

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on July 13, 2020 in the Hammond City Council Chambers.

Council President Dave Woerpel presided.

City Clerk Robert J. Golec facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.

Moment of Silence was held.

ROLL CALL

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

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor McDermott- Thank you, Council President. I'm here to answer any questions today. We enacted... I informed the Council President we have two employees, off the top of my head, I know that were infected with COVID -19. Not sure how they were infected. It could have been at work. It could have been socially. Some of them have second jobs, but nonetheless, you know this has happened with too much frequency. At the Sportsplex this weekend we had a big wrestling tournament, which is great, however, a lot of the parents, believe it or not, are the ones that aren't recognizing social distancing and not wearing masks, putting our employees at risk. So we took the steps today in City Hall requiring masks when you're in the social area of City Hall, you know so, for instance, when you walk into the building, you will have to have a mask on, you will not be allowed entrance. We will provide mask for the public that does not have it and when you are walking into your office Council Woerpel when you walk into the doors of the Council Office, you have the option to take off the mask at that point. Okay, when I go into my office, I can take it off when I'm going if I go into the Council Office to speak to Susan, I would have the mask on in a situation like that cause we don't want to put Susan at harm. Just like I don't wanna put my staff at harm so that was a big step it applies to all buildings including the Water Department Sanitary District and the Marina all public buildings. I was listening to a podcast today talking about when you're indoors, you're 20 time more likely to catch Covid then when you're outside so obviously being outside, we see a lot of baseball games being played in fact this weekend in Hammond, we had 150 teams playing baseball in the City of Hammond you know it's a lot harder when you're outdoors. We're still trying to recognize social distancing and obviously buy when you're outdoors, it's a lot harder, according to the experts to catch this then when you're indoors, so I think it's appropriate move I hope the Council agrees we're starting to see things build up and I just thought it was appropriate. So other than that I don't have any other topics unless the Council has questions for me?

Councilwoman Alexander- (Unclear)

Mayor McDermott- I lost a lot of what you said Councilwoman Alexander?

Council President Woerpel- I think what she's asking is are we gonna take this a step further and mandate masks like Indianapolis?

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR’S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott- I think that’s something we should all talk about, Council and the Mayor. That’s a pretty big step. I felt comfortable making the call in regards to the City buildings, it’s a big step forward. That’s something we need to talk about. I don’t really think it’s appropriate for cities to do that. I think that’s the kind of thing that should be done statewide policy as a National Policy. I think it gets confusing when you’re in Hammond, you wear a mask, but then you drive to Highland and it’s not necessary there and then you pass into Griffith and you don’t have to wear it there, but then you head into Merrillville and you gotta wear a mask. That’s where it starts to get confusing for the public. I think that’s a bigger decision than just the mayor making it on his own, Councilwoman. So if we’re interested in doing something like that, I suggest we do it in an ordinance form or some type of resolution that we can all agree on. I just didn’t feel comfortable making that call myself, Councilwoman, so I appreciate the advice.

Councilwoman Alexander- Just wanted to know your thoughts towards that. And I know we’re gonna be meeting and things like that but just as we continue to go on that we’re looking at helping our city and making sure our city is safe. I understand that you have some people that are saying that if the Governor doesn’t mandate, we don’t have to do it. But if your city is saying that you’re looking at your city as a totality, as a whole, to make sure that we’re doing what we need to do for our residents even if no one else is thinking about them.

Mayor McDermott- I appreciate your advice a lot so... I also want to point out we had an unfortunate incident that happened last week in our City, Councilwoman, worked with the administration and it was last weekend and it was a post that doesn’t needed to be repeated on a building in North Hammond and I wanna thank Councilwoman Katrina for giving me a picture of it and I wanna point out I found out about this graffiti on Saturday night and one of our staff members, by Sunday morning, had already knocked it out. I don’t wanna give it much more than that, but the system works when we work together. So thank you very much Councilwoman.

Councilwoman Alexander- No problem, thank you for getting it taken care of.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Rakos, moved to accept the minutes of June 22, 2020 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to approve the claims from June 25, 2020 through July 8, 2020. Claim #2949 through #3248, inclusive.

ROLL CALL VOTE (claims)

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

NAYS: Kalwinski

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

8/1/0

CLAIMS APPROVED

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Brought out 20-10.

