



Hammond City Council
Public Hearing Special Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2022 at 5:30 pm
312 East Charles St., Hammond, Louisiana

I. CALL TO ORDER: Council President, Kip Andrews called the Special Meeting to order at 5:30pm

II. ROLL CALL: Councilman Andrews (P), Councilwoman Gonzales (P), Councilman Leon (P), Councilman DiVittorio (P), Councilman Wells (P)

III. PUBLIC HEARING:

1. An ordinance to adopt a redistricting plan for the City of Hammond. (William Blair, Strategic Demographics)

- Attachment 1 – Presentation & Overview
- Attachment 2 – Ordinance
- Attachment 3 – Plan A Map
- Attachment 4 – Plan B Map
- Attachment 5 – Statistics

William Blair, gave a presentation on redistricting for council districts in the City of Hammond. He stated that he was at the meeting last week to do a more thorough introduction and explanation of law and criteria needed to redistrict the city. He stated that his presentation and maps were available on the Hammond website.

He stated that there was a compressed time period and that the 2020 Census data was seven months late getting to the state. Further compressed by city charter of Hammond which demands that a plan be adopted by May 7th and we are here today with two competing plans for redistricting Hammond and both achieves population equality. We also must make sure to adhere to the protections under the Voting Rights Act of 1965. That means if we have a minority or majority districts in the City of Hammond, we must maintain those and create new ones when or where possible and with both of the proposed plans that goal has been achieved.

Mr. Blair reviewed the Census data from Hammond and stated that the racial make-up remains consistent except for a decrease in the white only population and an increase in other population, mainly due to some questionable changes between 2020 and 2021. He explained the current districts of Hammond with 2020 population included. Four of the five districts are out of the deviation. Some were too high and some were too low. He stated that his job was to assist the City Council with getting population equality and adhere to the Voting Rights Act. He stated that he met with council members to hear their ideas about district boundaries. He stated that Plan A, makes substantial changes to District 2 and Plan B is a more in line with the current boundaries but still make substantial changes. Both of the plans maintains minority District 1 and District 3 and District 4 becomes more competitive racially.

Public Comment

John Hardin 211 W. Charles St, asked why it is so hard to find out information before it happens, he stated that it wasn't in the Daily Star and he found out from a neighbor.

Councilman Andrews, stated last Tuesday night, they decided to have another meeting and the information was sent to the Daily Star. It did not make Thursday's paper so it ran in Saturday's paper.

John Hardin, stated that it should have been two weeks in advance.

Councilman Andrews, stated that they were doing it within the constraints of the City's Charter.

Jeffery Dameron, 408 W. Robert St., stated that a lot of people were not aware. Plan A is drastically different and Plan B keeps it similar. He stated his concern was people did not have a lot of time to see the information to make a decision or provide input. He would like to see the districts remain the way they have been historically.

John Exnicious, 103 N Magnolia, stated that he was in favor of affecting the least number of people and does not want to change the districts.

Ralph Ross, 505 E Robert St, stated that in the longer presentation, there were bullet points about state requiring traditional redistricting criteria be applied. Seems that Plan A gets away from the traditional criteria. Plan A may

only hit one criteria. Plan B hits three to four of the traditional criteria. He also stated that it is tough to get the word out to the public

Barbara Roberts, 305 S Cherry St, state that she would like to ask the council for Plan B, it seems more reasonable.

Councilwoman Gonzales, stated that Plan B is the one that she developed with Dr. Blair and in consultation with Councilman Leon and Councilman Andrews. District 2 had to give up borders even though it was within the allowed deviation. All this requires is a 3-person vote. She thinks that it is very important that they maintain our lines as much as possible. She stated that she has three very large issues with Plan A and she does not want to lose Zemurray Park and she would like to maintain that in District 2. Plan A brings district 3 into downtown and borders Clarke Park and takes some of downtown, Iowa from district 2. Plan A is a drastic change and things should stay as concise as it can.

