

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on December 14, 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.
Invocation by Councilwoman Alexander.

ROLL CALL

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

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor McDermott - Right now we're still meeting bi-weekly with the Coronavirus Task Force. As most everybody in the region knows, Lake County is designated by the Governor in the red. Which places severe limitations on restaurants and gatherings of all kinds. In Lake County, any gathering of more than 25 people must be approved by the Lake County Health Department. Right now we had two waivers issued by Lake County Health Department for successful events that we held. The Tree Lighting Ceremony, which had proper social distancing. Also the Christmas Parade, which was held successfully last week. Right now the only other waiver that I'm aware of, in regards to the Lake County Health Department, is in regards to the Sportsplex. Which is still operating subject to restrictions approved by the Lake County Health Department. Also, we just recently wrapped up negotiations, excuse me, we signed our four year contract with the Hammond Firefighters. I thought that was good news. Firefighters were in City Hall last week. We ratified those contracts. I'm not sure if they've been presented to the Board of Public Works and Safety yet or not. The contracts were approved with zero, zero, one, one for the next four years, percent, pay raises. I briefed the Council about changes we made to the Union Contract that will help the Firefighters and the Police Officers when they retire, and the body felt that it was important enough to get zero, zero, one, one over the next four years with these changes we made, they felt that the changes were more important than the pay raises. City employees did get a 2% pay raise this year. We approved that during our budget. Right now, in regards to litigation with our customer communities, in regards to the water rate increase that was passed by the Hammond Council, all of our customer communities have submitted remonstrated against the rate increase, which was expected. We have asked our customers in the customer communities, which is Whiting, Highland, Dyer, Griffith, Munster, we've asked them, as a class, for a counterproposal to our rate increase. We haven't received it. It's been a month. Which leads me to believe that our customer communities aren't interested in negotiating, basically, out of this, which we feared. So right now we're ready to go to court. I know that there's a hearing set during the holidays and we intend to keep that hearing date. Our legal team is ramping up as we speak. I'm actually supposed to be on a family vacation. I am actually making arrangements to fly back in the middle of my vacation so that I could testify in this case. I think, at this point, it's literally gonna be on the 27th or the 28th. So it's right after Christmas. Right in the middle of the holidays. This is not unexpected. We expected this. I think the only unexpected part of this whole arrangement

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - was our customer communities wanted us to delay this hearing until after the holidays and we did not want to do that. You know it's easy for our customer communities that are charging their residents \$3 and \$4 for a thousand gallons to want to take it slow, but I want to remind the Council we're only charging our residents .44¢ for a thousand gallons. So if I were charging my residents six or seven times that like our customer communities are, I wouldn't be in a big hurry either. But we are. And right now we are scheduled to be in court right after Christmas and I know the legal team is working furiously to make sure they give Hammond, the Hammond Water Company, great representation. I'm trying to think of anything else I need to address the Council with.

Councilwoman Alexander - Mayor, just curiosity, I noticed that we continue to have a lot of cars at the Sportsplex. I understand that we have something in place where if there is a parent there but there is a lot of vehicles which means there's a lot of people. Are we going to dial down some of that at this time as we keep moving forward? Because the numbers are still where they are, they're still high. So I really want to look out for that place and make sure that we're not doing anything to help contaminate people or anything like that. But I have had several residents come to me regarding the Sportsplex and how packed it is and how many cars and things like that. Are we gonna do anything?

Mayor McDermott - There's no plan, from me, to do that, Councilwoman. I do want to remind the Councilwoman that our safety plan is being implemented rigorously by our staff. There is a mask mandate at all times required in there. Each child has to come in with just one parent and adults cannot bring in guests. There's a lot of cars because it's a big place, Councilwoman. I agree if there's more than 25 people in there, but we addressed this with the Lake County Health Department. Lake County Health Department's comfortable. I'd also like to remind the Councilwoman that high school sports are still being played around Northwest Indiana. Football season just got done and they're ramping up right now with basketball as we speak. I know it's not ideal. This is more my personal decision. I know there's people that probably don't agree with my decision but I think right now as long as the Lake County Health Department supports us, this is where we want to go. For the record, I did speak with staff of the Park Department this morning, including staff at the Sportsplex, and everybody's very comfortable with what's going on. And I do want to remind the Councilwoman that nobody is forced to go participate at the Sportsplex either. They are choosing to go there and play sports and we do have rules when they're in the building but I appreciate your concern, Councilwoman. You know, some people probably think I'm making a mistake and some people out there think that there's nothing going on but I'm trying to balance safety and at the same time recreation, I think is important as well.