Councilwoman Venecz- I wanted to address the upcoming Community and Crime Watch. As I stated at the last meeting, we never expected this situation to continue as long as it has and we're having difficulty of finding places to meet. The schools are closed. Some of the other venues are closed. Even if school does open in the fall, they're not going to allow any outside organizations into the schools. So we're kinda scrambling to find some places to make, but in the meantime, probably we'll have an announcement at the next Council meeting of another Zoom Crime Watch meeting that all of the directors of the groups will participate in addition to some of the community policing officers. I would like to announce that the Hessville Crime Watch will meet this Thursday, July 16th, at the Jean Shepherd Center. That begins at 7 p.m., be sure to wear our mask. The South Hohman Crime Watch is making arrangements for a meeting in September, that would be September 24th at Trinity Lutheran Church on the corner of 173rd and Hohman beginning at 6:30 p.m. So we will keep everyone posted.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

20-10 An Ordinance Authorizing the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana, to make Temporary Loans to Meet Current Running Expenses for the use of the General Fund and Park and Recreation Fund and in Anticipation of Current Taxes Levied in the Year 2019 and Collectible in the Year 2020 Estimated to be Received on or before December 31, 2020; Authorizing the Issuance of Tax Anticipation Warrants to Evidence such Loans and the Sale of such Warrants to The Hammond Local Public Improvement Bond Bank; and Appropriating and Pledging the Taxes to be Received in such Funds to the Punctual Payment of Such Warrants Including the Interest Thereon

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

Councilwoman Venecz- As was discussed in the Committee Meeting tonight, I don't know if any of the public was listening in on that but we also discussed this at the last meeting. This is an advance on the tax collections from the Bond Bank. It's approximately 80% of the taxes we anticipate collecting based on the 2019 figures. Our Controller mentioned to us this evening during the Committee meeting that Huntington Bank has agreed to this advance with an interest of rate of point, 1.85% on \$12,634,000, \$10,436,000 for the general fund and \$2,198,000 for Park and Recreation Fund.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Councilman Kalwinski- I've been on the Council for now 17 years and what's happening today never should have gotten to this point. City of Hammond has been receiving \$33 million, up to \$40 million dollars, for the past 20 years and we're going to a Bond Bank to pay our bills. I think that looking back in hindsight, a rainy day fund, right now, had it passed 10-11 years ago, would have about \$35 to \$40 million dollars in it sitting there for a situation like this. The city is in crisis. The city has been in crisis for 10 years. The administration has been siphoning district dollars for that long and longer to balance the General Budget. That's a crisis. That's a problem. For those of you too young to remember the Gaming Agreement that was created and was adamant about never using gaming dollars to balance the budget. Now, the districts are lucky to get half of the gaming dollars. The rest of it, you vote to go to the general budget. I heard the Mayor talk about investing about a \$100 million in parks since he's been Mayor. I believe we're getting close to a \$100 million that's been siphoned out of the Districts over the last 10 years to go to the General Fund, to the general budget. I think you have to think about that. I think that saying yes, carte blanche, to the claims, is enabling. I think that saying yes to this bond is enabling. I think we have to take a course that looks at the hard stuff. We're in crisis. We've been in one for 10 years. When you don't have gaming money to bail it out you're going to a Bond Bank. This is not how you run a city. This is not how you use \$33 to \$40 million a year and then you're broke and can't pay your bills. That's a problem. We all need to come together and figure this out there are some hard decisions to make get out of this crisis and it's not going to happen by just moving gaming dollars, especially with there aren't any, to balance the budget. So, I'm in a position not to support this right now. Thank you.

Council President Woerpel- I know, maybe I shouldn't join this discussion, but I'm thinking it's time we look at the Gaming Ordinance and maybe we distribute the money so we can have a rainy day fund and come up with a way that we can get projects done that cost \$2 and \$3 and \$4million dollars and I'm willing to look at the Gaming Ordinance to make that happen.

Mayor McDermott- I've been Mayor same amount of time that Councilman Mark has been a Councilman. I've never heard him vote against a claim until today. And I've never heard him propose a budget cut. In fact, I had to beg him three times to vote for the Health Department, a simple \$1 million dollar redundant savings, years ago. Councilman Mark is full of crap. Councilman Mark is trying to redefine history and I'm not gonna stand here and take it. Councilman Mark is trying to change the topic during the pandemic right now. The fact is he's one of the Councilmen that pushes his hardest to make sure that every penny goes to the Districts and doesn't go to support the budget. Councilman Mark, you're on the Hammond City Council, your job is to balance the budget. This is a budget you approve every year. If you think there's cuts in there that could cut out \$14 million dollars out of our budget, feel free, the budget is coming up Councilman Mark. Let's hear what you got.

