



**HAMMOND CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
312 EAST CHARLES STREET
HAMMOND, LOUISIANA
August 27, 2024
5:30pm**

I. CALL TO ORDER: Councilman Kip Andrews

II. ROLL CALL: Councilman Kip Andrews (P), Councilman Sam DiVittorio (P), Councilwoman Carlee White Gonzales (P), Councilman Steve Leon (P), Councilman Devon Wells (A).

III. PUBLIC HEARING:

1. An ordinance to transfer \$15,000.00 from the Downtown Development District Fund (207) Balance to the 'Digital Gateway Project' account (12327). (Michelle Kendall)

Michelle Kendall, explained the item

Councilman Wells enters the meeting

No Public Comments.



**HAMMOND CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
312 EAST CHARLES STREET
HAMMOND, LOUISIANA
August 27, 2024**

6:00pm or at conclusion of Public Hearing

I. CALL TO ORDER: Councilman Kip Andrews

II. ROLL CALL: Councilman Kip Andrews (P), Councilman Sam DiVittorio (P), Councilwoman Carlee White Gonzales (P), Councilman Steve Leon (P), Councilman Devon Wells (P).

III. PRAYER : Councilman Kip Andrews

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

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Approval of Minutes of August 13, 2024 Meeting

There was a motion by Councilwoman Gonzales and second by Councilman Leon to approve the the Minutes of August 13, 2024 meeting.

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

VI. FINAL ADOPTION OF AN ORDINANCE

1. Final adoption of an ordinance to transfer \$15,000.00 from the Downtown Development District Fund (207) Balance to the 'Digital Gateway Project' account (12327).

There was a motion by Councilwoman Gonzales and second by Councilman Leon to adopt an ordinance to transfer \$15,000.00 from the Downtown Development District Fund (207) Balance to the 'Digital Gateway Project' account (12327).

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

VII. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE:

1. Introduction of an ordinance of the Hammond City Council amending the Official Zoning Map for the following addresses along Hewitt Road:

515 Hewitt Road, amending from MX-N and MX-C to MX-C.

0.19 Acres in rear of 515 Hewitt Road, amending from RS11.A to MX-C.

515 ½ Hewitt Road, amending from MX-N and MX-C to MX C.

513 Hewitt Road, amending from MX-N and MX-C to MX-C.

411 Hewitt Road, amending from MX-N and MX- C to MX-C.

Mayor Panepinto, explained the ordinance.

Chuck Walker, Silverback Holding owner, 195 Laurant Road, Madisonville, was present and explained the use of the property and to answer questions.

Councilman DiVittorio, asked about a previous plan to build a school

Chuck Walker, stated that they were in the pre-school industry and they have several pre-schools.

Councilman Wells, stated he wanted to hear what Kylan Douglas of the Planning and Zoning Committee had to say and he asked to amend the item because some of the residents on Hewitt St. have some issues.

Kylan Douglas, Planning & Zoning Commission, explained the zoning and the boards position and the reason for the request to change the zoning. This was a planning and zoning request.

Councilman Wells asked if Kylan would explain the difference between MX-C and MX-N.

Kylan Douglas, explained the differences.

Councilman Wells explained his position and asked that the item be put on hold and invited anyone with a concern to speak.

Chuck Walker, stated this was already zoned and he did not asked for the change and he explained. The zoning department requested the change. They parcel was already zoned commercial.

Tracy Wells, 610 Mooney, Identified possible uses on MX-C. she stated they should keep that in mind for future use.

Councilman Wells, asked that the item be tabled until he and Mr. Walker could meet.

There was a motion by Councilman Wells and second by Councilman DiVittorio to table the introduction of an ordinance of the Hammond City Council amending the Official Zoning Map for the following addresses along Hewitt Road:

515 Hewitt Road, amending from MX-N and MX-C to MX-C.

0.19 Acres in rear of 515 Hewitt Road, amending from RS11.A to MX-C.

515 ½ Hewitt Road, amending from MX-N and MX-C to MX C.

513 Hewitt Road, amending from MX-N and MX-C to MX-C.

411 Hewitt Road, amending from MX-N and MX- C to MX-C.

VOTE: Councilman Andrews(Y). Councilman DiVittorio (Y), Councilwoman Gonzales (Y), Councilman Leon (Y), Councilman Wells (Y), 5-0 to table.

2. Introduction of an ordinance to increase fees for leases and services at Hammond Northshore Regional Airport.

Mayor Panepinto, stated this is to continue to move the airport to become self-sufficient. He explained the difference in fees and services.It was all approved by the board.

