

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on January 25, 2021 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 observed in honor of all the lives lost to Covid.

ROLL CALL

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

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

I wanted to start off with my report to the Council to talk about tonight, we are expected to get three to six inches of snow. I wanted to let the Hammond audience know that we have full call out scheduled for tonight. We expect the snow to continue through the night. We sent all of our employees in the Public Works home a little early today because we expect them to work a long evening. So Public Works will be in for a full call out tonight, probably pretty soon they'll be showing up and working until the streets are clear. It takes us about three hours to clear all the streets in the City of Hammond, all the mains, with all of our crew working. So please keep them in mind tonight when we're tucked safely in our beds, Public Works is gonna be working hard. So, I just wanted to let everybody know we have plenty of salt and we're ready to go on this. We are supposed to get three to six inches tonight. Another thing I wanted to let the Council and the public know, I know a number of people are watching the City Council Meeting right now, is I started a gofundme account for a young lady from the City of Hammond that's battling leukemia right now. As a lot of you are probably aware, I've participated in St. Baldrick's a number of years and it's a great organization. It helps combat childhood cancers. However, when you give to St. Baldrick's, which is a great not for profit, a lot of the money that you intend to go to go to certain individuals goes to the nonprofit first. I figured we're going to try to skip that whole step this year and try to direct the money right to a Hammond family. So we're working with the School City of Hammond. I want to thank Scott Miller, the Superintendent for the schools for helping us find a great family that is very much in need right now. We have a young lady named Ariyana Alaimo, she's a fifth grader at Harding Elementary. She's battling leukemia, she's been battling it since she was ten years old. She has to undergo daily chemo treatments. She has to go to like a spinal infusion, basically once every twelve weeks. She's gonna be going through these daily chemo treatments for quite a long time. Obviously, the expenses on the family are tremendous. The toll on the family is tremendous. This family has suffered a lot of heartbreak this year. Without going into too much detail, they suffered other losses in the family that are devastating. So besides the fact they're battling the horrible disease with their ten year old daughter, they're also fighting a lot of other, you know, effects of Covid and the pandemic and the lockup, but this family needs a lot of help right now. So, for the Alaimo family, I'm hoping to raise \$10 thousand. We've set up a gofundme account. We're already 10% of the way and we just started it like a couple hours ago. So if you find it in your hearts to try to help a Hammond family, 100% of the