Mayor McDermott - The bottom line is if this Tax Anticipation Warrant isn't passed, because we anticipated revenues in a budget, I believe it was 9-0, maybe it was 8-1, I'm not sure, but in that budget we didn't anticipate there was gonna be a pandemic, and there is a pandemic, and we didn't anticipate the Casinos boats would be shut down for 3 months. We're not the only City, Town, County or State that's floating Tax Anticipation Warrant right now, we're not. This is a pandemic, Councilman Kalwinski, and you've been on the Council for a long time, if you got cuts let's hear them, Councilman Mark, lets talk about them.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Councilwoman Venecz- I agree with Councilman Kalwinski on one thing and that thing is that a hard decision need to be made and it's going to be up to all of us to make those decisions. As far as the rainy day fund goes I remember sitting in the audience at the time that rainy day fund was introduced. The truth of the matter is it couldn't be sold to the people. I remember one of the council people saying, " I'm going to give up some of my District money and take one for the team. I think not." So there wasn't an appetite for it when it was introduced and it couldn't be sold. I would like to point out also that the last time we took an advance on our tax collections was 2013. I think that speaks to the job that we've done in moving forward to 2020. You know it just kind of funny that we're on the midst of a crisis, Council Kalwinski is right, we're in the midst of a crisis who in the world ever anticipated a crisis of this nature. Who in the world anticipated that the Governor would extend the date for the property taxes and that we wouldn't be getting our money from the State in a timely fashion. But yet nobody in the City of Hammond, there hasn't been an employee that I've heard of that didn't get a paycheck. We all got pay checks, what happens if we didn't get a paycheck for 3 months or the employees didn't get a paycheck for 3 months. You're right Councilman, it is a crisis and it's extraordinary circumstances that we need to make some adjustments and I look forward to the conversation of making some of those hard decisions and reexamining the gaming dollars. Thank you.

Mayor McDermott- I also agree, I think the way we distribute our gaming revenues is antiquated. I think it has to be taken a look at and I wanna talk about that with the Council people so that we can get a lot more projects done. And this \$12.5 million dollar Tax Anticipation Warrant, will be paid off by the end of the year with the property tax revenue that's gonna be paid into the City. A lot of governments are doing this right now because of the pandemic. It's not ideal, but like Councilwoman Janet said, we didn't anticipate being in a pandemic. We didn't anticipate people not paying their property taxes, not generating any, you know, revenue at the Sportsplex or the Little League fields and the Casino being shut down for 3 months, completely unanticipated. Do we need a rainy day fund? Sure, but that's gonna take away from the District Councilmen and I have feeling I know how Mark's gonna feel about that, cause he's one of the council people that's very unrealistic and pushes hard regardless. It's one of the reasons we're here in the first place.

ROLL CALL (passage)

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

NAYS: Kalwinski

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

8/1/0

ORDINANCE NO. 9468 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

20-11 An Ordinance Establishing Inspections Conflict of Interest Rules and Reporting Procedure

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for 1st and 2nd reading by title.

Councilman Torres- I have a question, section 1 on the 2nd page, where it says certificate of occupancy, is that referring to rental certificates or what permits?

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES cont.

Brian L. Poland, Director of City Planning- A certificate of occupancy is issued by the Building Department when they have a particular development has completed construction and that they are the user of that is allowed to open the, you know, the store, for example, and not specific to the rental properties at all.

Councilman Torres- Okay, so project is complete and the building or whatever it is, okay.

Councilwoman Alexander- While Brian is at the Mic can he just explain to our residents what this Ordinance is pertaining exactly so that they know?

Brian Poland- It's my understanding from discussions with Attorney Smith that there was a state law change last year in which the conflict of interest concept was introduced when it comes to the issuance of not only building permits and the list that is specifically in this Ordinance, but also when it came to the Plan Commission approval of rezoning and BZA actions and all the other items that are under the jurisdiction of the Plan Commission. As indicated previously, the component that affected the Plan Commission that was already adopted at the end of last year cause that was an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. This is specific to the issuance of permits that are in under the purview of the Department of Inspections. It sets up that when an employee has a conflict of interest when reviewing a particular permit that they have to declare that conflict of interest, report to the Chief of that Department, and then that report is then given to the City Attorney, so we have it on record that there is a conflict of interest, if there is a conflict of interest, another employee is supposed to be assigned to that review of that particular permit or project.