Councilwoman Alexander - I understand that. Like I said, I wanted to bring up what the residents are saying so that it's on the record that we had this conversation. That it's not being pushed aside. That everything is being thought about as we change and move forward.

Mayor McDermott - I appreciate it, Councilwoman. And I know how concerned you've always been about this and I appreciate that about you. I'm careful. I wear my mask at all times in public. You know, I am also trying to balance, you know, I feel strongly about the business community should be given a fighting chance to survive and, you know, I'm trying to balance everything, Councilwoman. Believe me, I worry about the staff that's out there as well. I do agree, Councilwoman. There are a lot of cars there in the parking lot. I appreciate you pointing that out and I have no problem with you bringing it up. So, thank you.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR’S ADDRESS cont.

Councilman Kalwinski - Mayor, is there any update regarding the City of Joliet and water?

Mayor McDermott - On Thursday I appear before the Joliet City Council. I testify on behalf of our City’s Water Department and the City of Hammond right after Mayor Lightfoot testifies with Joliet. You know, we talked about our proposal and I want the Council to keep in mind, our proposal, I think, is a great proposal because it gives Joliet independence from the City of Chicago. But our proposal does cost over \$250 million more than them hooking up to the Chicago Water Department. So, there’s two choices that face Joliet’s Mayor and Joliet’s Council. Hook up to Chicago and be subject to the whims of the Chicago Mayor. And I want to be very clear, I’m not talking about Mayor Lightfoot. I’m talking about the Chicago Mayor over the next hundred years. There could be a Chicago Mayor thirty years from now that quadruples the water rate and all Joliet rate payers and everybody else that buys from Chicago water will be subject to that rate, you know, based off of what the Mayor makes or mandates. If Joliet follows our advise and builds the pipeline and builds the plant in Joliet, they spend more now but they are independent of that Mayor’s position for the next hundred and twenty five years. So, I think that ours is gonna be harder to approve because it is more expensive but ours gets Joliet where they need to be, which is independent. But, that’s on Thursday, Councilman Kalwinski.

Council President Woerpel - Mayor, I just want to personally give a shout out to the I.T. staff for the way we’ve been able to do these Council meetings and every other meeting in the city. We haven’t missed a meeting all year and thanks to the I.T. staff. I’m not there tonight because I was exposed. I don’t have it but I’m being extra careful myself too and thinking of others. I encourage everybody to keep doing the same.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to accept the minutes from November 23, 2020 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to approve the claims from November 23, 2020 through December 9, 2020. Claim #5579 through #5974, 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

20-30 Ordinance Establishing Economic Improvement District and Authorizing and Approving other actions with respect thereto

20R-17 A Declaratory Resolution Determining That a Certain Area of the City of Hammond, Indiana be Designated as the Oxbow Landing Economic Revitalization Area #2 to which Deductions from Assessed Valuation May Be Requested by an Applicant to the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana Pursuant to Indiana Code 6-1.1-12.1

Council Atty. Berger - The very first paragraph of the ordinance, it says, "Whereas a petition has been filed", and I've looked and I've inquired and no petition has actually been filed with the Clerk or the Council and I don't see how we can adopt an ordinance that says something that's just not true.

Council President Woerpel - Which item does this pertain to? This is A.

Council Atty. Berger - That is correct.

Corporation Counsel, Kevin Smith - A large binder was presented to the Clerk. What we'll do, it's my understanding this is just the public hearing, it's not being taken out of committee. So between now and when it does come out of committee, we'll make sure to check with the Clerk to address Mr. Berger's concern regarding the petition.

Council President Woerpel - Does that answer your question, Atty. Berger?

Council Atty. Berger - I think it may answer my question when I actually see the petition.

Corporation Counsel Smith - Bob, I'll make sure that the folks that are here for the Data Center will get that over to you or at least give you a call to discuss that with you.

Council Atty. Berger - I think it should be circulated to the Council too.