William Blair: stated that he would close by saying, he has no opinion about what plan is chosen as long as it meets population equality and the voting rights act. He stated that he works for the state legislature and they advertised and still had terrible attendance in redistricting meetings.

Councilman Wells, stated he had one question and he stated he didn't want to go into the Iowa District because he didn't want to interrupt District 2. He did not want to cross the railroad tracks.

William Blair, Yes, you were very specific about not crossing the railroad track.

Councilman Andrews, stated that the issue tonight will not be voted on until Saturday morning at 9:30 am.



**Hammond City Council
Regular Session Special Meeting Agenda
May 3, 2022- Immediately following Public Hearing
312 E. Charles St, Hammond, Louisiana**

I. CALL TO ORDER: Council President, Kip Andrews called the Special Meeting to order

II. ROLL CALL: Councilman Andrews (P), Councilwoman Gonzales (P), Councilman Leon (P), Councilman DiVittorio (P), Councilman Wells (P)

III. PRAYER: Councilman Kip Andrews

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: All veterans and active military, please render the proper salute.

V. REPORTS

- Review of Charter Committee Findings - Frank DiVittorio, Committee Chair
Attachment 1 – Report

Frank DiVittorio, Chairman of the Charter Review Committee, began with an introduction of the committee members and he stated that several members were present. He began a slide show presentation and gave some background information and stated that they held 23 meetings. He presented the report of the committee and there were nine proposed amendment to the Hammond Charter; eight recommendations that did not require amendments; three issues that the committee thought warranted more discussion, but was able to reach a unanimous resolution on or was unable to complete with the resources and time they had. He stated that everything in the report was approved unanimously by the entire committee. Mr. DiVittorio, reviewed the report and expounded on some of the items the committee reviewed and gave recommendations. He talked about the SSA Consultant report and explained how the committee chose the municipalities. They recommended that department heads reside no more than two miles away; make sure the budget process is following everything required with operating and maintenance cost being placed in the budget. He talked about organization chart and that the council does have power to request reorganization plan which requires 2/3 majority of council.

Nick Gagliano, 902 W Colorado St member of the committee and served half of the time. He asked that the council to make a decision to go forward rather than tabling. He stated that there were two municipal elections coming up November 8 and December 10th, he stated the deadline to get it on the November 8th ballot is June 22 and for the December 10th ballot is October 17th.

Doug Johnson, 611 W Church St, stated the committee has done well to provide for needs of the citizens. He stated that in the first few meetings he found out mayor's appointment had no vote. He stated that there was a conflict of interest and disenfranchising the voters because highest representative didn't have a vote. He stated that the members of the commission did a lot of good work, but he will petition the Attorney General because it appeared to have conflict of interest in members appointed to the commission. He thinks it's a conflict of interest when you have a relative of a council person on the commission.

Lacy Landrum, stated with regards to the department head, she stated that it was mentioned several times that there was a lot of public input and she attended a lot of the meetings and they did not have very many people attend, she asked if he could elaborate on public input that was received by the committee that is not reflected in the minutes.

Frank DiVittorio stated that when they started out there was public input but as time went on public

increase decreased. He stated that he does not have names, he stated that the meetings went on for two years and he is unable to tell her names. He stated that everything in the report had public input. He stands by the fact that there was public input.

Councilman Wells, thanked the committee for everything they have done and he thanked them for the SSA Consultants report.

Frank DiVittorio, stated that the consultant came from the administration and the composition of that report to his knowledge was led by the committee

Councilman Wells, asked how many changes the committee made on a sheet that was received from the consultants.

Frank DiVittorio, stated none were made once numbers and data was inputted. He believed that the consultant produced a list of city that he had identified and he believes that he came to the meeting and proposed them to the committee. Changes were made prior to them getting numbers. The information was gained through public records request and a public meeting was held to select the criteria.

Councilman Wells, asked if he received the report directly or did they all get it?