Councilwoman Alexander- Thank you.

Council President Woerpel- On the motion for 1st and 2nd reading, all in favor? Opposed? AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

12R-13 A Resolution of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana Determining and Approving Plan Commission Resolution 2020-01 as a Written Order Approving a Redevelopment Commission Resolution No. 04-2020 as an Amending Declaratory Resolution that Amended and Modified the Boundaries of the State Line Allocation Area Within the Marina Development Area to Remove Certain Real Property from said Allocation Area Provisions of the Declaratory Resolution

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

Councilman Kalwinski- 20R-13 and 20R-14 are actually connected. One of them removes three parcels out of the Allocation area for the State Line Power Plant, because it's no longer there, and the other one replaces one parcel back that belongs to Redevelopment that wraps around the Data Center in the allocation area. These moves are necessary to move the date of allocation area back to zero now that the Data Center is identified in the allocation area and not the State Line Power Plant. Thank you.

RESOLUTIONS cont.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R13 ADOPTED

20R-14 A Resolution of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana Determining and Approving Plan Commission Resolution 2020-02 as a Written Order Approving a Redevelopment Commission Resolution No. 05-2020 as an Amending Declaratory Resolution that Amended and Modified the Boundaries of the State Line Allocation Area Within the Marina Development Area to Expand said Allocation Area Provisions for Certain Real Property Previously Removed from the Allocation Area by Amending Declaratory Resolution No. 04-2020

Councilman Kalwinski -20R-13 was removing the 3 parcels out of the allocation area, 20R-14 is putting one back in and having the base reset to zero for the TIF District or the Allocation Area that the Data Center now sits in. Thank you.

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

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R14 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Kalwinski- I too want to go on record that (unclear) slur on the metal container is wrong, appalling and beyond reproach and I'm sorry that such a thing could happen in the 1st District. Because we're not together in person I can't give you this handout. I'm going to walk you through this. I'll have you read that and then I got pictures from a resident regarding Pulaski Park this too is gonna be on the Casimir Pulaski Monument. This was put there a couple of weeks before the racial slur on the building and there have been other graffiti on park signs and also on stop signs in the recent months. So our District and neighborhoods seems to be getting pretty hard by somebody or bodies who want to create unrest. Also, regarding maintenance of Parks, does your park look like this in your District? That's the swimming pool at Pulaski Park last week, still the swimming pool, the deep bay of the swimming pool, the Ice Rink, another picture of the Ice Rink, Tennis Court. Most were sent by a resident to me late last week. Some of those issues were resolved, but has anything like that gotten that far away in any of your Districts regarding maintenance provided by the City? It's a rhetorical question. I just wanted to let you in on it and I also will be putting those packets in your mailbox so you can see closer what maintenance at Pulaski Park has looked liked this year so far. Thank you.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Tyler- I just want to welcome the 12 new firefighters into our Fire Department. It seems like we have a good group of individuals including the first woman firefighter in our City in close to 30 years, I believe. So, I'm going to welcome all those men and women as they join such a great group of individuals who serve and protect our city. And I also want to announce that at the Hammond Sportsplex, there is a youth soccer forum that's gonna be starting up on July 21st, between 5 year olds and 8 year olds. So if you're interested in that, please call the Sportsplex or visit the website for more information. Thank you.

Councilman Kalwinski- I just want to echo that Leon Repay from the 1st District, a city employee, and Precinct Committeeman for a long time. I've known him since we went to high school together at George Rogers Clark. He was a good friend. He had a zest for living, he enjoyed working, he enjoyed his downtime and whatever he did, he gave it his all and he'll be missed in the Districts and the neighborhoods and I'm sure in all the circles that he moved in. May he rest in peace and my sympathies to the Repay family. Thank you.

Council President Woerpel- I'll just state that Sandra Koartge, who was a 2nd District Councilwoman, and I think was a founder of Crime Watch, originally, with Jake and others passed away yesterday as well, so thank you for the condolences.