Councilman Kalwinski - Right, thank you.

Corporation Counsel Smith - Yeah, we believe it has been, Mr. President. But we will definitely address Mr. Berger's concern and the Data Center folks are here and they've been listening and will be happy to address that as well.

Tom Dakich - I'm with the Data Center. We did file the petition the rule requires 14 copies plus an original. That was all presented to the Clerk's Office. I didn't bring it but I can make a copy available or if you have an e-mail address we can basically get you a copy over if that's an issue.

City Clerk Golec - We didn't get the copies of the ordinance from the petitioner.

PUBLIC HEARINGS cont.

Tom Dakich - So, I could tell you what happened. When we filed it the ordinance requires as a room that was actually to be filed in. That room, I want to say was 221 off the top of my head but I could be wrong, that room was under construction. So we went down to the Clerk's Office and filed it in the Clerk's Office, downstairs.

Mayor McDermott - We're just having the public hearing on this. So why don't we just have the public hearing and then we'll fix whatever the problem is and we'll get it ready before the next Council meeting. Is that okay? If there's a problem I think we could rectify that before the next Council meeting.

Tom Dakich - This is a request for an economic improvement district bond. The bond is not going to put a dime of the City's money at risk. The whole concept here is to not do that, is to tie up the second position in the security that the taxes are the first, senior lender is the second, but in Indiana law there's a little area in there that's a little bit murky so in financing our project, we told you we'd do \$40 million, we're gonna do \$129 million worth of development at the site. As the project has grown and expanded we've gotten these more complicated ways to do this. I wanna throw a couple things out there. The North Hammond will do really well on this project. First of all is that we're in the process of refinancing a portion of the land and that land is going to go out at \$400 an acre. Now that's a ... as far as we can tell that will be the most any tract of land has ever traded for in Hammond and it's very competitive with the rest of the County. The second thing is that as we expand, and we didn't anticipate when I talked to everybody about this when we started this, we didn't anticipate that the expansion that NIPSCO was going to be required to do, so the Wolf Lake Power Plant or substation is going to eventually, very quickly, be expanded and made dramatically bigger than what it is now. This isn't news worthy today because it's not gonna happen today but over the course of the next two years we anticipate and possibly a doubling of the size of the power that's going to be available to the people in North Hammond. Upon passage of this, when we take this up, hopefully this gets passed. When we came to you at the first part, we had a ground lease that essentially took ... that deferred a payment on \$2.5 million worth of money on the land, we're gonna accelerate that, that money is due in nine and a half years, under the prior way we were gonna do this the payment to the City of Hammond, wouldn't happen for nine and a half years. And the \$2.5 million the Mayor and the staff have convinced us that retiring that would be good so we'll be within 90 days or so of the creation of the district will be paying that off to the City. There is a bond district, there is a district that is a part of this, there are three members that we have asked to be a part of that district, they are all Hammond residents. I'm not appointing anybody to that bond grouping. Whatever money comes into this, which will not be an obligation of the City, will be controlled by members of the three people that live in Hammond. On a personal note, I'm so happy with how this has gone. You guys have been fantastic to us. I would not and I think the Mayor, and hopefully his staff would agree with me, I would never put you guys in a spot where I wanted to put a dime of your money at risk. That's not what I wanna do. What I'd like to do is to reverse, when we need a little bit of help from you guys, you guys were there to help us start. And we try to be good neighbors through this and what I would like to do is to not ... is to give you back some of that money and make it such that and get that money back to you quicker than what we were gonna do before. We're really proud of Northwest Indiana. We're really proud of Hammond. We run around the Country, you guys have met most of the guys in our group now, we've got twenty two people or something working on the project. We run around the Country talking about Hammond and what we're doing is we're changing the way Chicago looks at it. Our motto is the best data center isn't in Chicago, it's in Hammond, Indiana. So, I thank you for the time and I'm available for questions if anybody has any.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC HEARINGS cont.

