

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on April 11, 2022 in the Hammond City Council Chambers and was available to be viewed at gohammond on Facebook, gohammond.tv live and per Zoom.

Council President Dave Woerpel presided.

City Clerk Robert J. Golec facilitated.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all.
Invocation by Councilwoman Alexander.

ROLL CALL

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

ELECTRONICALLY PRESENT PER ZOOM: None

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - Mayor Tom couldn't be here this evening so he asked me to step in. I believe all of you received the 1st Quarter 2022 Revenue Collections report from Megan Flores, our City Controller. Very quickly, I'll go over that. The 1st Quarter 2022 Revenue Collections were at \$3,317,465.24, which breaks down as such: Capital Improvements, which is 62% of that, the Capital Improvement Board will receive \$2,056,828.45; Mayor's Discretionary, which is 15% of that, is \$497,619.79; Districts Discretionary, which is 15%, divided up between the 6 Districts, breaks down to each District receiving 82,936.63; the Gaming Advisory Committee, which receives 4% of that, is getting \$132,698.61; and of course the Rainy Day Fund, which also is 4% is that same number, \$132,698.61. Again, I believe everybody has a report and there's also additional information that Megan has given you through that letter. The Gaming Advisory Commission completed the process of awarding grants for 2022 this last Thursday, on April 7th. Initially we received 56 grant applications requests were totaling over for almost \$1.2 million. In the end we were able to award grants to 52 not-for-profit organizations for a total amount of \$550,582.00. So it was significantly higher than last year, obviously with Covid last year we had significantly less revenues to dole out. I really want to thank the ten members of the Commission for all of their hard work through the process. Really quickly, the five members that the Council appointed were Councilwoman Alexander, Councilwoman Venecz, Councilman Rakos, Melissa Farrell, and Marcus Mabry. The Mayor's representatives were Marty Wielgos, Andrea Edwards, Laurie Czulno, Loretta Flores, and Sharon Szany. I just will tell you that, you know, it wasn't always that everybody agreed every single time but every time there was somebody had some different thoughts we talked about it, we compromised, and we completed it really without any issues whatsoever. So thank you to all the people that were involved. I hope, honestly, that we have the same group next year because it really was that comfortable of a process. Lastly, Mayor's Night Out is Wednesday, April 20th, it's at 6:30 pm in the 2nd District. It will be at the HUB in Downtown Hammond. I would suggest, with all the construction that's going on there that you leave just a little bit earlier than normal and make sure that you find parking prior to the event starting. But that's all I have. I'm happy to take any questions you might have.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Councilman Tyler - Phil, can you give us a couple more updates about the fence along Columbia Avenue?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - Happy to. Finally, it feels like we've been waiting a long time for this moment. I believe it was about two weeks ago that they actually started the new construction of the fence on Columbia. For those that are, I know the Council knows about this, for those in the public that are just tuning in that aren't familiar, this was a fence project that the city completed many years ago. I believe prior to Mayor McDermott being in charge. Obviously, the fence over time, due to weather and other issues had become dilapidated. It became an eyesore. There were holes. It became impossible to repair and so we came together, the City, the Councilmen, to come up with a plan. We had to have every resident that has a home off of Columbia that had part of the fence on their property, sign off on a paper allowing us to repair it. Like I said, about two weeks ago they finally started putting in the new fence. I know part of that, by the way, was supply issues that are going on in our Country due to Covid. It had nothing to do with the fence contractor being slow or anything like that. So, I want to thank Councilman Tyler for his participation with that. That's gonna really change that entire corridor when you see a new fence compared to what it looked like.

Councilwoman Venecz - So the city is the owner of that fence now?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - So, it's complicated. Technically the fence is on private property. The reason we were able to replace the fence is because the city constructed the fence initially and there was no agreement or language in place that stated that the residents were going to repair the fence if something in the future and that put us in a situation where the residents weren't repairing them for their own reasons, we're not picking on them or anything like that, but it came down that the city had to step up and try and form an agreement with the residents so we could get it done. So technically it's on private property, however we did it legally. We made sure we talked to all the attorneys as we were going through the process, and like I said, a big part of that was making sure every resident signed an agreement with us allowing us to replace the fence.

