

The regular meeting of the Hammond Common Council of the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana was held on February 13, 2023 in the Hammond City Council Chambers and was available to be viewed at gohammond on Facebook, gohammond.tv live and per Zoom.

Council President Scott Rakos 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, Woerpel, Rakos

ELECTRONICALLY PRESENT PER ZOOM: None

ABSENT: None

TOTAL: 9

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Chief of Staff Phil Taillon - Good evening, Council. Mayor Tom asked me to give his report this evening and I'm happy to be here with you. First, a reminder. I believe this has been brought up at Council already but the Gaming Advisory Commission is accepting applications right now. They're due, I believe submissions or applications are due by March 3<sup>rd</sup>. These are for not-for-profit organizations. This is part of the 4%, if you will, that gets put into this pot of funds so that we can help lots of different not-for-profit groups out there. Mainly in Hammond but, obviously, some that work with Hammond that maybe aren't located in Hammond as well. I look forward to working with the Council and the representatives that you have appointed on the Gaming Advisory Commission group. I believe last year we gave out somewhere in the neighborhood of about \$550 thousand. So I have not received the number yet this year but my guess is we'll be somewhere in that area. This past Wednesday the Mayor gave his Annual State of the City Address at the Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce event that he does every year. Amazing turnout. It was sold out. I know there were over 400 people in the crowd. A lot of you were there. Thank you for attending. I know Mayor made it very clear that the City of Hammond could not have the success that it has without the relationships and working together with the Council that we do. I think, you know, I think he brought up that some of the cities and towns around us don't have the same working relationship and maybe that's part of the reason that haven't seen the success that we have. So I just want to say kudos to all of you again. I know you heard Mayor say it but if you weren't in attendance and want to hear his remarks, I know it is on Facebook Live, I believe under the Chamber of Commerce. I think it might even be on gohammond as well, but I have to check into that. 219 Day is this Saturday, Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>, it's from 6 o'clock to 11 o'clock at the Hammond Civic Center. It is for 21 and over. It is a free event. We have a disco theme this year. There's gonna be a lot of fun games. A lot of exciting activities, food, drinks. So I hope to see a lot of you out there. I know I will be there for sure. And that's my report. I'm happy to answer any questions if there are any.

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Spitale, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved to approve the Council Minutes of January 23, 2023 and place on file.

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Tyler, moved to amend the Approval of Claims section we need to correct a couple of names. It should read Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Woerpel, moved to approve the claims from January 4<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup>. Also, the amendment was introduced by Councilwoman Venecz, and supported by Councilman Woerpel.

ROLL CALL VOTE (amendment)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 MINUTES AMENDED

ROLL CALL VOTE (as amended)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 MINUTES APPROVED  
(as amended)

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Tyler, moved to approve the claims from January 24<sup>th</sup> and ending with claims dated February 8<sup>th</sup>. Claim number #489 through claim#963, inclusive.

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Torres, moved to amend in:

Claim #964 Hammond Council PTA \$255.00

ROLL CALL VOTE (amendment)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 CLAIMS AMENDED

ROLL CALL VOTE (as amended)

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried 9/0/0 CLAIMS APPROVED  
(as amended)

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Councilwoman Alexander - Our scholarship is available now to our high school students that are in the Hammond area from Hammond Central, Morton, Bishop Noll and HAST. The scholarship is available now until March 31<sup>st</sup> at each high school. All they need to do is complete the application in its entirety. Any application that is missing information will be returned to those students. And those applications must be to Dr. Rauch by March 31<sup>st</sup>. So, up until then I will continue to announce the application and hopefully we'll get a lot of participants this year.

Councilman Kalwinski - I received a communications from the Hammond Mohawks. The Hammond Mohawks, again this year will be sponsoring the Memorial Day Parade. If you would like to be in the parade, call the parade chairman, Larry Fentriss at the Hammond Mohawk Club, 219-933-9823. Thank you.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Capital Improvement Board Committee - Councilman Woerpel - Capital Improvement Board met on Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>. Items under new business, we approved a funding allocation for the Summer Street resurfacing. Indianapolis Blvd. to 165<sup>th</sup> St., First Group Engineering, in the amount of \$143,500. This is part of a state grant in the amount of \$2 million, which the city's share will be \$1 million. A funding allocation was approved for Kennedy Ave. reconstruction change order, spare conduit, for fiber optics to Milestone in the amount of \$48,795.60. Another funding allocation for Chicago Street Phase One supplemental construction to American Structurepoint in the amount of \$6,367.99. Chicago Street Phase Two supplemental construction engineering to American Structurepoint in the amount of \$49,815.68. Under Matters from the Mayor and the Council, Councilman Torres appeared and inquired about the flooding on Sherman Street, and Summer Street, from Indy to Columbia, and I know that that's gonna be worked on this year is my understanding. And Councilman Emerson was there and requested Tapper be repaved from 169<sup>th</sup> to 173<sup>rd</sup> Street; and 173<sup>rd</sup> Street, Columbia to Calumet; and Forest Avenue from Vine to 173<sup>rd</sup>. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, Feb. 24<sup>th</sup> with a Work Study Session at 4:30 and the regular meeting at 5:00.