Frank DiVittorio, stated that the report was sent directly to him and he forwarded it to the committee.

Councilman Wells, state that he have a trust issue. He has a problem with other report we've received. How often does charter have to be reviewed? Every 10 years?

Lacy Landrum, the charter review is whenever the city feels it's needed.

Councilman Wells, thanked the committee member everyone for their time

Frank DiVittorio, thanked the committee.

- **Review of Pay Study Report - Jacob Dufour, HR Nola**

Attachment 1 – Report

Attachment 2 – Pay Grades

Jacob Dufour, stated that he wanted to address the first question regarding why they chose the area that they did. He stated that they chose those areas because they were the closest areas that they could pull reliable statistical relevant data from. He stated that the last example was a mayoral salary and that was easy, there is not a lot of variations in mayoral job. He also stated that you are not only competing in data from were closest in areas where they could get relevant data. He stated that people can zoom in from anywhere and not only are you competing with larger metropolitan area, but you are competing nationally. He stated that was the reason they chose those areas and those were the only areas that they could pull accurately from. He stated that they gave them statistically relevant data. He did not receive any questions about the data or any of the positions but he would be happy to take any questions regarding how the process worked.

Councilman Wells, stated he was looking at some data that was used before they NOLA did their survey. He was comparing statistics, populations etc. and stated that he was comparing it to what they NOLA had and what make sense to him. One of the questions he had would be, could everything on the sheet be in a written statement from Jacob Dufour that the information is accurate to his knowledge. He stated that he wants everyone to receive a raise. He stated that he has a problem with the hand-picked. Councilman Wells looked at the position of the building official in the three options. He asked if the information on the sheets was accurate.

Jacob Dufour, answered yes and asked Councilman Wells if he could address his earlier question about the sizes of the city and he stated that he could promise that people leaving the work force that are working for the city are not waiting for jobs to open up in smaller sized cities. They are not checking to see what the budgets are for similar size cities, they are looking for higher compensation.

Councilman Wells, asked if that were leaving the work force for higher pay.

Jacob Dufour, answered yes

Councilman Wells, stated that out of all the hand-picked people, their salaries doesn't add up. I was elected by the people. I became a city councilman and didn't know my salary. We pick these jobs and pick them for a reason. We work for the public. It's not a job that you're supposed to get rich off of. Yes, it's scary. We have an issue. They told you to say that people are leaving for more pay. He stated that we have issues.

Councilwoman Gonzales, stated that she doesn't know what format they are going with and asked Mr. Dufour if he was going to give them a presentation as far as options or should they just start asking questions.

Diana Guzman-McMahon, stated that she was going to do a recap. She explained their process and stated they selected HR Nola and Jacobs's findings are in the green which is option 1. She stated he gave them guidelines on how to implement and they provided to the council the tools to implement the pay increase and it's not an easy thing to do.

Councilwoman Gonzales, asked to clarify and she asked if the green option was their option.

Diana Guzman-McMahon, said yes and proceeded to explain the options.

Lacy Landrum, proceeded to explain the options and pay. She stated they structure this in the way the current paygrades work. Stated that whatever it takes to get the pay raises for the City of Hammond is what they are going to do.

Councilwoman Gonzales asked for clarification of the pay raise.

Lacy Landrum proceed to explain the pay system and the options.

Councilman Leon asked how they arrived at the numbers for options 2 and 3 and was there a formula used.

Lacy Landrum, stated that they took the HR NOLA's numbers and began to average them together. She explained how they reached the numbers.

Councilwoman Gonzales asked about the grid system and could they get information from HR NOLA and input on the grid system.

Jacob Dufour, stated that the grid system does give the employees the option to see how they are going to

progress, he stated that it does somewhat limit hiring managers and what they can offer them coming in which is why they suggested the incentives, certifications and education. He stated that if it was something that the employees wanted, most municipalities are on a grid.

