

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on April 12, 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.

Invocation by Councilwoman Alexander.

ROLL CALL

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

ABSENT: Torres

TOTAL: 8

MAYOR ADDRESS

Mayor McDermott- Nice to see you City Council Members. It's been a few weeks since we last met, but thanks for letting me give my update for the council meeting today, April 12, 2021. Basically, just some, just so, you know, I go through the last couple of weeks of my calendar and try to give you guys a summation of some of the things we're working on and then we have a couple other issues with gaming. I want to talk to you about a couple of issues in the community, so we might just take a few minutes. Last week upon the expiration of Gov. Holcomb's Executive Order that mandated masks be worn across the state of Indiana. It was a hot topic what we're going to do in Hammond and we decided to go the safe route and extend the mask mandate through May 31st by Executive Order in City buildings. Now we did not extend that to restaurants. Like if Freddy's Steak House doesn't want to have a mask mandate, they do by the way, but if they didn't want to have a mask mandate, my order wouldn't order them to have a mask mandate. I didn't want to go there and try and supercede the Governor's orders. But we felt that it was the responsible thing to do in our public building where we work every day to maintain the mask mandate. I believe the schools still have theirs, right Councilman Emerson?

Councilman Emerson- Yes.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you. So anyway, the mask mandates are in place until May 31st at this point, by Executive Order. I want to thank Megan Flores and her staff in the Controller's Office for submitting the 1st Quarter Report in a timely manner. This is how we hope it goes going forward. Right as soon as the quarter ends, you guys get a summation of the gaming report for the 1st quarter of 2021 year over year. Our boat did 91% and that's compared to the year 2017 through 2019. So, in January, Horseshoe did 91%; in February, Horseshoe did 94%; in March it did 85%. Obviously, down year over year resulting in \$3.6 million dollars of gross gaming revenue, which is similar to the first amount we paid out that ended the fiscal year 2020. Capital Improvement Board gets 62% of that, which is \$2.28 million. Mayor's Discretionary gets 15% of that, which is \$551,000.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont

Mayor McDermott- Each Council District of the 6 Districts gets \$92,000 under the formula. Gaming Advisory Committee gets 4%, which is a \$147,000. Rainy Day Fund gets 4%, which is a \$147,000. Items of note coming up, Majestic Star, the two casino boats, it's always two different licenses in that one location. They are closing on April 18th and Hard Rock Casino Gary opens May 14th. So the next quarterly report I give you will be with competition and we'll see what that does to our year over year and we'll start making adjustments on that. Any questions on this so far? Okay, I've had a few complaints in my office. A few literally, but I imagine that a lot of you are getting the same type of complaints. Councilman Mark up in the 1st District, who I've spoken with about this problem, there is a humming noise in the 1500 block of Robertsdale, apparently coming from the Cargill plant. It's weird because I have employees very close to Cargill, literally across the channel from Cargill, and they hear nothing. And you talk to a few residents in the 1500 block of Davis in that area over there and they say they hear it plain as day. So it's troubling, like usually when you have a noise, it's annoying in the Community, it's not annoying in one block. It's annoying across the entire section and that is not the case in this. So when we first got reports about this, we sent the Chief of Staff and Hammond Department of Environmental Management to Cargill to talk to the plant operators about this problem. They felt like they knew what it was. We got more complaints. I called the plant manager into City Hall and I met with them personally. They feel like they have isolated what was causing the noise and they're perplexed also, by the way, because they say we're not really doing anything different. We think we have it isolated then a couple of complaints came in the next day, also not widely heard across Robertsdale, literally pinpointed to one particular neighborhood, and they said when that came out the machine we thought it was was shut down. So we have no idea what's causing this either, that, or I don't know. So it's a hard issue. I talked to Councilman Mark about it. I don't know if Councilman Mark wants to add anything, but this is something that we've been on. Like, it's hard, because if you drove up there right now, you wouldn't hear anything. If you're across the channel when the noise was happening, you probably still wouldn't hear anything. But if you're on this one block, that's where the frequency is working. I don't know, it's a hard issue, but I don't want you guys to think I'm blowing it off. Is Councilman Kalwinski in the meeting today, I'm not sure?