Community and Crime Watch Committee- Councilwoman Venecz - I'd like to announce the upcoming Community and Crime Watch meetings:

Community Watch at Mt. Zion Pleasantview Plaza; Wed., Feb. 15; 1:00 p.m.  
Hessville Crime Watch; Thur., Feb. 16; 6:00 p.m.; Jean Shepherd Center  
Whiting-Robertsdale Crime Watch; 6:30 p.m.; Calumet College; March 9<sup>th</sup>

As usual, if you see anything suspicious please do not hesitate to contact our Police Department. And when you see one of our officers, stop and say thank you. They are there to protect us and allow us to sleep at night knowing that they are there to protect us. So, please stop and say thank you.

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

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

None

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

23-03            To Appropriate of Funds from the Operating Balance for the Hammond Park            23-03  
Department

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved the proposed ordinance to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reading with a Public Hearing on Feb. 27, 2023.

Councilwoman Venecz - This is an ordinance that comes up annually. We are appropriating funds from the operating balance to various special events throughout the city. Throughout the year, as a matter of fact.            AYES: ALL

23-04            Creating a New Fund (Fund #2474) and to Appropriate Funds within the Parks            23-04  
Department for the Harrison Park Restoration Project Grant

Councilman Tyler, supported by Councilwoman Alexander, moved the proposed ordinance to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> passage.

Councilman Tyler - This is just an ordinance creating a new fund so that we can accept the grant that we received for improvements to Harrison Park, mainly surrounding the restoration of the pond. Once we are able to receive the grant, there is a matching portion that the Mayor and I will contribute to. So, we'll have about \$200,000 to restore the pond and begin the, I think there's three phases of Harrison Park restoration that we are going to launch later on this year.            AYES: ALL

23-05            To Appropriate Funds in the Hotel/Motel Innkeepers Tax Fund for the Hammond            23-05  
Park Department

Councilwoman Venecz, supported by Councilman Emerson, moved the proposed ordinance to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reading with a Public Hearing on Feb. 27, 2023

Councilwoman Venecz - Once again, this is an ordinance that comes up annually, appropriating funds from the Innkeepers Tax to the Hotel/Motel fund.            AYES: ALL

23-06            Vacating an Approximately 1242 Foot Portion of street in the 2700-2800            23-06  
Blocks of Eggers Avenue and Elder Avenue, an Approximately 488 Portion of  
Street in the 1400 Block of 127<sup>th</sup> and 128<sup>th</sup> Streets and an Approximately 1242  
Portion of a North-South Alley in the 2700-2800 Blocks between Eggers and  
Elder Avenues in the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana

Councilman Kalwinski, supported by Councilman Spitale, moved the proposed ordinance to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reading, referred it to the Council as a Whole Committee with a meeting at 5:15 p.m. on February 27, 2023 and a Public Hearing on Feb. 27, 2023.

*Prepared by  
Robert J. Golec  
Hammond City Clerk*

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES cont.

Councilman Kalwinski - This ordinance has to do with streets that were planned a long time ago that is now currently the Lost Marsh. To conform with the Lake County Recorder, we be vacating those streets that do not exist and will never exist because the Lost Marsh and the golf course are in that area, and that's the reason for this ordinance.

AYES: ALL

RESOLUTIONS

None

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Macio Rainey - Good evening. I serve the region as a Director on the campus of Purdue University Northwest that is responsible for a signature program that brings Federal dollars from the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, D.C. right here to the counties of Lake County, LaPorte County, Porter County and Starke County for what's known as wraparound services for low income, first generation college students. I'm here to thank Mayor McDermott for recently hosting, as part of Black History Month activities, the Divine Nine Event. It was a great opportunity for members of the Divine Nine Historical Black Fraternity and Sororities to come in and share their collective histories. It's the first time I have ever seen a sitting Mayor actively recognize the cultural and educational contributions of the Divine Nine. Kamala Harris, Dr. Martin Luther King and Rev. Jesse Jackson were all members of the Divine Nine. These fraternities and sororities have a history that dates over 100 years. Many were founded at historical black colleges and universities. I came to thank the Mayor and the Council, and citizens for hosting the event. It had implications for diversity, equity and inclusion. I have gifts for the Mayor.

Ken Rocek - I had an incident a few weeks ago where somebody was pounding on the door and scaring my brother who I take care of. Last week they pounded so hard I ran out and screamed at them. One of the gentlemen pulled out a gun and pointed it at my head. It was a very large gun with an extended clip. Fortunately the house next to mine had a camera pointed right at him. The police were called and they assured me they would get them. Day before yesterday an officer came to my door to inform they apprehended the juvenile. I have to commend the police officers for that.

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

AYES: ALL

2023 HAMMOND COMMON COUNCIL ATTENDANCE RECORD OF  
ELECTRONIC AND PHYSICAL PRESENCE

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec	
	9	23	13	27	13	27	10	24	8	22	12	26	10	24	14	28	11	25	23	13	27	4		
Katrina Alexander	E	P	P	P																				
Dan Spitale	E	P	P	P																				
Janet Venecz	P	P	P	P																				
Mark Kalwinski	P	P	P	P																				
Pete Torres	P	P	P	P																				
Barry Tyler	E	P	P	E																				
Bill Emerson	P	P	P	P																				
Dave Woerpel	P	P	P	P																				
Scott Rakos	P	P	P	P																				
Initials	RJG	RJG																						

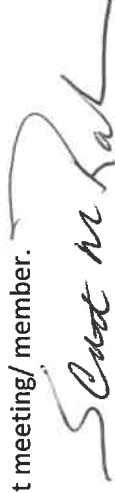
E=ELECTRONIC

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.



Scott Rakos, President  
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:



Robert J. Golec, City Clerk

Time: 6:30

cb

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