Mayor McDermott - We're in daily discussions with the Data Center group in regards to the request for \$30 million of EID money. This proposal's a lot like a TIF District which if you think about a TIF District like, let's just say Cabela's, we floated \$20 million plus when we did the Cabela's District. We carry it on our books and the property taxes that are generated in the Cabela's District pay off the bonds that were paid for it. So we carry that debt on our books but City of Hammond taxpayer money, City of Hammond budgeted money doesn't go, a penny, towards the Cabela's District. So, you know, this is a similar type of proposal. If we want to be in the Data Center Game we gotta be competitive with other municipalities that are willing to do whatever it takes to bring these types of developments to their city. We have amazing opportunity at the former State Line Generator. It was the dirtiest coal fire power plant in the United States of America that was shut down. When it was shut down we lost \$100 million of assessed value in the City of Hammond and this is the type of development that's gonna bring it back all the way. As Mr. Dakich indicated, the first phase of this project has turned out very well. We participated in that one to the tune of \$8 million. The State of Indiana also participated in that first phase to bring the first Data Center in the State of Indiana to Hammond. This next phase is \$30 million of EIDSS money, which is a higher priority, which is important for investors. This will be carried on our books as though we're paying for it but in fact we're not paying for it, it's the assessment on the Data Center that pays for it. There will be investors to buy these bonds. They will not come from Hammond taxpayer money. Any remote possibility of liability we have, we are trying to address that now. Councilman Kalwinski, who sponsored the ordinance is aware of what we're trying to do. We've been working real close with him. Obviously, this being in the 1st District we felt it was most appropriate for Councilman Mark to sponsor this ordinance. I'm hoping we can iron out the last few issues we have so that we could bring this before the Hammond Council for the final vote. I appreciate Atty. Berger's objections and obviously we want Atty. Berger to be comfortable with this as well. So whatever Clerk Golec and Atty. Berger need of my staff, we're gonna take care of it so that the Hammond Council is comfortable with what they are being asked to do.

City Clerk Golec - Atty. Berger had called the office regarding the documents and we had indicated to him at that time that we do not have it, that he should contact the attorney or the petitioner, someone else, not this office because we didn't have them at that time. I'm surprised Atty. Berger is bringing that up now when he had the time and opportunity to do that a week ago. I'm just surprised at that.

Mayor McDermott - I appreciate that, Clerk Golec. You know, obviously, whatever my team could do to help bridge this gap we are willing to do it. Because we respect everybody. Everybody has got tough jobs. City Hall is in complete disarray right now with all the grinding and painting and we have workers tearing the place apart right now. So whatever we need to do, my administration needs to do, to make everybody satisfied, we're gonna take care of it before the final vote. I'm real happy, as a Mayor, to host the first Data Center in our City and I know the Council helped make that a reality. This is the second Data Center and, of course, the development group is coming to us for assistance. And I dare say I've heard rumors of a possible, you know, another group that may be interested in this type of development and I imagine if another group came forward and they were interested in doing something at that site, we may be here talking about it again. So, you know, as long as we're bringing these data centers to our city, we're gonna be talking about incentives and if you're not comfortable with that then, obviously, you have the right to vote against this proposal. We're presenting it. We're trying to eliminate all the risk for Hammond. But, keep in mind, for those debt hawks that are out there waiting for debt

PUBLIC HEARINGS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - to go up, this will add to our books. We will carry this on our books. It's not going to be paid for by Hammond taxpayers, it's not gonna be paid for by Hammond Schools, it's not gonna be paid for by the Civil City, but it will be on our books. The assessment will pay for it. But it will be on our books so it will look as though we have more debt, when in fact it's being paid by the assessment on the Data Center. Anyway, anybody have any more questions for me in regards to the Data Center?

Council President Woerpel - I received a message during this meeting that we do have a copy of what is being talked about at the Council Office. I just received that message from our secretary. So we do have a copy about what Mr. Berger's concerns were.

COMMUNICATIONS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community & Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - No upcoming meetings for the remainder of the year.

Capital Improvement Board - Councilwoman Venecz - Under new business we discussed a funding allocation for the 2020 Community Crossing Design and Construction Engineering Contract to resurface 169th from Kennedy to Indpls. and Sibley from Hohman to Sohl. There was also discussion on funding allocation for Summer Street Design Phase One from Columbia Avenue to Willis. And we did get, after the meeting, an e-mail that we had gotten approval on a project. That the Indiana Department of Transportation sent us a letter dated December 8th granting approval for the Community Crossings Match Grant Fund.

