation about what changes we could actually implement given everything that's going on within the country. I stand with a lot of our other residents, in terms of believing that our Hammond Police Department is one of the best in the country, but of course there are still improvements that we can make. So, we will be announcing steps in terms of how the general public can take part in those interactions and conversations moving forward. We're working on identifying exactly what those venue those will take place in but part of that might be reestablishing the Hammond Police Citizens Advisory Committee which was started quite a few years ago but has not been as active as it could be, so hopefully we can get that back going and give the residents a way to interact with our Police Department on a regular basis. The other thing I wanted to note was that over the weekend there were several deaths within the

June 8, 2020

Hammond Common Council
5925 Calumet Ave.
Hammond, IN 46324

Public Comment Letter:

Councilmembers:

Sunday, I was fortunate enough to witness scores of my fellow Hammond citizens marching peacefully under the banner of the Interfaith Churches, on their way to the Hammond Police Station. This past week, there have been several peaceful marches in Hammond, echoing the nationwide call for a reevaluation of police tactics and policies., particularly in light of the violence that broke out in neighboring cities and the police response here in Hammond.

As far as I read in the papers and viewed on some streaming platforms, last week Hammond Police, or other law enforcement in our City, had at least twice confronted demonstrators on Hammond streets, to my understanding, firing teargas, pepper spray and/or rubber bullets.

Is there a report to come on these incidents? What is the Use of Force policy, if any, on the use of the aforementioned projectiles? How many bullets, tear gas canisters and/or pepper spray bags were expended? On whose order? Were there other City departments and/or law enforcement from other departments or cities participating?

Correspondingly, how many protesters were there? Were there any injuries of police or protesters? Any reports of property damage? Any identification of "outside agitators" among the protestors?

We were fortunate here in Hammond to avoid the looting and out-of-control violence that plagued our neighbors and several cities nationwide. It would be good for our City to understand why and see how we can participate in the nationwide discussion on policing - as for instance, is a choke hold a permitted tactic for Hammond Police Officers? What does, say, the last 15 - 20 years show as far as Hammond Court settlements and trials over alleged police misconduct? Do bargained-for police union rights prove an impediment or benefit to justice?

I hope the City of Hammond, its Mayor, its Police Department and you, Council members, take advantage of this heightened scrutiny to answer these questions and examine our City's own policies and procedures. It's better to do so now, rather than later, during the crush of events when, as in Minneapolis, a resident is hideously murdered on city streets.

Curtis Vosti
224 Humpfer St.
Hammond

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Tyler cont. - district in the city as a whole. I wanted to give condolences to Councilman Rakos and his family as well as the family of Johnny Williams, a long time 3rd District resident and just want to give additional prayers and thoughts to everybody who has lost the one giving all these trying times that we're having ...

(Video ended)

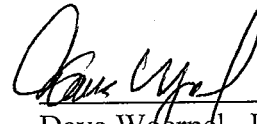
PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Marty Wielgos spoke.

Curt Vosti read a letter to the Hammond Common Council. Letter is attached to the minutes.

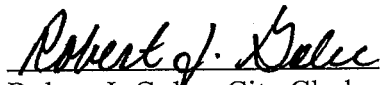
Councilwoman Alexander, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved to adjourn.

AYES: ALL



Dave Woerpel, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:


Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 7:05 p.m.
dw/cb