Council President Woerpel- Yes, he's up there.

Mayor McDermott- I don't know if Councilman Mark wants to add anything to this. I'm sure he's been way more involved in it than I have.

Councilman Kalwinski- Sure, I have had calls from 1300, 1400, 1500 and 1700, regarding noise, certain times of the night that just persists so long and so hard, people just can't sleep. It's not all the way across the Water Gardens, but it is further North and East, for the most part, where I'm getting most (unclear) complaints (unclear). I spoke to the plant manager (unclear) it's Wednesday as a (unclear) follow up call, he did mention that they were going to follow up. He had some new technology for improving plant operations and I invited him, of course (unclear). But I'm not sure that he will show up for that.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you, Councilman Mark. So anyway, we're going to keep monitoring that, HDEM is aware of it too. I urge any residents to call me when you hear it so I could drive to the right block, so I could hear it also. Call me, most people have my number. Call my cell phone, text me, say it's happening right now. I will get in my car and I'll drive up to 1300, 1400, and 1500 block so I can hear it with my own ears. This is a tough one, because there's people I rely on in certain neighborhoods around the City when I have a problem and the people that I would call literally can throw a rock at Cargill, they're so close to it, and they can't hear it, which is frustrating for me because they're the closest. So this is not an easy issue, and by the way, there's a lot of industry in this area, you know the BP Whiting is not far from here, there's Unilever, there's Cargill, there's a lot of industry up in this area. I want to make sure if we're going to blame somebody for making a noise that's hard to detect, we're blaming the right company. So we're just being very careful and very cognizant of the fact that people are complaining about it. I spoke today to the, basically, the banker that's financing the Data Center project along with the management team just to get an update so I can give to you all, they said things are going very well with the Data Center and that they're going to be back like we anticipated talking to us about a national tenant that wants to locate to our City. I imagine that means they want to come to you and ask for some type of assistance, but it's exciting to hear the type of interest that the Data Center location is drawing. I wanted to point out that there was still some questions about the April Fools joke that we pulled this year. We are not planning to build a dome at the Lost Marsh. That was a joke, that was a April Fools, and I just wanted to point that out officially on the record because I didn't follow up the post and say, "Ha ha, I got you". We just sort of left it hanging, so I just wanted to point out that we have \$53 million of stimulus money coming in and I would never in a million years try to spend that money without consulting with the Hammond City Council first, it was an April Fool's joke. Two Bills that are problematic in the General Assembly, is so problematic, I think it's imperative that we get involved as a City, and I hate saying that but there's Bills that are gonna damage our city. One Bill is about HB 1453, it's a Bill about the merit selection of judges. The thing that's disturbing about this Bill is they're basically... right now in Indiana, 70% of African American and Hispanic Hoosiers cannot vote directly vote for their judges, and that's not right. And instead of making it right, so, for instance, we can't elect our Superior Court Judges, which is 95% of the judges are appointed through a merit selection process and ultimately picked by the Governor. Lake County is one of the counties that can't directly elect their Superior Court Judges. But over in Porter County, they can. I guess in Porter County they're smart enough to pick their Superior Court Judges. But here in Lake County, we're not smart enough to pick our own judges. Why do I think this is important, because the new system that they're coming up, with which removes even more power from the merit selection panel that we have, the new procedure harms us even more. Hammond is the most diverse City in Northwest Indiana, for sure the most diverse City in Indiana. I think it's imperative that we start standing up for ourselves when this ridiculous legislation comes around and my goal is for Lake County to be treated like every other County in Indiana. I think we should get involved in this case. I want to talk to you all about the possibility of intervening in this case and that's another case that directly interferes with us as well. It's a Bill about Charter Schools. I don't have the Bill number, but it applies more directly to the School City, but it affects us also because what it requires is for any school city in Indiana that wants to get rid of their buildings, they have to offer it to a Charter school for \$1.00. They have no choice. So, for instance, let's talk about Gavit High School and Clark High School projects that we want to get a hold of and develop. The School City first has to offer it to a Charter School for \$1.00 For Gavit High School is probably worth \$4 or \$5 million