Councilwoman Venecz - So, future repairs will be done by the City?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - Potentially that's the case. I would love it if there could be some conversations with the residents where they sign off on taking full responsibility for the fence that's on their property in the future. Like I said, unfortunately the way it was done many years ago it's kind of put us in a situation where we don't have a lot of leverage and potentially what you're saying is accurate. We may have to step up twenty years from now and do the same thing.

Councilman Torres - Back on the Downtown project, is '23 the time line for that? Where that whole street is gonna get completed and all that work down there.

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - Let me just say, Councilman Torres, if you have another question I'll make sure to hit it because I know you said two things. So I don't want to forget that. Obviously, the construction, the Hohman Avenue redevelopment project has begun and we are fully expecting that it will be completed before the end of this year.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Councilman Torres - So this year.

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - It is a 2022 project, that is correct. Now, you know, again, with everything that's going on with supply issues, I always want to put an asterisk on that and just say, you know, if there's some unforeseen circumstances that are out of our control, maybe there's a possibility that it could run over until 2023. But the plan is it's gonna be completed by the end of this year.

Councilman Torres - Okay, thank you.

Councilman Tyler - My other question was just about the date that we are planning on releasing the RFP's for the developments to the north and south of City Hall?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - I might need to call upon Anne Anderson, our Director of Economic Development. For those in the public that aren't familiar with this project. The city owns the property both north and south of City Hall. We recently had a meeting to talk about how can the property be repurposed to fit in with the neighborhood and the community, especially with the High School project that just took place across the street. The High School looks awesome. So we want to do something that's gonna fit in well with that and so we are in the process of coming up with requests for proposals to see what types of development could happen on both of those parcels.

Anne Anderson, Director of Economic Development - So thank you for your question about that, Councilman. The two RFP's for the north parcels and the south parcels will be advertised in the Times on April 22nd. With proposals due on May 3rd, and that's a Redevelopment meeting.

Councilman Kalwinski - The FRP's are for what kind of construction?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - It's really asking developers what they would be willing to do at those sites. Obviously, it has to fit the zoning. I believe it's a C-4 zoning. So whatever they propose would have to fit into our zoning. But we're really opening up to developers and say, "Hey, what would you do here that would be successful in the future but also works well with the neighborhood?"

Councilman Kalwinski - So, how do we determine who's the best bidder if they're bringing in different ideas?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - It would be the Redevelopment Commission, would typically be the group to review the RFP submissions after they come in.

COMMON COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP DRAWING

Councilwoman Alexander - Before we get started I wanted to just give a little history on the scholarship fund. The scholarship fund was established by Whiteco Industries in the year of 2000 by ordinance in the amount of \$300 thousand and administered by the Legacy Foundation. The income from the fund is annually appropriated for fifteen, one time, \$1,000 scholarships for Hammond residents who are graduates from Hammond High Schools who attend an accredited two or four year college or university. Any qualified Hammond resident graduating senior from any of the Hammond High Schools may apply for the one time Scholarship that will be awarded annually. The applications that were submitted from each school, Bishop Noll had 11 applications out of 44 seniors; HAST had 14 applications out of 49 seniors; Hammond Central had 34 applications out of 401 seniors; Morton had 328 seniors and 14 applicants. So 73 applicants out of 822 seniors in Hammond. So Bishop Noll will have 1 scholarship awarded today; HAST will have 1 scholarship awarded today; Hammond Central will have 7 scholarships awarded today; and Morton will have 6 scholarships awarded today, with two alternates picked for each school. I'm going to ask Dr. Rauch to come up and take over.

Dr. Amy Rauch, Executive Director of Secondary Schools - I recently started with the School City of Hammond and the Executive Director of Secondary School, and really I need to give a big thank you to Laney Kaminsky, my Assistant. She really spearheaded this project and really made sure that we received all of those applications. But I just want to say thank you on behalf of all the seniors and the families here in Hammond that they are gonna pursue their education beyond ... once they graduate from K-12 in their respective school districts.