Capital Improvement Board - Council President Woerpel - I'll add to that, that I've been asked about the 173rd in front of Purdue. I did notice that they are starting to move the telephone poles. That was a Community Crossings Grant awarded last year that got let out for bid late summer and that project, I'm assuming since the telephone poles are being moved is beginning to have a (unclear) that's a project that was approved in 2018 or 19 for Community Crossing, which is a State Grant.

Capital Improvement Board - Councilman Tyler - I'll just add that that we'll submit a copy of the minutes from our last two meetings to be included for the record for the City Council as well.

Council President Woerpel - Is there a regular Zoom number for their meetings as of right now that we could at least post on our web site or you can give out?

Councilman Tyler - Yes, we can share that.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

20-31 Fixing the Salaries for Elected City Officials for the City of Hammond, Indiana Commencing January 1, 2021

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, 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 December 28, 2020 at 5:15 p.m. AYES: ALL

20-32 Authorizing the City Controller to Transfer Funds from one line item to another within Various City 2020 Budgets

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading by title. AYES: ALL

Councilman Rakos- This is basically a cleanup ordinance in a sense, but it's a little bit different then the cleanup ordinances we sometimes have. These are the results of individual offices, individual departments, that have saved money through our lease agreement with Leopardo. And, for instance, like the Police Capital Outlay saved \$450.00 and it's going to the Rainy Day Fund, which pays for these lease payments (unclear) what we got through Leopardo on the energy savings. There's several of them in here and it totals \$2,415,000, which goes to pay for our lease payments.

20-33 To Appropriate Funds in the Hotel/Motel Innkeepers Tax Fund for Economic Development Purposes in 2020

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, 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 December 28, 2020 at 5:15p.m., with a Public Hearing on December 28, 2020. AYES: ALL

20-34 Creating New Funds (Funds #229, #238, #280, #281) for Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program Funds Awarded to the City of Hammond Police Department

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Tyler, 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 December 28, 2020 at 5:15p.m. AYES: ALL

20-35 Creating a New Fund (Fund #150) for U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Cares Act Provider Relief Funds for the City of Hammond Ambulance Services During Covid-19

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilwoman Alexander, 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 December 28, 2020 at 5:15p.m. AYES: ALL

Councilwoman Venecz- Yes, this creates a fund for some of the CARES ACT money to reimburse for the ambulance services.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Mayor McDermott- For the homeowners that may be wondering what's going on, you're gonna see the Sanitary District CEO, Mr. Wielgos, come up after I'm done and talk about, you know, I'm not sure how many people are aware but right now the United States of America has historically low interest rates. And just like if you bought your house 5, 6, 7, years ago and you have people approaching you about refinancing your house. And if you refinance your house now and lock in the low rates we have now you could save hundreds of dollars on your monthly mortgage payment, you know, still not incur more debt, you just refinance it that you have and you save a bunch of money. We took a look at some of the bonds we have throughout the City, and the Sanitary District, and there's a bond that Mr. Wielgos is going to come up and talk about when I get done here that simply by refinancing a bond that they issued in the Sanitary District a few years back he could save almost a million dollars a year by refinancing it. So, obviously, Marty being a good CEO, is approaching the city council asking for your support and refinancing that debt he has. I want to remind you and the Hammond residents that are watching this it's just like a typical financing of your house. We're not bringing on more debt we're just refinancing the debt Mr. Wielgos already has. And in this case is gonna save them, like I mentioned, almost a million dollars a year. The next meeting the City Controller and the City of Hammond is gonna approaching the Council with a refinancing of their infrastructure bond that we passed a few years back, which will save the City of Hammond a lot of money as well. So, over the next couple of weeks, you're gonna see us approaching you trying to refinance these bonds, this is the first of two. So I did want to point that out for the homeowners to understand, this is just like if you were to refinancing your house. So anyway, I wanna cede to Mr Wielgos so he can explain in particular what he's asking the council to approve.

Marty Wielgos, Sanitary District Manager- Thank you, Mayor. City Council, Mr. President, it's exactly what the Mayor said as we have talked about in the Executive Session. We're gonna take the opportunity as the Sanitary District Building Corporation, that's what this bond is, that the council, as I had indicated several years ago when I came to the Council that the district needed to have some cash flow and that was the entity that we used to get about \$12 million dollars. As of today, by refinancing that debt under the same term, not adding any more years to that bond, we're not taking any money out, we're gonna save close to the \$900 to a million dollars that the mayor had talked about. And once again, I'm happy that the Hammond Council had helped us before and I'm hoping to get your blessing on the refinancing again today. Does anybody have any questions?