MAYOR ADDRESS cont

Mayor McDermott cont- dollars, but the School City of Hammond is going to be forced to take a loss to offer it to a Charter School and if a Charter School takes their offer for a dollar they get to open up a Charter School at Gavit High School and draw students away from the School City of Hammond. I think we need to get involved on behalf of the City of Hammond in this case as well, and I'm going to tell you why, they're going to make it hard for us to develop Gavit High School. They're going to make it hard for us to develop Clark High School. We have a few other high schools that we want to develop as well. I know there's a couple of other ones we want to develop as well. This proposal is going to make it that much harder and we're going to have some fly-by-night Charter School move into our City for a buck and steal students away from the School City of Hammond and make our City look bad. I want to develop Gavit High School on behalf of the City of Hammond. I want to develop Clark High School on behalf of the City of Hammond. We have deals with the School City, they want us to develop these pieces of property. But this stupid State Law requires them to offer it to a Charter School for \$1, which is a taking. Let's say Gavit High School is worth a million dollars. That's a low estimate. Gavit High School is worth a million dollars and they have to give it to a Charter School for \$1. The State of Indiana took a \$1 million from the taxpayers of Hammond. We paid a million dollars for that building, we paid far more than that. It's a taking, and it's a constitutional issue and it's important. I hate getting involved in litigation, especially when it doesn't directly affect us. But I would argue that both of these Bills greatly affect the City of Hammond. I hope you support me on that endeavor. That's all I have, Mr. President, unless you have any questions.

Council President Woerpel- Can you explain the new form for allocating gaming dollars real quick?

Mayor McDermott- We just felt, honestly, we changed the way we do business, the Council knows that. Instead of spending forward, anticipating money, we spend backwards, based on what we actually have, which the money that we just broke out in this Council meeting today is what we actually have. We take what we actually have, we put it through the formula that we all agreed upon and then we could spend that money. Now, since we've changed everything, I've been very frustrated my entire time as Mayor, and we've been doing this a long time. I didn't like the way we were doing the green sheets, that's what we call them, the green sheets would... let's just use Councilman Woerpel, for example, Councilman Woerpel says I want to do this block of streets, I got the money. He signs off on it, sends it to me, and I would sign off on it, and it goes to the Board of Public Works. However, what I wouldn't know is whether maybe, Councilman Woerpel in this case, was overextending himself, and maybe Councilman Woerpel didn't even have the money. I'm using you as an example. So what we wanted to do was have more signatures on there. So the first signature I need to see before I sign it... so Councilman Woerpel, under this scenario, would sign it then he'd give it to Megan the City Controller and Megan signs it, she's telling me, "Mayor, Council Woerpel's got the money for this" and I said, okay, Megan signed it, Councilman Woerpel signed it, if the Water Department is putting money into it, Marty, excuse me, Mark McLoughin signs off on the Water Department. If Marty in the Sanitary District is putting money in, Marty signs off. When I see all the different people participate, I sign off, and we send it to the Capital Improvement Board and ultimately to the Board of Public Works. I'm sorry. I'm just trying, honestly, you're not the only one we're just trying to like get everybody used to the new system. It's going to be way better since we've changed our system and I think we've made it a lot better than what we used to do. We just want to tighten that up as well and I wasn't trying to be disrespectful. We wanted to make a clean shift to the new system.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR ADDRESS cont.

Council President Woerpel- I was unaware of it.

Mayor McDermott- I mean, I know you were and that...

Council President Woerpel- It's not a big deal.

Mayor McDermott- You weren't the only one by the way.