Councilman DiVittorio asked if the board was in favor of the increases.

Councilman Wells, asked about operation permits and the using local businesses.

Christopher Goodmans,861 Industrial Road asked about fees, leases and adjustments.

John Bohnig, owner of lease, asked about his lease status.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Gonzales and second by Councilman Andrews to introduce an ordinance to increase fees for leases and services at Hammond Northshore Regional Airport.

VOTE: Councilman Andrews(Y). Councilman DiVittorio (Y), Councilwoman Gonzales (Y), Councilman Leon (Y), Councilman Wells (abstain), Motion to approve 4-1

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS- DISCUSSION

1. Permits, construction, code violations, remedies, and related issues and action regarding 1100 Rue Challet, Hammond, Louisiana.

Councilman DiVittori, explained the reason for the discussion. He invited the people to come up and express concerns regarding related issues.

Councilman DiVittorio, invited people to come and express their concerns.

Councilman Leon asked what was the current status.

Mayor Panepinto stated that he spoke with the judge about the process for warrants.

Andre Coudrain, City Attorney, stated that he communicated with the owner and the owner knows that he can not operate as a duplex and if he does, legal action will be taken.

Cindy Grega, 1108 Rue Chalet, asked the city attorney about what he said regarding the property being a duplex.

Andre Coudrain, City Attorney, explained what a duplex was.

Cindy Grega, stated she could get pictures of the interior of property.

Andre Coudrain, City Attorney, stated if they were to go to court the need to have proof . If there is evidence of changes to the interior making it a duplex, he asked City Grega to bring it to them and they will bring enforcement.

Mayor Panepinto, stated it was a permit issued for a driveway and not for interior construction.

Jim Grega, 1108 Rue Chalet, asked about the wall that was put in. He stated they had the date and pictures. He also describe what he saw in the interior of the home.

Andre Coudrain, stated the he and Cindy can sign an affidavit as well as testify, certainly if they have photographs.

Jim Crawford 105 Rue Chalet, stated he was the first one to notify Sam of the parking pad being put in front of the property. He explained his concern.

Lloyd Washington, 604 Rue Chalet, explained his concern.

Councilman DiVittorio, explained the reason why they are having the discussion and his concerns.

Mike Barnholdt, 805 Del Mar, expressed his concerns regarding permits. He spoke about the liability to the city.

Ginger Dangerfield, 1000 Rue De La Pax, she feel like the city let them down. She thinks the city should held liable.

Councilman Leon, asked for clarification on what has been taking place on the property, regarding permits the have been issued on the house.

Councilman DiVittorio, stated no permits were issued for the work on the house and the one that was issues for the driveway was not completely filled out and had the wrong name. He stated he notified everyone that there was a problem.

Devin Boudreax, 1005 Rue De la Paix, stated the the owner sent out his contract early to get the job done so it can't be reversed. He gave his opinion on what happened between the owner and contractor.

Christina Monistere, asked for clarification on what constitutes a felony.

Andre Coudrain, explained what constitutes a felony.

IX. RESOLUTIONS

1. A resolution to approve Holy Ghost Parish Fair Committee to hold its annual Parish Fair on October 25, 26, 27, 2024 within the boundaries of Magnolia Street from W. Colorado to railroad track, and NW Railroad Ave from W Colorado to railroad track.

Larisa Mears, representative from Holy Ghost was present to answer questions.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Gonzales and second by Councilman Wells to approve Holy Ghost Parish Fair Committee to hold its annual Parish Fair on October 25, 26, 27, 2024 within the boundaries of Magnolia Street from W. Colorado to railroad track, and NW Railroad Ave from W Colorado to railroad track. **Motion Approved 5-0**

Vote: Councilman Kip Andrews (Y), Councilman Sam DiVittorio (Y), Councilwoman Carlee White Gonzales (Y), Councilman Steve Leon (Y), Councilman Devon Wells (Y). Motion Approved 5-0

2. A resolution authorizing Holy Ghost Parish Fair Committee to "serve, sell or otherwise handle alcohol" on Friday, October 25, 2024, from 5pm to 10pm, Saturday, October 26, 2024, from 9am to 10pm, and Sunday, October 27, 2024, from 9 am to 6pm within the boundaries set.

Larisa Mears, representative from Holy Ghost was present to answer questions.