Mayor McDermott- I want to respond to Councilman Mark, in regards to the pool at Pulaski Park, which is what we're talking about. Every Council person knows what's going on with the pool at Pulaski Park, but there's people watching right now that have no idea what's going on with the pool at Pulaski Park. So I wanna talk about it, since Councilman Mark wants to show pictures. Let's go ahead and talk about what happened. We had a Park Bond and we had four pools that we were gonna shut down. We struck a deal in the 1st District that we were gonna design a new pool, an upgraded pool, and then we were shutting down the three other pools across the City. I made a deal with Councilman Emerson, where Councilman Emerson got two million dollars, plus money that I put in, plus money that he put into his Park, and we upgraded Edison Park. It's gorgeous. We made a deal with Councilman Rakos where Councilman Rakos put money in to retire his pool. Councilman Woerpel kindly shared money with that project in the 6th District as well, the Park Bond put in money, and I put in money as well as. Hessville Park is gorgeous, and heavily used. I made a deal with Councilman Higgs, at the time, who put in a million dollars for the project that you see at MLK Park, I put around a million dollars, the Park Bond paid for two million dollars, and look what we did to MLK Park. We made a deal with Councilman Mark where we were gonna redesign this pool and we were gonna put some money in from the Park Bond, I'm gonna put some money in, and Councilman Mark is gonna put money in, and he steadfastly refused to put a penny into that project. He would not put a penny into the project. He didn't want the pool redone. He wanted it the way it was always done and it was a violation of the ADA. And how could I do business with the Council if I treat Councilman Mark separately than I treat all the rest of the councilmen. I'm gonna say, sorry Rakos, thanks for a million dollars. Thanks, Councilman Higgs, for your million dollars, now Councilman Barry. Thanks Councilman Emerson for your million dollars. Councilman Kalwinski is special, he doesn't have to pay anything for his project. I dug in and said absolutely not, Councilman Kalwinski, we're not gonna do this. I'm not gonna give you a free ride. He's had probably over \$100 million dollars of money from the Port Authority money spent in his District. He had \$35 million dollars that we won, this administration won, spent in the 1st District and he wants a free ride in addition being treated separately than all the other councilmen. So that pool

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - has been sitting there in limbo. I was hoping Councilman Kalwinski would come around and say, you know, I wanna do just like Councilman Rakos did, just like the 3rd District did, just like Councilman Emerson did, but no, he wants to be special. And now we're in a situation where even if the pool was redone it wouldn't be open this year anyway, so we're just gonna fill it in. It's a failure, we, you know, I, put a bunch of money in the 2nd District, Irving Park, that I was gonna put into the 1st District. I made a great deal with Councilman Torres, and his park is gorgeous, and we're gonna keep building on it. Councilman Mark steadfastly refused to put a single penny into that project, and it failed because of that. I have credibility, look around the city, look at all the projects that we did with that Park Bond. The only one that didn't work was the 1st District, because the Councilman wanted to be special. That's why it looks like it does. It's not gonna look like that again, cause we're gonna fill it in.

Councilman Kalwinski- You have to believe that the Mayor lives in a twisted reality. I've never objected in giving money to the pool. I can't even schedule a meeting with him or the Engineering for them to move on it and now we don't have any money to put in it. So we're in a tough spot now, but it's not because I don't wanna give money to the pool. I'm happy to give money to the pool. It's a passion here in this District. I've always been open to it. There's a distortion of facts here.

Mayor McDermott- Every Council member knows what the story is, okay, every Council member sitting up there knows how this went down, Every one of you knows if I would have given in the Councilmen Mark, there's no way I would have been able to do business with the eight other councilmen that are reasonable. That's a fact, by the way, Councilman Mark, you have a beach about a mile up the street and it's packed. So maybe some of our constituents could go there. It's a beautiful beach, right by the Hammond Marina, and it's open with lifeguards. It's packed. But, by the way, we just did Irving Park, we just did the ribbon cutting last week. Councilman Torres and I partnered up. Councilman Torres put money in for the 2nd District. We put money in and look at that park, it's gorgeous.

Councilman Kalwinski- Distortion of facts. That's all. I'm done.

Councilman Emerson- Yes, I too would like to comment on Mr. Repay. You know, I'm gonna miss him. You know I see him a million times a year and our running joke was I would always ask him to play one on one and I said, I would always beat you. And if you knew him at all, he was a very tall man, and I'm 5'10 and a half and can't play basketball. But I don't know that he could. So we had this running joke. So, you know, prayers to him and his family and may he rest in peace.