Councilman Kalwinski- A while back the Mayor mentioned that he would get us the water rate breakdown for Hammond and customer communities. My understanding is Hammond is paying the full freight right now, but customer communities that buy water will be coming in at a graduated rate, but we didn't have that in hand, or I don't, wondered if that's available yet or not.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you, Councilman Mark, I apologize. I should have brought that up myself. Our attorney had a medical issue come up and that put her out of commission for the better part of 2 weeks. We're not making excuses and getting our ... we had multiple plaintiffs in this case filing suit against the City of Hammond and multiple attorneys involved and getting everybody to agree on thousands of words in a settlement agreement has proved more challenging than we thought. We wanted to get it to you sooner than this, Councilman Mark, it is going to be here but our attorney getting ill, and you know undergoing a medical procedure certainly didn't help speed this process up because we rely on her so it's not... there's no problems the litigation nobody... there's no real attorney fees being spent right now. It's literally submitting the entire agreement to writing. As it stands right now, Councilman Kalwinski, the water that I purchased as Mayor of the City of Hammond, is at the same rate that the Hammond residents pay right now. I'm paying a \$1.90 for the water that we're selling in Illinois for \$2 bucks and some change. We're buying it for a \$1.90, which is a lot more than we used to. There will be a true up in this process once it's all said and done and everything will be made good. So even though I've been paying, on behalf of the Council and the Mayor, \$1.90 for water that we will probably ultimately pay closer to a dollar, right now, we're just paying the bills and will true up once the settlement agreement has been signed and approved, but I'm sorry I didn't bring that up, Councilman Mark.

Councilman Kalwinski- Thank you. One more question, if I may. The two bonds that we took out last year during the pandemic because we were fearful we might need them, and my understanding is we never did use any of that and I also remember back then you were saying we wouldn't if not used, we would send that money back and retire those bonds. What's the status right now for them?

Mayor McDermott- Thank you, Councilman Mark, yeah, you authorized us in the midst of the pandemic to issue warrants. I'm trying to remember the amount, \$12 million dollars in warrants. The Hammond Council gave us permission. We obviously were preparing for the worst, you know, we put in a spending freeze. The casinos were shutting down. We had no idea how long that was going to last. So the Council gave the City authorization to purchase \$12 million in Warrants, which are short term loans to help make payroll and stuff like that, we never had to use them. Right now are they considered shut down or still open? It's all squared away, Councilman Mark.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Councilman Kalwinski- What does that mean. I didn't get that?

Mayor McDermott- We paid them. It's all closed out.

Councilman Kalwinski- Oh, so they're gone?

Mayor McDermott- Yes.

Councilman Woerpel- They were never taken right?

Mayor McDermott- We actually had the \$12 million. It sat in an account, we never used it. We paid it all back already and that was from the City Controller.

Councilman Kalwinski- Terrific. Thank you.

Councilman Tyler- Mayor, I just want to commend you. I think we all received correspondence or maybe it was just me. But you submitting a letter to the Lake County Health Department to try to establish a Covid vaccine site here in the 3rd District. You know we all know that African- Americans and Hispanics are hardest hit by the pandemic and Councilwoman Alexander has been on top of sharing those updates with us, especially for our hardest hit communities. So I just want to commend you on submitting that letter, I actually submitted a letter of my own in support of that recommendation. So hopefully we'll... I don't know if you've heard back from the Lake County Health Department. But hopefully we will hear something back from them soon so we can hopefully get a vaccine site set up here in the 3rd District, so residents can easily access it. We can see a higher number of people receive the vaccine over the next few weeks.

Mayor McDermott- Thank you, Councilman Barry, and I appreciate that and Councilwoman Alexander for keeping me plugged into the issue. I did submit a letter on our behalf in the City of Hammond, asking that the Lake County Health Department make the Ophelia Steen Center a vaccine location. I have not heard back Councilman Barry. In fact, I'll make sure that my Chief of Staff reaches out to the Lake County Health Department tomorrow for an update and I will share it with the Council, of course.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to accept the minutes of March 22, 2021 and place on file. AYES: ALL

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to approve the claims from March 22, 2021 through April 7, 2021. Claim #1379 through #1721, inclusive.

ROLL CALL VOTE (claims)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried

8/0/1

CLAIMS APPROVED

PUBLIC HEARINGS

21-10 An Ordinance Vacating a 66-Foot Portion of 600 and 700 Block of Eaton Street and 5800 Block of Madison (AKA Windrich) Avenue the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana..