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - money we raise is gonna go towards the Alaimo family, and they need it badly. So if you have any interest in participating with this gofundme can you please go on the City of Hammond's web page, gohammond, or you can go on my personal Facebook page where there's information about this gofundme. So, thank you very much for participating with that. There's a couple other reports I want to make to the Council. I've been talking a lot about 2020 excess gaming revenue. Last year we put a spending freeze in as soon as we hit the pandemic, as you all know. We did not spend money. And, quite frankly, we still had property tax draws last year and, quite frankly, the boat was open last year, and we weren't spending money. Which is a wonderful thing for us because we find ourselves in a unique position of finishing the year in the black, with positive money in the bank. Right now, I know that in the 4th District, Councilman Emerson is carrying money forward and in the 3rd District, Councilman Barry's carrying money forward. When I say money, I'm talking pretty excessive amounts of money that they're carrying forward. Other than that, everyone else is pretty close to zero. At that point we plan to drop \$4 million into the equation that we created with the Capital Improvement Board, the Rainy Day Fund, the Gaming Advisory Committee, each Council district, the Mayor's Gaming money, will get their percentage of the \$4 million, give or take a couple bucks, that we're dropping into the equation. You should see that first appropriation at the next Council meeting. Once we appropriate it, it goes into all of our accounts and, you know. I mentioned to the Council at the last meeting that we're trying to spend backwards instead of spending forwards. This is our first attempt at doing this. I know that everybody in Hammond probably doesn't want to get into the details of what we are trying to do but we went almost a full year without spending money, which is the hard part. What we're trying to do now, instead of spending money that we expect to get in 2021, we're gonna spend money that we have in the bank for sure. Right now we know for sure, for December 31, 2020, we had \$4 million in the bank and that's what we're appropriating now and that's what we expect to do this every quarter. So, March 31st I'll be making a similar type of report to the Council saying we have x number of dollars in the bank and we appropriate it on the spot. By doing that, we're going to inflate all of our cash balances in all of the accounts we have, which is just smart business. You know, instead of spending money we expect to get in 2021 right now, we're spending money that we already got in 2020. That's a big deal, it really is, it's gonna make our City Controller's life a lot easier. So, we should be approaching the Council at the next Council meeting with our first appropriation of \$4 million. I think that's good news. That's money in the bank sitting there collecting interest for us right now. You know, when I get done if there's any questions, I'll submit myself to them. Covid-19, we're still are meeting in the Covid Task Force. Right now, not much has changed as far as the State of Indiana is concerned. We're still at the same level we've been for a number of weeks. The only thing that's really changed now is vaccine sites. I just found out a new vaccine site opened in the City of Hammond. I talked to the new owners of Northshore Health Clinics, which is located on 165th in the 3rd District. That's the old Walmart, for those of you that aren't familiar. They're offering vaccines right now at that location. So for those of you that are out there in the public and you want to get your vaccine in the City of Hammond, there are a number of sites throughout the County, but that's one that's one offering to the public right now in the City of Hammond. It's the Northshore Health Clinics. You do have to be age qualified to be able to do that. I don't meet those qualifications yet. But once I do I will be getting my shot as well. I know that a lot of our first responders have already been vaccinated at St. Margaret's and places like that. Right now I still haven't been, for instance I'm 51 years old and I'm still too young to get vaccinated at this time. So, but if you're interested in becoming vaccinated in the City of Hammond, I would check with Northshore Health Clinics on 165th, Right there in the 3rd District. I know that this is gonna come up

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - later in the meeting regarding the EID, the Economic Impact District. Councilman Kalwinski, Council Atty. Berger and the City of Hammond's Economic Development team have been working very closely together regarding some technical aspects of the EID, and out of abundance of caution the Council and the Mayor have agreed that we're gonna delay this until the next Council meeting so that we could clear up some technical deficiencies that may be there. When we're talking about so much money, we don't want to take any chances. So we felt that out of abundance of caution, we talked to the data center, Mr. Dakich from the data center, we all felt that out of an abundance of caution, the next Council meeting is the one where we should vote on this. And last, regarding the water litigation. We just had a hearing last week where the city prevailed on an attempt to include Illinois water into the litigation. They were not successful, our customer communities. As a reminder we are in litigation with our customer communities regarding the water rate litigation. All customer communities are due to come up, Highland, Munster, Whiting, their contracts are due to expire within the next three or four years, all of them. I think that's something they should keep in mind. Griffith customer community, has no contract with Hammond Water. They are expired. So Griffith has to decide, in this litigation, if they want to keep litigating, if they want to continue to be customers of Hammond Water, or if they want to find another source of water. That's something Griffith is dealing with right now. Highland, and Munster, and Whiting has to decide also if they want to continue moving forward with the litigation or if they want to continue being a customer of Hammond Water and then we have the opportunity within the next couple years if we want them as customers. Quite frankly, this litigation is getting a little testy. So, that's my update to the Council. I'm available to answer any questions.

Councilman Kalwinski - Have we had an update or did I miss what happened with the Joliet water?