Tasha Dameron, 410 W. Roberts, stated that she runs a business and it's not just about what your starting salary is it is retaining people and keeping them from going other places. When you have a constant turn over for people trying to get better wages, you waste money because it takes time, effort and resources to train someone. You must be competitive and have a living wage.

Jessica Shirey: 202 Holly Dr. stated that she reiterates what the lady before said but she said from an economic stand point and when people in our community make more money, they will spend more money in our community. She's in favor of raises. People need money to stay here and keep our money here.

Karolyn Harrell, 228 Cherie Drive, stated she wanted to address the cities that were not selected.

Thibodaux (Nicholls State) v. Ruston v. Hammond. Stated that they are not your competition. My spouse drives 40 miles south of here. He's a corporal who makes more money than a captain or lieutenant in the Hammond Police Department. She stated that what Jacob Dufour is trying to explain is the regional average and the data is there.

Ivan, 2009 Corbin Road, asked what the highest paid position in the city is.

Lacy Landrum, stated the building official and that salary was done off of the SSA study that the council set last year.

Councilman Wells, reviewed the pay options of the city official.

Jennifer Payne, 120 S Oak St, stated the cities named in the study. We are all classified as large municipalities. She reads from OSE website of large municipalities. We need to be competitive with New Orleans and Baton Rouge. We have people who drive from here to work there. Stated that she was 21 years old when she took this job. It's ridiculous that we're even having this conversation. We know our worth and they love their jobs. The rewards do not justified what you put in. You are going to lose good police. She stated Hammond is better than this and nobody that works for the City of Hammond should make \$10.20 per hour.

George Bergeron, 303 E Thomas St, stated he has been here for 22 years and has been dealing with pay studies since 2005. This is the first study I know of where the employees are getting an increase. According to the ordinance, the city shall do a pay study every two years. He stated his rank is 92% below what everyone pays. He stated his rank alone is down and is the lowest paid.

John Exnicios, 111 N. Magnolia, stated as a citizen and a tax payer that he is highly embarrassed how an outsourced company that got paid money to do a job and gave you data was questioned and the integrity of the data. Stated that he appreciates our police force and the decision should not be based on emotion but on the data. He thanked them and he stated that not making a decision is a decision. It's time to take action.

Councilman Andrews, stated that he did not think that the people sitting up there did not want to see everyone get a raise. He stated that they needed to look at some things to make a proper decision. He stated that funds were appropriated last year to make sure that the police got a raise and they appropriated some more funds for the other city employees to get a raise. He stated that no one there was against raises. They are all on the same page with that. He has received several calls from employees expressing their opinions about being compensated. He stated that it was time to stop pointing the finger, playing games and going back and forward and come to an agreement to what needs to be done.

Karolyn Harrell, 2208 Cherie Dr. stated that she wanted to thank him for his honest answer and that there is a number at which I will say they're adequately compensated

Councilwoman Gonzales, stated that they need to do this and her only question is, do employees want a grid or not. She has no experience of the grid and she asked do they want a grid.

Councilman Andrews, stated that the fire and police department have to have the grid.

Anthony Maurer and Frank Patti, Fire Union representative, thanked everyone for bring this conversation for a pay raise. Stated that they are in full support of that grid system and they explained what it does in relation to state law, raises and promotions. They ask that the grid be maintained as it is.

Councilman Wells, stated he wants everyone to get a raise. He spoke to the Mayor and went to HR and wanted the little people to get a raise. All he wanted from day one for everyone to get a raise.

Frank Patti, stated the reason some of the fire department did not get a raise was because their steps were out of line with their years and they got that fixed and some of their pay did not match up with their grade.

Anthony Maurer, stated you can make a huge impact here to the employees.

George Bergeron, stated that everyone gets a raise in the NOLA option.