No one spoke.

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale moved to have a memo placed on file. The 1st Quarter 2021 Gaming Distribution (January - March 2021). AYES: ALL

Councilman Tyler- As I mentioned during the Mayor’s remarks, I submitted a letter to the Lake County Health Department requesting that we establish a vaccine site here in the 3rd District. So I’ll send a copy of that so we can add that to our records as well.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilman Spitale - Brought out 21-10 and 21-11.

Capital Improvement Board - Councilwoman Venecz- We discussed the 2021 resurfacing program, the total amount on that was \$1.9 million. There’s a project request form that’s being developed and prepared to place online. The Chicago Street phase one and phase two projects are moving along. The next meeting will be on April 19th, at 5pm.

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz- Now that many of the residents have been vaccinated and we’re kind of inching back toward some sense of normalcy, Crime Watch is beginning to look forward to starting our in person meetings again. These are the meetings that have been scheduled.

Thur., Apr 15th; Hessville C.W; Jean Shepherd Center; 6 p.m.

Wed., June 9th; Community Watch at Mt. Zion Pleasant View Plaza; 1:00p.m.

South Hohman Neighborhood Watch; Thur., June 17th; Trinity Lutheran Church; 6:30 p.m.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

COMMITTEE REPORTS cont.

Councilwoman Venecz cont.- The guest speakers will be the new Chief of Police and the Assistant Chief of Police. These are some meetings that we can look forward to. Harrison Park is looking to start back up in June. Edison Community Watch will resume in September at Edison School. Irving Community Watch will resume in September at Irving School. And of course when I get more information, I'll pass that along to everyone. Meanwhile, if anyone sees anything that is suspicious or something that just not seem right please call 911.

Councilman Rakos- I have a question for Councilwoman Venecz about the Capital Improvement Board that \$1.9 million for resurfacing is that throughout the whole City, all six Districts, and was it compiled by Engineering?

Councilman Venecz- Yes, it was compiled by Engineering and to the best of my knowledge it is throughout the City. If you'll bear with me one moment I'll pull out the list and I'll be able to tell you. Because of some work that Councilman Mark and Engineering has done in the 1st District, there is not much in the way of overlay in the 1st District, there were 4 items in the 2nd District, 4 item in the 3rd District, 4 items in the 4th District, 4 items in the 5th District, 6 items in the 6th District. So yes, they were spread throughout the City.

Council President Woerpel- Quick question, that doesn't include the stuff that's like up for grants, like the Community Crossings Grant and stuff like that?

Councilwoman Venecz- No, these are streets that are in need of repair in one form or another.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE

21-10 An Ordinance Vacating a 66-foot Portion of 600 and 700 block of Eaton Street and 5800 block of Madison (AKA Windrich) Avenue in the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana

Councilman Tyler, supported by Councilwoman Alexander, moved for final passage.

Councilman Tyler - Just to restate what this ordinance is concerning, we are vacating the property right behind the Civic Center so that the School City of Hammond and Hammond Central can use this area for sports, I believe they are going to use it for a football field as well as a track field. In that same area is going to be softball and baseball fields too. I'd like to see this go through so that our high school can have a place to play their sports.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried

8/0/1

ORDINANCE NO. 9503 PASSED

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

21-11 An Ordinance Reclassifying Certain Lands in the City of Hammond for Zoning Purposes and Amending Ordinance No. 8514 (An Ordinance Establishing a Zoning Plan for the City of Hammond Including the Regulations and Maps to Administer the Zoning Plan in Order to Provide for Orderly Growth and Development Within the City, All in Accordance with the Comprehensive/Land Use Plan, as Amended) for Property Commonly Known as 2642 New York Avenue

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

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried

8/0/1

ORDINANCE NO. 9504 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

21-12 An Ordinance Creating a New Fund (Fund #176) for the Funds Distributed to the City of Hammond from the American Rescue Plan

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading by title and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a Committee Meeting on April 26, 2021 at 5:15 p.m. AYES: ALL

Councilwoman Venecz - This ordinance designates certain line item numbers for us to receive the funds from the American Rescue Plan. This is dictated by the State Board of Accounts. As far as the usage of the funds that come in, we have not received directive from the Federal Government just yet as to exactly how that money can be spent.