Mayor McDermott - No, we have not. That should come anytime now. As a reminder to the Council, the Joliet water situation is something where Joliet is deciding between hooking up to the City of Chicago and being subject to the rates set up by the Chicago Water Co. or having a fresh water pipe line go from Joliet, across Illinois, across, basically, the Robertsdale part of Hammond, into Lake Michigan, where it would take raw water and pipe it all the way out to Joliet. City of Hammond would get, basically, a carrying fee for carrying that water across our city. Our proposal to Joliet was more expensive than just hooking up to Chicago. So I imagine what they're going through right now in Joliet is do we want to pay more now and be water independent, we'll never be subject to the Chicago Mayor's water rate increases or do we just want to go cheap right now and just hook right up to the Chicago Water Company. That's something they have to decide. But I believe it's very soon, by the end of January.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to accept the minutes from January 11, 2021 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to approve the claims from January 13, 2021 through January 20, 2021, Claim #101 through claim # 344, 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

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Brought out 21-01.

Capital Improvement Bureau Board - Councilwoman Venecz - Did not meet January 18, 2021 due to the holiday. Next meeting will be February 1, 2021 with Work Study Session at 4:30 p.m. and meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Upcoming meetings:
Citywide C.W. - Thur., Jan. 28 - 6 p.m. - Virtual Meeting on HPD Facebook page

Covid Task Force - Councilwoman Alexander - For 46320, we have an additional 117 cases from our last meeting; for 46327, an additional 137 new cases; for 46323, an additional 242; 46324, an additional 228 cases; 46394, an additional 110 cases. That takes us to 834 new cases from the last meeting. Continue to mask up. We know the vaccine is out for certain individuals but until that time come for each person to be vaccinated, if they choose to, that you wear your mask so that you can help protect others while you're wearing your mask you're helping to protect someone else. Continue to stay six feet apart or more and don't forget to wash your hands and sanitize.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

21-01 An Ordinance to Repeal Ordinances 7337, 8036, 8489, 8906, 8907, 8908, 8909, 8910,8911 also known as Chapter 119 of Title XI of the Hammond Municipal Code and Adopt and Enact Chapter 109 of Title XI of the Hammond Municipal Code relating to Business Licensing in the City

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

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

Councilman Spitale - The goal for this ordinance is to revise and update the General Business License Ordinance in the Hammond Municipal Code.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

ORDINANCE NO. 9493 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

21-02 An Ordinance to Amend Ordinances 4872, Am. Ord. 8715, 8717, 9133 also known as Chapter 122 of Title XI of the Hammond Municipal Code relating to Peddler and Pop-up Vendor Licensing in the City

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 February 8th, 2021 at 5:00p.m. AYES: ALL

21-03 An Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 8514, Being: an Ordinance Establishing a Zoning Plan for the City of Hammond in Order to Provide for Orderly Growth and Development Within the City, All in Accordance with the Comprehensive/land Use Plan; for Purposes of Amending Title XXI Signs to Incorporate Revised Provisions for the Prohibited and Temporary Signs

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a Committee Meeting on February 8th, 2021 at 5:15p.m. and an Intent to Consider. AYES: ALL

Council President Woerpel- It was brought to my attention in Caucus, did you want to add your name as a sponsor?

Councilwoman Venecz- Yes, if you would please. That was my next motion. Thank you.

RESOLUTION

21R-02 A Resolution of The Common Council of The City of Hammond, Indiana, Approving Plan Commission Resolution 2021-01 as The Written Order Approving Redevelopment Commission Resolution 01-2012 an Amending Declaratory Resolution Regarding Certain Matters in Connection with The Downtown No. 1 Urban Renewal Area
Petitioned by the Hammond Plan Commission and Hammond Redevelopment Commission

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

ROLL CALL (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R02 ADOPTED

21R-03 Confirming the Reappointment of Gabriela Gallegos as a Commissioner of the Hammond Human Relations Commission of the City of Hammond, Indiana

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

Councilman Rakos- Right now Gabriela is out of the Country right now because of a family emergency, but she'll be back in time to attend the Human Relations Commission meetings.