AWARD WINNERS

Hammond Central H.S.

Angelica Bahena
Sha'Mya Barksdale
Amber Bell
Jasmine Burgos
Ceasar Garcia
Xelha Ibarra
Cymone Ross

Bishop Noll H.S.

Sarai Quezada

HAST H.S.

Edwin Zarco

Morton H.S.

April Burnham
Hayden Lewder
Zion Pelloz
Ryan Peppers
Jasson Sanchez
Immanuel Winfrey

Councilwoman Alexander - On may 9th we're asking that all we're asking that all those scholarship recipients will be here in Council Chambers at 6 pm to be awarded those specific scholarships. In 2001 I was a scholarship recipient of the Hammond Common Council Scholarship and I just wanted to let parents know the scholarship is so simple to fill out, literally. So for those that are juniors that are getting ready to be seniors next year we truly encourage you to fill out the application. This is probably one of the simplest applications I've ever seen. You don't have to fill out.... do a survey, or anything like that. So I really encourage our residents to take advantage of filling out for the actual scholarship.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

DISTRIBUTION OF COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS cont.

Council President Woerpel - So this scholarship is part of the original Development Agreement, correct? The scholarship's made available by a grant from the Visitor's Center?

(unclear)

City Clerk Golec - Yes, it was Bill Wellman. In fact it was Councilman Zubrenic from the 5th District that negotiated for that because they wanted a \$1.2 million dollar tax grant to develop the Optimist parcel right off of Kennedy. To do that they needed to elevate the land out of the flood plain so the Council agreed to give the tax abatement at that time and Bill Wellman, out of gratitude, he set up the scholarship for the kids in the City of Hammond.

Council President Woerpel - And that's going on thirty years now?

City Clerk Golec - Yes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to approve the minutes of March 28, 2022 and place on file.

ROLL CALL VOTE (approve minutes)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 MINUTES APPROVED

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to approve the claims from March 23, 2022 through April 6, 2022. Claim #2019 through claim #2337 in the amount of \$ 2,863,878.87

Councilman Rakos, supported by Councilwoman Venecz, moved to amend in claim:

#2338 Servepro of Kankakee County Common Council \$12,340.00

ROLL CALL VOTE (amendment)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 CLAIMS AMENDED

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS cont.

ROLL CALL VOTE (as amended)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

CLAIMS APPROVED
(as amended)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Torres- I received a letter here from Irving School. The principal is asking for donations for a project called Math Toolboxes to help students grow in the number science. So, please donate generously. Thank you.

Councilman Tyler- I would like to announce that on Thursday , April 28th, the School City of Hammond will be doing the actual renaming of Maywood Elementary to Annie Burns-Hicks Elementary School. That will start at 10am at Annie Burns-Hicks Elementary along with that there will also be a showing of the documentary “This Wall Must Come Down” which was put together by Mr. Roland Parrish from Hammond. That will begin at 6pm. That same day, Thursday, April 28th . At Morton High School in the auditorium. Thank you.

Councilman Rakos- Hessville Commerce and Community Creative, HC3, invites everyone to the 2022 kickoff event Thursday April 14th at 5pm at the Hansen Community Center, 823 Martha. It’s the old Hanson Branch Library. They want to show off the new Hanson Community Center. Also, there’ll be drinks and appetizers and information about the exciting changes coming to Hessville, including Live in the Ville on June 3rd and 4th .

Council President Woerpel- Councilman Tyler, when you talked about the showing of Mr. Parrish's film, is that open to the public, and is there any charge for it?

Councilman Tyler- Yes, it is open to the public and free to the public. You do have to reserve the tickets on Eventbrite. If you just search for this, Wall Must Come Down, you'll be able to find it. But yes, it is free and open to the public.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Brought out 22-14.

Capital Improvement Board - Councilwoman Venecz - We met on April 4th , 2022. We approved \$3,709.65 for the Conversion of Russell Street to a Two-Way West of Hohman. We approved \$50,000 for Geotechnical Services for Little Calumet River Pedestrian Bridge. And incidentally, the Russell Street Project is

COMMITTEE REPORTS cont.

Capital Improvement Board - Councilwoman Venecz cont. - in the 2nd District. The Little Calumet River Pedestrian Bridge is in the 4th District.. We approved \$226,700 to United Consulting for 117th construction from Caroline to Calumet Avenue for the design that is in the 1st District. We also approved \$491,150 for the design of the expansion of the Sportsplex, which is with American Structure Point and that is in the 3rd District. The next meeting will be April 18th. The work study session begins at 4:30 and the meeting will follow at 5pm. Thank you.

Community and Crime Watch Committee - Councilwoman Venecz - Upcoming meetings:

- Wed., April 20th; Community Watch at Mt. Zion Pleasant View Plaza; 1:00p.m.
- Wed., May 4th; Edison Community Watch; Edison School; 6:30pm
- Tues, May 3rd ;Harrison Park Crime Watch; VFW; Canceled.
- Thur., April 21st ; Hessville Crime Watch; Jean Shepard; Canceled.
- South Hohman Neighborhood Watch; Thur., April 21st ; Trinity Lutheran Church; 6:30 p.m.
- Thur., April 14th ; Whiting Robertsdale; Calumet College; 6:30 p.m.

Councilwoman Venecz- As of late, there have been several issues that have been brought up at Crime Watch Meetings. And I just want to encourage our residents to come and speak to the Community Policing Officer. Speak to the Code Enforcement representatives who are in attendance at these meetings. Because they can help you with an issue that you're having. It doesn't matter what area you are from. You are more than welcome to attend any of the meetings and get the answers to your questions. And don't be afraid to call 911 if you see anything suspicious, if it just doesn't feel right call 911. The police would much rather get a call about something that turns out to be nothing than for you to not call them about something that turns into something. Because community is not just about me, It's about us.

ORDINANCE 3RD READING-FINAL PASSAGE

22-14 An Ordinance of the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana upon recommendation of the Hammond Economic Development Commission designating a certain area within the City as an Economic Development Target Area Pursuant to Indiana Code 6-1.1-12.1

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

Councilwoman Venecz- Yes, this is the next is a series of steps that need to be taken for us to approve the tax abatement for the ATG Rimbach Project.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage of 22-14)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

ORDINANCE NO. 9547 PASSED

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

22-15 An Ordinance Creating a New Fund (Fund 2465) for the City of Hammond Police Department For FY2022 Stop Arm Violation Enforcement (SAVE) Grant Funds.

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved the proposed ordinance to 1st and 2nd reading and referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a meeting on April 25, 2022 at 5:15p.m.

Councilman Spitale- This ordinance came through on 22R-03 was adopted and approved on the 28th of February. It's about the police targeting stop arm violations and unsafe driving around schools.

ROLL CALL VOTE (1st & 2nd reading; CAW)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 MOTION CARRIED

RESOLUTIONS

22R-07 A Resolution Granting Plaza LLC an Assessed Valuation Deduction (Tax Abatement) for Qualified Tangible Real Property Pursuant to I.C. 6-1.1-12.1

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

Councilwoman Venecz- This is the final step in regard to the tax abatement for ATG/Rimbach and our vote on this will give approval of their statement of benefits which is included in your packet.

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. R07 ADOPTED

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

22-16 BZA; 22-06; Petition of Tiwana Petroleum, Inc. for Variance of Use regarding T/S 10.11 (3) Automobile Fueling Station to Allow Construction of a Convenience Store as an Accessory Use to an Automobile Fueling Station in a C-1 Local Commercial District located at 403 Gostlin St.

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to approve the petition for variance of use from zoning ordinance for Tiwana Petroleum.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS cont.

Councilman Kalwinski- This came through the Board of Zoning and Appeals. The gas station owner purchased a property behind it, allowing it to expand. So, their intention is to build a new convenience store where the old one is, and demolish and remove the old one. The convenient store will be larger as a result of that because of the property that they annexed, and it will be going to a C-4 to a C-1 zoning approved all the conditions that were worked on through several meetings including hours of operation and when fueling of the underground tanks would occur as well, location of the store and ingress and egress, as well as some pavement. So, all in all, it will be a nice refreshment at the corner of Hohman and Gostlin. I agree that this should move forward. It's a good benefit to the district as well as to the operators. Thank you.

ROLL CALL VOTE (approval)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Torres

Motion carried

9/0/0

PETITION FOR 22-16 (Z-22-16)
APPROVED

Councilman Tyler- A couple of weeks ago, it was brought up a traffic issue around Annie Burns-Hicks Elementary School, the former Maywood Elementary School. I just want to update the public that we were able to host a meeting with representatives from our Engineering Department as well as representatives from the School City of Hammond. The head of Transportation Department, and the head of their Safety Division were both part of that meeting as well. I want to say our consultant from I can't think of the name of our traffic consultant. Phil, do you know the name?

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon- First Group.

Councilman Tyler- Yes, First Group was there as well and so, we took a look at the traffic patterns around Annie Burns-Hicks Elementary. They also raised concerns around traffic around Kenwood Elementary as well as Morton High School. So, we were able to review all three of those and they're going to do their studies hopefully before the end of this month. They'll have recommendations on how we should move forward to make all of the traffic patterns around the three of those schools, making it safer for the children and the parents who are dropping and picking up their children. And the staff there too. So I'll follow back up to let the rest of the council and everyone know from our perspective what we have to do as a city to support that. But a lot of what we look at is displays at the school city can adjust their and the way that they release and allow students to be dropped off from their perspective too. So, I'll keep you all updated.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Barb Hargrove- Some friends and I are sponsoring Earth Day Celebration for the City of Hammond. And I came to invite all of you. I have a little packet here that's in both English and Spanish. I don't know if any of you do newsletters for your district. It's all about healthy eating community gardens. So please come out and have a good time.

*Prepared by
Robert J. Golec
Hammond City Clerk*

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

George Stoya- Last time we were here, Kevin Smith mentioned something about the problem about the pilot payment of the Water and Sanitary District. I was hoping to here some developments? Do you guys know anything about whether they can meet his nut.

Council President Woerpel- I heard nothing about a new ordinance coming up with changes to any of those pilot payments. That wasn't spoken that night. He just made us aware that the cost of chemicals to the water and sanitary district have gone up. And he made us aware that there may be some adjustments to the budget if I understand that correctly, Megan? That was all I heard. And I think that's all everybody on the council heard.

George Stoya- Are adjustments to the budget code for raise adjustments to our rates, that all I'm concerned about. That's the issue here.

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

ROLL CALL VOTE (adjourn)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

MEETING ADJOURNED

2022 HAMMOND COMMON COUNCIL ATTENDANCE RECORD OF
ELECTRONIC AND PHYSICAL PRESENCE

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec	
	10	24	14	28	14	28	11	25	9	23	13	27	11	25	8	22	12	26	10	24	14	28	12	26
Katrina Alexander	E	P	P	P	P	E	P																	
Dan Spitale	E	P	P	P	P	P	P																	
Janet Venecz	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																	
Mark Kalwinski	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																	
Pete Torres	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																	
Barry Tyler	E	P	P	P	E	E	E																	
Bill Emerson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																	
Scott Rakos	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																	
Dave Woerpel	P	P	P	P	P	P	P																	
Initials		RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG																	

E=ELECTRONIC

P=PHYSICALLY

PRESENT

A=ABSENT

If the member qualifies for an exemption from the "Consecutive - 50" requirements, draw a circle around the E for that meeting/ member.

ATTEST:


Robert J. Colec, City Clerk


Dave Woerpel, President
Hammond Common Council

Time: 6:50 pm
cb/dw

Prepared by
Robert J. Colec
Hammond City Clerk