Angelo Monistere, 303 E Thomas St, stated that he has been through all of the pay studies and has seen different grids, but the important thing is all of the members of the Hammond Police Department in the last few years that have been lost, 35 employees lost. They have eight open spots and six new candidates. It's time that the city takes the lead. He stated that they are having staffing issues daily. If we continue with low salary, we'll continue with those problems. He thinks that option one is where the city needs to be. He asked that they review option one.

Lacy Landrum stated that the police and fire are on their grids on option one because they knew they could not break state law. In option one there are some positions that were valued lower that they would need to make a decision on. There are a few positions that don't have any raise because they were suggested to be too low.

Councilman Wells, stated that from all that he has heard, he is ready to vote.

Lacy Landrum stated that if they wanted everyone to have a minimum raise they can do that.

Councilman Andrews asked, if they were to vote on this item tonight, do they have to come back and address those that are not getting a raise individually.

Lacy Landrum stated that they could wrap it into the way that they word the vote. What they would be doing would be to introduce a budget amendment to implement option one, but they could say that they would like a minimum raise of whatever percentage for every employee or majority or however they want to say.

Councilwoman Gonzales state that she is fine with the pay rates but do other departments want to be in a

grid. If they pass this and they are not, is that going to be a problem?

Lacy Landrum, stated that the person who's going to have the most challenge with implementing it will be accounting department and Human Resources.

Mayor stated that what happened with the fire department when they went through their grid and cleaned it up those that did not get a raise was already at the average/pay scale

Tracy Wells, 610 Mooney Ave, asked about the CompaRatio's, regarding the employees above marked and employees below market. She asked what you do when you have employee's way above market versus those who are below market.

Lacy Landrum, stated that when HR NOLA established a salary range they went 10% below and 10% higher of the middle point that they were trying to achieve. Our grid goes for 30yrs so it is a long term grid and all of their salary ranges are higher than what HR NOLA has establish. She asked Jacob Dufour to explain what the CompaRatio means and how it is significant in the report.

Jacob Dufour, stated that the CompaRatio normally is based on the mid-point of the salary range and because they used the twenty fifth percentile as the range for setting their suggested salaries they used the twenty fifth percentile as the basis for the CompaRatio. He stated that it is not at market rate but it is an easy way to take a look at where people are in relation to the twenty fifth percentile mid-point that they suggested.

Councilman Andrews, asked about the option to get everyone included, stated in a motion.

Councilwoman Gonzales, stated that even at a minimum everyone gets at least two percent, standard that way it ensures that everyone gets a raise. In addition, she asked about the car allowance.

Lacy Landrum, stated that they can put in a mileage reimbursement request. She stated the council can chose to do what they want to do with it. She stated that there was an issue last year and they tried to address it, this salary is based on salary. If there are certain position that you want to do that for you can.

Councilman DiVittorio, stated that in looking at the raises, some of have hardly anything, while others get a twenty thousand dollars increase and he believes that morale wise that would not be a good thing for city workers.

Councilman Andrews, asked to move forward with approving the budget hearing with option one.

Andre Coudrain, City Attorney, stated to make a motion or to adopt something, they will need to amend the agenda. They should amend the agenda to add whatever item they desire.

Councilwoman Gonzales asked if this was a resolution or an ordinance.

Andre Coudrain, asked what's the motion.

Councilwoman Gonzales stated that they were going to adopt option one.

Andre Coudrain, stated that it may be hard to implement it with all of the adjustment

Councilwoman Gonzales, state she would like to make a motion to amend the agend to add a resolution adopting option one of HR NOLA with a minimum of 2% pay increase for anyone who does not meet that threshold. She state that that is their will but they will still have to do a budget item. She asked Andre would that work.

Andre Coudrain, answered yes, but it doesn't appropriate money but it does express to the administration the will of the council.

Councilman Wells asked, when is the raise supposed to start and he suggested that they take it back until January to give the employees their money and he doesn't want to wait until the budget.

Lacy Landrum asked, Andre if there was a specific way they would need to word that motion, could we say that this study has been under review.