21-13 An Ordinance Creating a New Fund (Fund #246) and to Appropriate Funds within the Hammond Police Department Grant Fund for 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 May 10, 2021 at 5:30 p.m., with a Public Hearing on May 10, 2021. AYES: ALL

ORDINANCE 3RD READING - FINAL PASSAGE cont.

21-14 An Ordinance to Amend Ordinances 3305, Am. Ord. 3387, Am. Ord. 4301, Am. Ord 5004, Am. Ord.8592, Am. Ord.8595, Am. Ord.8961, Am. Ord. 8962, Am. Ord. 9098, Also Known as Chapter 117 of Title XI of the Hammond Municipal Code Relating to Food and Drink Sales and Establishment Licensing in the City

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Rakos, 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 April 26, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

21R-15 A Resolution Authorizing the Hammond Police Department to Apply for a 2022 Comprehensive Highway Injury Reduction Program (CHIRP) Grant

Councilman Spitale, supported by Venecz, moved for adoption.

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried

8/0/1

RESOLUTION NO. R15 ADOPTED

21R-16 A Resolution to Recognize the Hammond High Boys Basketball Team for their Continued Success on and off the Court and for Demonstrating what it truly means to be a Wildcat at Heart

City Clerk Golec read the resolution in its entirety.

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

ROLL CALL VOTE (adoption)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried

8/0/1

RESOLUTION NO. R16 ADOPTED

Councilwoman Venecz - I would like to be added as a sponsor of that resolution. The accomplishments of those young men has been outstanding and I think it's very appropriate for all of us to be on the resolution, quite honestly, but I personally would like to be added.

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to add the entire Council as sponsors.

AYES: ALL

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

RESOLUTIONS cont.

Councilman Tyler, supported by Councilwoman Alexander, moved to suspend the rules to allow Coach Larry Moore to speak.

ROLL CALL VOTE (suspension of rules)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried

8/0/1

RULES SUSPENDED

Coach Larry Moore, Hammond High Basketball - I would like to say thank you all for recognizing my team. I coached a great group of kids this year. The support from the community and throughout the State has been amazing. For us to achieve what we did during a pandemic, being number one for the first time since 1974, and my kids staying focused in the classroom while virtual and a little bit of hybrid. I really want to give them the recognition because it was just a difficult year for everybody in the school, as well as athletically. So again, thank you for the recognition and I'm really proud of my team.

Councilwoman Alexander - I would also like to congratulate Coach Moore on being selected as Coach of the Year. That is a great honor. Congratulations on that as well. Without a great Coach you can't have a great team and vice versa, so good job on what you did.

Coach Moore - Thank you.

Councilman Tyler - And that's back to back, second year in a row too.

Coach Moore - I appreciate that, Mr. Tyler.

Councilwoman Alexander, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to return to the regular order of business.

AYES: ALL

ROLL CALL VOTE (return to regular order)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried

8/0/1

RETURN TO REGULAR ORDER

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

21-16 BZA- Z-21-05 Petition of Kube Sports Complex, LLC for Variance of use from Zoning Ordinance to Allow a Biorespository (Cold Storage Warehouse and Distribution of Medical Supplies) Located at 2825 J.F. Mahoney Drive, within the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to approve the petition for variance of use from zoning ordinance for Kube Sports Complex.