Councilman Torres- Okay, I just wanna make a comment on Irving Park. We did a ribbon- cutting last week. We got a lot of compliments. I do want to thank the Mayor. He contributed the most of the money and the improvements that we got are unique to other parks like the (unclear) and we're gonna have a unique dog park that is still to be built. I was told it's gonna be added on at the end of this year. I appreciate the improvement, and from my understanding, it hadn't been improved since the 1940s. Thank you Mayor for your contribution.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilwoman Alexander- I just want to say kudos to Councilman Torres, and past Councilman Higgs, and Councilman Tyler, we're gonna do what's right with our parks. And kudos to Mayor for donating towards those because our parks are starting to look amazing. And just to drive past MLK Park and see the kids playing at the splash pad, see people walking around the Park, see people looking at the Monument at MLK, it's actually refreshing growing up. So that was a big deal in the 3rd District. And I wanted to say kudos to that, because it looks absolutely amazing. Just seeing the kids and the parents faces as they play. Some are social distancing as we get back to things, not to beat a dead horse, just as a reminder to people. Wear your mask as you protect yourself, you're actually helping to protect others. Thank you.

Council President Woerpel- For the record I would like to just state real quick, Mayor, you said I gave \$300,000 for Hessville Park. I don't consider that my money. It's the cities money, and it's our job as the fiscal body to help you make the decisions, like you said, on the best way to spend it. And me personally, I get aggravated when I refer to it as my money.

Mayor McDermott- I'm a resident of the 5th District and my son, Tommy, uses Hessville Park in the 6th District, four or five times a week. So I appreciate you going across the lines like you did Councilman Woerpel and helping Councilman Rakos get that project done, its gorgeous. What happened to Hessville Park, Council Emerson, it's over a year old now, but it's still gorgeous and I drive there all the time and kids are always using the gated, not the gated, the walled in soccer fields. And Edison looks special and thank you, Councilman Torres, for Irving Park. And we're not done yet at Irving Park, Councilman Torres wants a splash pad and I'll be honest with you, I think that's a good goal to have for that. It's close to MLK Park but really different neighborhoods altogether. I think it's totally doable and I think that's something we should look at. And I agree with Councilwoman Katrina, MLK is special, and I'm really glad that park, with all the quotes from Dr. King, and the splash pad and all the work that we did with the walking path and everything. I'm just really proud of those projects. And I know in North Hammond, I know what Pulaski pool looks like, and it's a failure between two people, Councilman Mark and myself. It's a failure and, you know, we had to move on at one point and we've moved on, and I said, you know what, Irving Park is right down the road, let's focus our attention there. Councilman Torres is the happy recipient because we gotta get it done and I tell you what, I want Irving Park to shine. And Pulaski Park, I wanna remind the residents of North Hammond, I put \$6 million dollars in Pulaski Park when I first became Mayor, and it's still pretty damn nice. So just because the pool doesn't look like Councilman Mark wants it to look, it's still a really nice park that we put millions of dollars into when I became Mayor. Thank you.

Councilman Tyler- I would like to just remind everyone to fill out their Census. I know pretty much every single Council person as well as other Department Heads across the City are working with our local Census representatives to get our completion rate up. I think right now, our average, we're at like 60% for the entire City. We'd love to see that number skyrocket over the next couple of months as the deadline approaches in October. It's really easy to fill out the information and you can do so online at 2020census.gov, takes about 10 minutes maybe 15 at max to complete it all. So I encourage all the residents that are watching to take it upon yourself and spread the word so that everyone living in our city will go out and complete it. Thank you.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Emerson- I just want to piggy back on what Councilman Tyler just said, it's very important because of the funding that we may or may not get we could lose a congressional seat if people don't fill out the Census. So it's very important that we do that, especially with the pandemic and everything else that's going on. So it's very simple, we did it online and you know if I can do it anybody can do it.

Mayor McDermott- Just to echo on the Census, we know Hammond participation rate is in the sixties, maybe it's in the low seventies by now, which isn't good enough. We know the neighborhoods that aren't responding like they've responded ten years ago. And the census takers are knocking on doors and we're gonna actually have workers from Public Works go out door to door and put it on people's door. Just as a reminder if you're watching this meeting right now, we need you to respond to the census either on the internet or through the mail, you'll get an actual mail piece. I took care of it right away on my smart phone and I never got the mail piece cause our family was counted already. If you're getting mail from the census you haven't answered them yet and we need you to, your City needs you to. Thank you.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

No one spoke.

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

AYES: ALL



Dave Woerpel, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:


Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 7:00 p.m.
dw