There was a motion by Councilman Leon and second by Councilman Wells to approve Holy Ghost Parish Fair Committee to hold its annual Parish Fair on October 25, 26, 27, 2024 within the boundaries of Magnolia Street from W. Colorado to railroad track, and NW Railroad Ave from W Colorado to railroad track.

Vote: Councilman Kip Andrews (N), Councilman Sam DiVittorio (Y), Councilwoman Carlee White Gonzales (Y), Councilman Steve Leon (Y), Councilman Devon Wells (Y). Motion Approved 4-1

3. A resolution authorizing Holy Ghost Parish Fair Committee to obtain a waiver of the Open Container Law for the following dates and times: Friday, October 25, 2024 5pm to 10pm, Saturday, October 26, 2024 9am to 10pm, and Sunday October 27, 2024 9am to 6pm within the boundaries set.

Larisa Mears, representative from Holy Ghost, same as previous.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Gonzales and second by Councilman Leon to approve Holy Ghost Parish Fair Committee to obtain a waiver of the Open Container Law for the following dates and

Vote: Councilman Kip Andrews (N), Councilman Sam DiVittorio (Y), Councilwoman Carlee White Gonzales (Y), Councilman Steve Leon (Y), Councilman Devon Wells (Y). Motion Approved 4-1

4. A resolution for approval of Final Acceptance/Substantial Completion for "Airport East Utility Connection" – project no. 616-12408.

Mitchell D. Roniger, Spangler Engineering explained the project.

There was a motion by Councilman Andrews and second by Councilwoman Gonzales approval of Final Acceptance/Substantial Completion for "Airport East Utility Connection" – project no. 616-12408.

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

5. A resolution to approve the Mayor to enter into contract with Robinson Dozer Work LLC, for Demolishing services at 501 W Coleman St., Hammond LA., in the amount of \$44,500.00 RFP 24-26.

Mayor Panepinto, explained the scope of the work.

Councilman Wells, asked about the removal of the driveway and backfill.

Mayor Panepinto, stated they are responsible for taking everything off of the property, it should be a cleared lot when they are done.

Councilman Wells, asked about the backfill.

Mayor Panepinto, stated it will be leveled. Like everything around it.

Councilman DiVittorio, asked it that was in the bid.

Councilman Wells, stated it was in the bid. He also expressed his concerns regarding the housing that is being torn down in the community. The work that they are doing on the building he would like to see it done to housing that is being torn down in the city.

There was a motion by Councilman Andrews and second by Councilwoman Gonzales to approve the Mayor to enter into contract with Robinson Dozer Work LLC, for Demolishing services at 501 W Coleman St., Hammond LA., in the amount of \$44,500.00 RFP 24-26

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

6. A resolution to purchase a Kubota M5-111HDC-1 Tractor with a 60” Diamond side Rotary Mower for total amount of \$98,584.06. Star Equipment will be the delivering dealer, State Contract#4400025216 & Contract # 4400027628.

Mayor Panepinto, explained the item.

Charlie Ciolina, Star Equipment, stated they have the tractor in stock but the mower will be deliver in 14 to 16 weeks. Equipment should be ready the first of the year and that they will train the operators.

Tracy Wells, asked the City Council if they knew the balance that was in the checking account. She stated the council should now what the balance is in the bank account. She explained her reason for the question and stated it was their responsibility to know the balance and what’s being spent. She asked that they be told at the next council meeting, how much is in the bank account. She stated as a citizen they have a right to know. It is the council’s responsibility.

Mayor Panepinto, stated that there were funds in the budget for this.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Gonzales and second by Councilman DiVittorio to approve the purchase a Kubota M5-111HDC-1 Tractor with a 60” Diamond side Rotary Mower for total amount of \$98,584.06. Star Equipment will be the delivering dealer, State Contract#4400025216 & Contract # 4400027628.

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

7. A resolution 1) accepting a \$277,225 grant from the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program to rehabilitate Lift Station 22, which serves the Woodbridge Subdivision and surrounding area, and Lift Station 45, which serves the Elmwood Park Subdivision and surrounding area; 2) approving a cash match of \$103,940; and 3) authorizing the Mayor or his designee to complete and sign related documents. The rehabilitation of these lift stations is included in the City's 5-year Capital Improvement Plan.

Mayor Panepinto, stated explained the grant and the match.

Deborah Swenson, 12 Ravenwood Street, asked if this would help out Whitmor.

Mayor Panepinto explained that Whitmor lift station is 21 and that would be the next project.