ROLL CALL VOTE (approval)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried

8/0/1

PETITION FOR 21-16 (Z-21-05)
APPROVED

Councilwoman Alexander - I have the Covid numbers for today. For 46320, we have an additional 12 cases; for 46323, an additional 22 cases; for 46324, an additional 20 cases; and 46394, an additional 2 cases. That's 62 new cases from our last meeting. Numbers are continuing to trend down, which is a good thing for our city. But we want to keep them that way. So as the Mayor stated about our city buildings and things like that, we also just want to encourage you to continue to wear your mask, continue to social distance, because we're not out of it yet. Vaccines are available. There is a new mass vaccination site at Gary Roosevelt that, from my understanding, there is no appointments needed. They are now welcoming, also, Illinois people to come over for that site. There is appointments being made all over the place. I received my first vaccine. I'm looking forward to getting the second one as I continue to teach in the schools with our students and I encourage others to research the vaccine for yourself. If it's for you, get the vaccine. We want to make sure we get out of this pandemic. The new variants are here, they are doing research now about if they need a third vaccine to combat the variants that are out. I'll continue to keep you updated as I continue to do my research.

Councilman Tyler - I have three quick things. The first is that the Hammond Common Council Scholarship is now open. Applications are now open. So you can apply online, I know on my Facebook page and gohammond have shared it on theirs, and the School City of Hammond too. So feel free to fill it out online. I'm guessing you can still get a copy of the application from your guidance counselor at your high school. Just a reminder, it's open to any high school senior within the School City of Hammond. The application closes on April 23rd. The second thing is, I just want to continue to encourage residents to use the 311 App to submit any requests that they have for garbage pickup, like lawn care or anything like that, that they want to share with Code Enforcement, even Police Department or any other department within the City. I know I use that app a lot. I know a lot of the rest of our Council does too. So it's a good way to communicate anything that you might need to us and those other departments so we can get those things taken care of. And then lastly, I'll be doing a Facebook live this Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. to just kind of share some updates about things that are going on in the 3rd District. So if you want to learn more about some of the things that are taking place, feel free to join my Facebook live on Wednesday, April 14th at 6:00 p.m. to kind of hear more updates about some of the projects that we're working on.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilwoman Alexander - There is a Mayor's Night Out scheduled on April 21st in the 1st District at the Lost Marsh from 6:30 to 8:30, just so that the residents know that Mayor's Night Out will start April 21st going all the way to November.

Councilman Kalwinski - Listen, do you know if that meeting will be Zoom and in person? How will that be conducted? Does anyone know there?

Council President Woerpel - Controller Flores said it's going to be both. So it will be on Zoom and in person.

Council President Woerpel - Just letting the Council know, we all received an e-mail asking for our support on the Calumet National Bank Building redevelopment. Rather than us send all nine of the same letters, we have a Council letter here in the office that those that want to support that projects can come in and sign and we can send it to the developers so they can send it for the financing they need. But rather than send nine separate letters, our Council secretary has typed up one that if you can come in and sign, if you are in support of it, if we can do that this week, preferably by tomorrow or Wednesday, that would be great.

Councilman Spitale - Will it be ready by tomorrow, you said?

Council President Woerpel - It's typed up now.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

George Stoya - I'd like to take issue with the Mayor and Councilman Kalwinski, as to the gas lighting of the issue of noise and vibration primarily emanating from Cargill. Come deeper into Whiting/Robertsdale, it's there. Ron Novak was aware of it. He said it was something from their fans that makes it happen. I don't understand, so these people all hearing things. I find it unacceptable. When you are down wind you hear it, you feel it. It's a vibration and it's very strong.

Councilman Kalwinski - I'm not taking it lightly. I had a meeting with Cargill and also had follow up phone calls. I've written an article last month and have another one coming out this month in the paper regarding those meetings. Briefly, they worked on some of the baffles that are in the ground that were damaged during the winter and fixed those. They are agreeing to a noise study to ascertain the levels and where it's coming from. They are also looking into new technology for the plant to which we'll get more explanation down the road. I've encouraged people to come to Mayor's Night Out and let the Mayor know where all the noise is being heard. I know it goes all the way to Whiting. I know it seems to be primarily East and a little bit South and a little bit north too. But east of the plant seems to be getting hit hard. I'm taking this very seriously, so you know that we are looking at it.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

Councilwoman Alexander, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to adjourn.

AYES: ALL



Dave Woerpel, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:



Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 7:05

dw/cb