Andre Coudrain, he stated it is subject to issues anytime you go retroactive with any kind of payment. It can be challenged, but if it's the will of the council to say that the issue has been discussed and addressed prior to January 1st and have it effective January 1st, you can do that.

Councilwoman Gonzales, asked if they could do the first thing she suggested and then have that be a bonus.

Andre Coudrain stated that it could be a onetime payment. A One-time payment for retention will be easier to defend then a payment for past services. A payment for past service can be a legal issue. If it's a retention payment that's easier to defend. Basically, you are making a payment to retain your employees in the future.

Councilwoman Gonzales, asked, what if they ask the administration to make a retention payment based on their calculation. She stated that it was just a suggestion and she would like for this to go forward without an issue.

Andre Coudrain, stated that there must be a seven day layover period for publishing in Daily Star required for an ordinance and it could be introduced tonight then published and seven days after publication the public hearing and final adoption.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Gonzales and second by Councilman Wells to amend the agenda for a resolution to implement Option One of HR NOLA with a minimum of 2% pay increase.

VOTE: Councilman Andrews (Y), Councilwoman Gonzales (Y), Councilman Leon (Y), Councilman DiVittorio (Y), Councilman Wells (Y) Motion approved 5-0

There was motion by Councilwoman Gonzales second by Councilman Andrews to approve the resolution to Implement Option One of HR NOLA.

VOTE: Councilman Andrews (Y), Councilwoman Gonzales (Y), Councilman Leon (Y), Councilman DiVittorio (Y), Councilman Wells (Y) Motion approved 5-0

There was motion by Councilwoman Gonzales second by Councilman Andrews to amend the agenda to add a resolution instructing the administration to present a one-time retention payment option to the council based on Option One of HR NOLA with a minimum 2% payment.

VOTE: Councilman Andrews (Y), Councilwoman Gonzales (Y), Councilman Leon (Y), Councilman DiVittorio (Y), Councilman Wells (Y) Motion approved 5-0

There was a motion by Councilwoman Gonzales second Councilman Andrews to amend the agenda to introduce an ordinance to amend the budget as necessary to implement the prior resolutions.

VOTE: Councilman Andrews (Y), Councilwoman Gonzales (Y), Councilman Leon (Y), Councilman DiVittorio (Y), Councilman Wells (Y) Motion approved 5-0

There was a motion by Councilwoman Gonzales second by Councilman Andrews to introduce the ordinance to amend the budget in the amount necessary to implement the resolutions that have been passed.

VOTE: Councilman Andrews (Y), Councilwoman Gonzales (Y), Councilman Leon (Y), Councilman DiVittorio (Y), Councilman Wells (Y) Motion approved 5-0

Public Hearing will be scheduled for May 24, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

Councilman Andrews stated that the non- profit discussion will be tabled until May 10, 2022.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Andrews second by Councilwoman Gonzales to table the non-profit discussion until May 10, 2022.

Lacy Landrum, stated that they could do in the proposed budget they could use the similar numbers from last year and the council will have the option to amend the numbers as we go forward.

VOTE: Councilman Andrews (Y), Councilwoman Gonzales (Y), Councilman Leon (Y), Councilman DiVittorio (Y), Councilman Wells (Y) Motion approved 5-0


VI. ADJOURN:

There was a motion by Councilwoman Gonzales and second by Councilman Andrews to adjourn the meeting. All members were in favor to adjourn the meeting and the meeting was adjourned.

CERTIFICATION OF CLERK

I LISA COCKERHAM, CLERK OF COUNCIL DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE AND FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECITATION OF THE BUSINESS TRANSACTED AT THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD **MAY 3, 2021**

BEING 6 PAGES IN LENGTH



LISA COCKERHAM

HAMMOND CITY COUNCIL CLERK



PRESIDENT, KIP ANDREWS

HAMMOND CITY COUNCIL