Council President Woerpel- Just for the record we didn't have an Executive Session, I don't want anyone freaking out. You had mentioned that we discussed in Executive Session, it was just during caucus, just for the record.

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. R24 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

20-36 Z-20-11; Variance of Use from Zoning Ordinance to allow a Beer Fermentorium in a C-3 Central Business District Located at 474, 478 & 496 Fayette Street, within the City of Hammond, Indiana

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

ROLL CALL (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

VARIANCE OF USE Z-20-11 APPROVED

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Kalwinski, moved to reappoint Janet Venecz to the H.A.S.T. School Board.

Councilwoman Venecz- I would like to say that I served on the H.A.S.T. School Board for at least the past 6 years, I can't remember exactly, but it is definitely an honor and a pleasure to serve on that board and to observe the outstanding students. And to brag on their graduation rate and every year it's just a pleasure to see our Hammond kids excel. Thank you. Thank you, Councilman Spitale.

Marty Wielgos- I just wanted to add to that. I also sit on the Board and it's been a pleasure to serve with Councilwoman Venecz. She has added so much to the board. I've been on the board, I think, 3 or 4 years now and she has done a wonderful job. It's a pleasure to sit next to her in the meetings and to do the great things that we do as a board for all of those students at that great school. I just wanted to add that your reappointment of her to that board is a real plus for the City Council.

Councilwoman Venecz- Thank you, Marty.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

APPOINTMENT APPROVED

Councilwoman Alexander -I'm sorry, I didn't do this in Communications. But our updated Covid numbers from our last meeting for 46320, an additional 150 cases. For 46327, we have an additional 123 cases. For 46323, we have an additional 282 cases. For 46324, we have an additional 250 cases. For 46394, we have an additional 129 cases. Taking it to 934. It's a drop from the last meeting, which is great, but not a good drop for me. So I just wanted to continue to encourage our residents... sorry for the way I talk, I just had surgery, I just wanna continue to encourage our residents to stay masked up, continue to wash their hands, stay socially distanced, as we continue to battle Covid-19 together.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilwoman Venecz- I would like to wish a very Happy Birthday to our Cameraman, Jake Jacobs, and our City Clerk, Bob Golec. Happy birthday, gentlemen. I also would like to request that everyone remember the reason for the season. This is a season of giving and to reiterate what Councilwoman Alexander said in the spirit of giving, please give safety to your neighbors, give safety to the people who surround you, and wear your mask. Please continue to social distance and wash your hands. Please take all the precautions that you can so we can all be around next year to celebrate this wonderful season of giving and family and friends next year. Thank you.

Council President Woerpel- I Just wanna take the time to echo what you guy have said and wish everybody a very Merry Christmas. I know this isn't the last meeting of the year. We have one more meeting before 2021 can be put in the books. This has been a very tough year and this time last year if you would've said, "Hey, next year you guys are gonna be doing your meetings on Zoom." I would have said, "What's Zoom?". I am proud of the fact that they way the Council and the City have worked together to work through these hard times, as far as Gaming money and everything has gone this year and I'm just wanna, you know, tell everybody Merry Christmas. And I'm very much proud to be a member of this Council and hopefully 2021 will be a lot better and I wanna wish everybody a Merry Christmas.

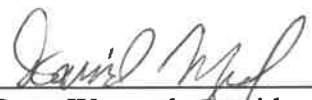
Nash Patel- I just wanna thank every Council Member and the City of Hammond, and Mayor McDermott, and Africa, and Anne, and Phil, and everybody that's worked with me over the years. And I love what you guys are doing and I am very grateful to be a part of such a great City. I look forward to seeing the beautiful hotel there and create some more revenue and beautify our City, and I look forward to working with you guys in the future. And I sincerely thank you all for being great partners to Ascent-Hospitality. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to you and all of your family members. Thank you.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

None.


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

AYES: ALL



Dave Woerpel, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:



Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 7:05 p.m.

Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk