

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on May 9, 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.

Council Coordinator Carmen Balboa facilitated.

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

ROLL CALL

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

ELECTRONICALLY PRESENT PER ZOOM: Venecz

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor McDermott -It's been a few meetings since I've been here. So, it's nice to be back. I've been traveling a lot, but been doing a lot during the day as well. I'm like a Mayor by day and a candidate by night. So I want to talk about a few of the things that we've accomplished. We announced three huge projects in one week, which is unfortunate. I'd rather announce them like week, after week, after week. So we could absorb all three. All three of them, literally, closed at the same time. Which is unusual. But it's about \$160 million dollars in new development. So it was a big week. When you consider our city is probably worth \$3 million and we add another \$160 million in one week, it's a pretty solid week. So, the first thing I'd like to talk about is Huhtamaki North America's plans for expansion. We all know where Huhtamaki is, right across from the Sportsplex. This will be a separate facility. For those of you that don't know what Huhtamaki is, it's a Finnish Company, stationed in Hammond amongst many places. It's a leading manufacturer of packaging for consumer goods. For instance, we just went on a tour of the plant, I guess it was about a year ago, and they do all the Starbuck's. So if you take a Starbuck's drink holder home, it was made right here in Hammond. They do Wendy's and things like that, that's what they do. They buy recycling, they smash it, and then they create new recycling containers. So, they're adding a whole new building, about \$100 million expansion, just Huhtamaki itself. With about 100 new jobs created. They already have well over 100 people working there already. So this is a major expansion. It's clean, you know, we don't have any environmental issues with Huhtamaki at all. In fact, if anything, they buy recycling from us and help recycle it. So it's a real positive. We were in competition with many cities across North America. Then it came down to us and some other city, we don't know who it was, but we beat them. The expansion is happening here. You know, I just signed the Developmental Agreement the other day. Capital investment, again, of \$100 million. Created a hundred new jobs, obviously the construction jobs doesn't count towards that. It's a hundred permanent jobs. Two hundred and fifty thousand square foot facility is gonna be built to the north of the current plant. So, that's really good news, obviously. Another bit of good news that happened last week is a \$35 million investment which is coming. It's a brand new company locating into Hammond's 2<sup>nd</sup> District, which is excellent. Meats by Linz, which is a company that sells meat to restaurants.

## MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - Steak and things like that. Located at the Queen Anne Candy site on 628 Hoffman Street. This was, I want to tell you, three years in the making. Forever, forever, we've been doing this forever and it just seemed like it would never happen. I'm real happy that we finally closed. It's coming from Calumet City, obviously, one of our neighbors, but it is across the state line, so obviously, it's a benefit to the City of Hammond. \$35 million investment, new jobs, obviously, moving the whole company and all their jobs over here creating new positions as well. So we're happy about that, signed a Development Agreement on both these projects already. Last but not least, the Economic Development's project is relatively small by comparison, which isn't small at all, \$24 million new development in Downtown Hammond, Bank Calumet Building, also in Hammond's 2<sup>nd</sup> District. So, good week for the 2<sup>nd</sup>. This is a hundred market rate apartments, ten thousand square foot ground floor commercial space, \$24 million investment, into the Bank Calumet building Downtown Hammond. It's been vacant now for seven years. It's been under utilized for well over a decade. This is going to convert it into a nine story, 112 foot tall structure showcase for the city. Market rate apartments in Downtown Hammond. This is obviously very good news as well. All three of those deals were announced this week and they're all done. So we're moving forward with seeing construction, hopefully, soon. Some of the things I did over the last few weeks, one really great thing that we did, I know there's a lot of people from the School City in here right now, attended the former Maywood Elementary School, now called the Annie Burns Hicks Elementary School. It was the Maywood Mustangs and now it's the Annie Burns Hicks Bulldogs. Which is appropriate for Annie Burns Hicks, who is Hammond's first African American woman teacher. She's a historical, trail blazing woman, and now it's Annie Burns Hicks Elementary School. So, appropriately named. That was a really nice ceremony. There were tv stations there. It was front page news across most of the Chicagoland Area, a real big day. Prayer Breakfast was well attended. I know a number of the Council people were there. I appreciate you guys being there. It was attended by hundreds. Obviously, the Hammond Area Ministerial Alliance, takes the lead on that every year. We appreciate their help and they did a really good job of getting a lot of Baptist Ministers, a lot of ministers from across Hammond, across Northwest Indiana, we had a minister from East Chicago in there, Anthem Church was there, we a couple Catholic Priests, so really well attended this year. I appreciate that. Councilman Kalwinski and I, along with neighborhood representatives from Pulaski Park Neighborhood Association, my office, Controller's Office, Park Department, Law Department, got together talking about the future of Pulaski Park. I think that was a pretty good meeting. Obviously, I don't want to speak for the Councilman, so if he wants to comment on this he is more than welcome. Talking about what the future looks like for Pulaski Park. We sort of left that up in the air. I bear some of the responsibility for that, obviously, being the Mayor. So I want to work through this problem and I think we had a good meeting. I met with the CEO of PolyJohn, another 1<sup>st</sup> District issue regarding issues we've been having, environmental issues we've been having with the North Basin of George Lake. I think it was a real positive meeting. I hope it results in real positive developments. We have plastic pellets being washed into the North Basin of George Lake, which is unacceptable. Obviously we have a lot of wild life up there and there's a lot of concern that the pellets could be causing problems for the wild life and we're trying to work through that issue. Festival of the Lakes line up is set. We've only announced three of the bands but the entire thing is set, which is good news. We've announced already Toby Keith, Country act on Wednesday, July 13<sup>th</sup>; Counting Crows, like a Pop/Rock group on Thursday, July 14; Lynyrd Skynyrd, Classic Rock on Friday, July 15; we have a really big rap act that I can't announce publically or else Kevin with slap me, because it hasn't been finalized. It's done but we have to get it in detail. It's a really big hip hop act. It's gonna be playing on Saturday, more legendary type of person, not Snoop Dogg,

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - I want to put it out there. It's not Snoop Dogg, unfortunately. Then on Sunday we have a great Latin act secured as well but we haven't announced it also. So we'll be seeing those come out. Turnover, and I think I speak for a lot of bosses across Chicagoland, we are accepting applications from everybody. So if you're in the public watching right now, if you want to get a job with the City of Hammond, they're great jobs, pay well, great benefits, great people to work with. I think it's a pretty good boss. So, CDL drivers, you could literally walk off the street and make \$19-20 an hour working for the City of Hammond. So if you have a CDL and you want to come to work right now, we've got a job for you. Correction Officers, we have a pathway that gets you from Correction Officer within a couple years gets you into the Police or Fire Department. It's been real successful. Correction Officers we're looking for. Police Officers we're looking for. Firefighters we're looking for. Water .... if you want a job with the City of Hammond we're here. It's a good job. Just, look, I've been Mayor for eighteen years, I've never seen a situation where we have a lot of jobs coming forward and we can't fill it internally. It's pretty revealing. Obviously, this is not just a City of Hammond problem, it's a problem in the country right now. So, unless the Council has any questions, that's all I got.

Council President Woerpel - I know Councilman Rakos loves hearing this but Huhtamaki is another Gavit grad, Scott.

Mayor McDermott - Yeah, Gavit grad. He's a Hammond guy and runs Huhtamaki's Hammond Plant. He's a bigwig in the corporation. He's a big reason why we were successful in getting this \$100 million project.

Councilman Torres - I just want to thank you for that positive announcement about the meat packing plant coming into the 2<sup>nd</sup>. It's gonna help the district a lot, well the city, but we can use the jobs in the district. So make sure they get priority.

Mayor McDermott - Yes sir, I agree with you Councilman. It's a big win for us and we're doing really well with manufacturing in that little area over there with Tortillas Nuevo Leon right next door. This will be just as successful. It's a really good area for us so I'm happy. This one took way too long though. Honestly, we are what, three years into this term. I bet you this entire term we've been working on this project. It moved really slow. But sometimes they move slow, sometimes they happen fast, but this one finally went. So, we're real happy about it.

Council President Woerpel - Mayor, one thing I did notice today. I had to go to Walmart and there's actually a sign out in front of Culver's that they're hiring as well.

Mayor McDermott - Yeah, I'm sorry I didn't get that, I know they're getting real close. That's a great project. Right next to that is going to be a car wash. Like the one on Calumet Avenue. Not like a gas station car wash. Like one of the ones on Calumet. The one that's always busy. I've always wondered why car washes don't locate to Hammond more because we go cheaper water than all of our neighbors and they use a lot of water. But there's a car wash going right there to the north of the Culvers is where it is. On the same side of Cabela's Drive is Cabela's but just to the north, literally, of the Culvers. So, and then there's supposed to be a big gas station

MAYOR'S ADDRESS cont.

Mayor McDermott cont. - that goes right on the corner there. It was supposed to be Bucky's but I think it recently sold to another development. But that's only the second gas station we've opened in Hammond in the last 18 years, new gas station.

Councilman Tyler - I'm not complaining, Mr. Mayor, but in terms of ... there's gonna be a lot of construction on that corner on Indianapolis Blvd. and 165<sup>th</sup>. I think the Y is supposed to start building this year, if I'm correct. Any idea of the Huhtamaki expansion?

Mayor McDermott - That's a great question, Councilman. That's why you're a great Councilman. That's a really good question. So what you're saying is we already have the Y expansion gonna be going and then .... the good this is they are on different sides of the boulevard, obviously, and I know Huhtamaki's expansion, I think they plan to go through where the old Pizza Hut is. I think they plan to utilize that back entrance. So it should be out of the way of the Y. And quite frankly, the Y is big. The whole thing is big. It's getting bigger. It's like massive at this point. I can't really talk about it publicly but they have a whole ... they're trying to take care of a lot of problems on that side of the street with parking, particularly. Our parking is at a premium because of the Sportsplex taking most of the parking already. So now that we're talking about a \$50 million YMCA opening there, yeah, parking's gonna be at a premium. But I appreciate your concern. I think that's a real good point.

Councilman Tyler - I just want to make sure (unclear) we're aware of the time line.

Mayor McDermott - It's your job.

Mayor McDermott - I'm sorry, Council, that I've missed a couple meeting. I know you guys know I'm busy driving around and I'm gonna be here a lot more this summer thankfully. So, it's good to see you all. I've missed you, believe it or not.

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARSHIPS

Superintendent of Schools, Scott Miller - Thank you for continuing to support our students and our graduates. It's very thoughtful of the Council. We certainly, on behalf of all our graduates, appreciate you. So, thank you very much. We'll be sure next year to get that application much higher for Central and Morton.

Presentation by Dr. Amy M. Rauch.

Hammond Central H.S.

Sha'Mya Barksdale  
Jasmine Burgos  
Ceasar Garcia  
Xelha Ibarra Chavez

Morton H.S.

Hayden Lewder  
Zion Pellox  
Ryan Peppers

Bishop Noll H.S.

Sarai Quezada

***Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk***

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARSHIPS cont.

Donna Catalano of the Legacy Foundation, Inc. - Thank you so much for doing this at your Council Meeting. I think it means a lot to the kids. We're glad that we can give the money and it's glad to see these young people and see what the future will bring for them.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to approve the minutes of April 25, 2022.

ROLL CALL VOTE (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 April 20, 2022 through May 4, 2022. Claim #2700 through claim #2966 in the amount of \$ 12,309,508.85

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

#2967 Anthem Church	Common Council	\$100.00
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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

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 Kalwinski- Hammond Mohawks have announced that they are holding their North Hammond Memorial Day Parade again after a two-year hiatus and that will be on Monday, May 30th, and they'll be meeting starting at 10am on Baltimore and Gostlin, which is next to the Cavalier Inn and across the street from the former Roller Dome and it'll step off on Gostlin at 11am. There will be a memorial service at St. Casimir Church, right after the parade, where it ends on the Huen and Cameron. And to be in the parade, call the Hammond Mohawks, at 933-9823. Ask for Larry to get further information about the parade or to be in the parade. We are looking for Veterans, floats, bands. Hammond has graciously announced that they will have the Pride of Hammond Band there and the Rock Band as well. Bishop Noll Institute will have their band there. We're looking for other bands and floats and veterans and anyone else that would like to be there for the Memorial Day Parade and the service afterwards. Also, Pulaski Park Neighborhood Association announced that it will hold its next meeting on Tuesday, May , 31st at 6:30pm at the Hammond Mohawks located at 144th and Calumet Avenue. And lastly, the Lake County Veteran Treatment Courts next graduation is on Wednesday, June 1st, starting at 12 til 2pm at the Lake County Fairgrounds in Crown Point, where they will be graduating about a dozen veterans out of Lake County Veterans Treatment Court who otherwise would have had criminal offenses but through their graduation and being in the program for 18 months, their charges will be dismissed at the time of the graduation, and they will continue to be productive residents and opted into the Lake County Veteran Treatment Court instead of incarceration. Thank you.

Councilman Tyler- I want to send my condolences to the Smith and White family on the passing of their matriarch. I believe was 89 years old. Her funeral services are tomorrow morning. I also want to give condolences to the Farris family as they lost a loved one over the last couple of weeks. And I also want to enter into the record a letter we received from Best Friends Animal Society, which is one of the leading animal welfare organizations in the United States. They state that the ordinance that we have proposed has been passed in more than 435 cities, counties, across the US and they are in support of our passing of the new pet ordinance too. So, just want to put that on file for today's meeting. Thank you.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council as a Whole Committee - Councilman Spitalo - Brought out 22-18.

Capital Improvement Board - Councilwoman Venecz - Met on Monday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> . We approved \$82,062.22 for the Russell Street Pedestrian Tunnel. We approved \$30,000 for the INFRA Application for Columbia Avenue and 165<sup>th</sup> to Michigan. We also approved \$75, 526.00 for the Schneider Avenue storm sewer. We also approved \$65,649.78 for Invoice No. 2 NICTD Russell Street Pedestrian Tunnel. The next meeting will be May 16th. 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., June Stay Tunned for date; Community Watch at Mt. Zion Pleasant View Plaza;
- Tues, June 7<sup>th</sup> ;Harrison Park Crime Watch; VFW; 6:30p.m.
- Hessville Crime Watch; Thursday, May 19; 6 p.m.; Jean Shepherd Center
- Whiting Robertsdale C. W.; Thursday, May 12; 6:30 p.m.; Calumet College

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

COMMITTEE REPORTS cont.

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. Because community is not just about me, it's about us.

ORDINANCE 3<sup>RD</sup> READING FINAL PASSAGE

22-18            An Ordinance Creating a New Fund (#4409) known as the Hammond Police Capital Fund

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved for final passage.

Councilman Spitale- State Board of Accounts recommended their creation of a police capital equipment fund. The renewal fund must be created for the City of Hammond for #4409 Police Capital Equipment Fund.

ROLL CALL VOTE (passage of 22-18)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried

9/0/0

ORDINANCE NO. 9549 PASSED

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

None

RESOLUTIONS

None

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilman Torres- I just want to thank the sponsors of Ordinance 22-19 for holding off until there is further discussion, and also the Animal Control Committee Councilwoman Venecz, Councilwoman Alexander. So, holding off until we can further discuss and maybe take the consideration of the existing pet shops and the other issues that were presented tonight. Thank you.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Elizabeth Oreg- I'm the national manager for Best Friends Animal Society. We are in full support of this ordinance. This is about protecting our animals and consumers. It's not about putting anybody out of business.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION cont.

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

ROLL CALL VOTE (adjourn meeting)

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	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	P	P	P	P															
Dan Spitale	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P															
Janet Veneez	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E																
Mark Kalwinski	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P															
Pete Torres	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P															
Barry Tyler	E	P	P	P	E	E	E	E	P	P	P															
Bill Emerson	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P															
Scott Rakos	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P																
Dave Woerpel	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P															
Initials	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	RJG	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.



Dave Woerpel, President  
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:



Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 6:45 pm  
cb/dw

Prepared by  
**Robert J. Golec**  
**Hammond City Clerk**