ROLL CALL (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Emerson

Motion carried

8/0/1

RESOLUTION NO. R03 ADOPTED

21R-04 Confirming the Reappointment of Anne Herbert as a Commissioner of the Hammond Human Relations Commission of the City of Hammond, Indiana

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

ROLL CALL (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R04 ADOPTED

RESOLUTIONS cont

21R-05 Confirming the Reappointment of Alberto Ochoa as a Commissioner of the Hammond Human Relations Commission of the City of Hammond, Indiana

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

Councilwoman Venecz- Before we move pass the Human Relations Commission I would like to say that I have attended some of the Human Relations Commission Meeting and all three of these Commissioners are a great contribution to the Commission. And I'm very proud to vote to re-appoint all three of them. Thank you very much.

ROLL CALL (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R05 ADOPTED

21R-06 A Resolution Proclaiming the First Week of February of Every Year as National School Counseling Week in the City of Hammond

Councilman Tyler, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for adoption

Councilman Tyler- Once again, this was brought to our attention by Dr. Michelle Rushing with the School City of Hammond and they're trying to get some support for our guidance counselors who work their tails off trying to get students, of course, through highschool and to get them to succeed in college. So we just wanted to do our part to help recognize all of our guidance counselors throughout the School City of Hammond and say, "Job well done". Especially during the pandemic and trying to figure out the virtual world of support for students outside of the classroom.

ROLL CALL (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

RESOLUTION NO. R06 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Kalwinski- I wanted to give a quick update regarding the Ordinance 20-30, which has to do with the EID for the Data Center project. I want to let everybody know that it's clear that the administration is in full support of getting this moved forward. The Council, when we had the Council as a Whole Committee Meeting last week, a couple of the Council actually asked if they could have the Data Center in their own Districts. I am delighted and thrilled that this is coming to fruition very soon in my district and I've asked attorneys at the Council as a Whole Committee Meeting about their view on this project, and Redevelopment, the City Attorney, the outside attorney, all agreed that this was a good project for the City of Hammond and I agree with them. However, we have an internal procedure issue that we can best fix by having public hearing at the next council meeting February 8, 2021 at the Council Meeting. And at the end of that meeting, we will bring out the Ordinance for final passage and pass it. So, I appreciate everybody's effort and understanding in moving this project along including Mr. Dakich and all his people. He is wonderful to work with and looking forward to passage in a couple of weeks moving this project along. Thank you.

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved for Public Hearing on 20-30 on February 8, 2021. AYES: ALL

Tom Dakich- Managing Member of DX Digital Crossroads- Yes, Mr. President, 30 seconds. I wanna thank you, Mr. President, Councilman Mark, and the Mayor and his staff. This is what leadership looks like. We are working through brand new revolutionary ways to finance projects. It's a reason in Indiana we do things better. It's the reason that Hammond is our preferred home. It's because of the way we're working together and I want to thank Councilman Mark for holding us accountable for making everything right. And the City Clerk has been wonderful in this. Everybody's put a lot of effort into this. The Mayor's Office has given us an unbelievable amount of leadership and this is a day in which I'm real proud to be a Hoosier because of the amount of leadership everybody in the room has shown. So, thank you very much. We're thrilled with Councilman Mark giving us all this guidance and holding our feet to the fire.

Council President Woerpel- Mr. Dakich, I would like to thank you for your patience and to let you know that we had that special caucus meeting the other day and I didn't hear anything that made me believe that there's nobody not in favor of this project and I commend all you guys, the City, Councilman Mark, on the project that you're bringing to Hammond.


Tom Dakich- My goal is to make Hammond, and the Data Center in Hammond, the best it can possibly be and you guys make it really easy for me. Thank you.


PUBLIC EXPRESSION

No one Spoke.

Councilwoman Alexander, supported by Councilwoman Venezz, moved to adjourn. AYES: ALL

ATTEST:


Robert J. Golec, City Clerk


Dave Woerpel, President
Hammond Common Council

Time: 6:45 p.m.
cb/dw