Mayor Panepinto, stated that there were funds in the budget for this.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Gonzales and second by Councilman Andrews 1) accepting a \$277,225 grant from the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program to rehabilitate Lift Station 22, which serves the Woodbridge Subdivision and surrounding area, and Lift Station 45, which serves the Elmwood Park Subdivision and surrounding area; 2) approving a cash match of \$103,940; and 3) authorizing the Mayor or his designee to complete and sign related documents. The rehabilitation of these lift stations is included in the City's 5-year Capital Improvement Plan.

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

8. A resolution to open an investigation into the building department office regarding any and all matters related to permits under Section 2-06 of the City Charter, hiring an attorney to conduct the investigation pursuant to Section 4-02(E) of the City Charter, obtaining and independent audit of the building department under Section 2-07 of the City Charter, selecting a Certified Public Accountant or firm pursuant to Section 2-07 to conduct the audit, and authorizing the lawyer and accountant to coordinate and work together regarding the investigation and audit.

Councilman DiVittorio, stated that this resolution stems from the Rue Chalet permit issue. The resident brought this to his attention. He explained the the reason for this item and his concerns.

Sylvester Marshall Sr., 2503 Rue Simone, asked if there are checks and balances in the permit office.

Mayor Panepinto, explained

Vic Couvillion , 802 Rue Caine, Villa West, stated he has been watching and covering meeting. He stated a mistake was made and he cannot see spending money on an accountant, lawyer or consultant. He stated we talk about saving the city money and hiring these people could be expensive. He state a mistake was made and the administration is addressing the issue and he thinks it will be taken care of. A mistake happened and it’s being corrected.

Sal Nicolosi, 3607 Hwy 190 W, stated the Mayor and the Council need to get on the same page. Council should get a report on where the money is going. He thinks the Mayor and Council need to get together.

Eddy Campany, 208 S. Olive Street, stated the building and permitting department should be investigated.

Councilman Leon asked Eddy Campany what is he speaking of.

Eddy Company, stated they should take a closer look at how building permits have been issued over the last ten years, policies and procedures.

Bobbi Carter, 2503 Rue Simone, Villa West, talked about illegal permits in another situation. She stated people in the department need to be trained.

Micah Perie, 903 Rue St. Michael, she believes there needs to be an investigation.

Deborah Swenson, 210 Ravenwood, stated that there was a home in her neighborhood that is being worked on and the owner was being told different things by different people in the building department and this needs to be checked on.

Tracey Wells, 610 Mooney Ave, asked how was the permit on Rue Chalet issued

Mayor, stated it was for a driveway, it was not a permit for the house.

Tracey Wells, pointed out the the permit was incomplete and this needs to be investigated. She stated from her experience the former planner was very through. She stated there is nothing wrong with an investigation or audit.

Councilman Andrews asked City Attorney Coudrain if an amendment could be made to the resolution.

Frank DiVittorio, 912 West Morris, stated the council should be able to ask questions. He asked that if they decide to hire someone to lead an investigation or audit, make sure that that they are accountable to them.

Councilman Andrews asked City Attorney Coudrain, about making modifications.

Attorney Coudrain, asked are they doing an investigation or they hiring a consulting firm to recommend policies and procedures.

There was a motion by Councilman Andrews and second by Councilman DiVittorio to move forward with opening an investigation into the building department and the scope will be determined at future meetings.

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

9. A resolution to authorize the Mayor to enter into a one (1) year agreement with Verizon Wireless/Connect. The proposed one (1) year agreement is for the Verizon Reveal application and hardware which will enable the tracking of city vehicles. This for 240 vehicles at a total price of \$50,256.00.

Mayor Panepinto, explained the item.

Councilman Wells asked how many vehicles the city owns and about the equipment.

Councilman DiVittorio, stated we need a count, because we have a lot more equipment than 240.

There was a motion by Councilman Andrews and second by Councilman DiVittorio to authorize the Mayor to enter into a one (1) year agreement with Verizon Wireless/Connect. The proposed one (1) year agreement is for the Verizon Reveal application and hardware which will enable the tracking of city vehicles. This for 240 vehicles at a total price of \$50,256.00.

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

10. A resolution to approve Brady's located at 110 SW Railroad Ave. Hammond, LA 70403 to obtain an alcohol permit for a restaurant. The owner is Shamrock Hospitality. (Mayor Panepinto)

Mayor Panepinto, stated this was an ownership change and everything was in order.

Glen Alack, 110 SW Railroad Ave stated they are changing the name on the license but everything else will stay the same.

Councilwoman Gonzales, stated that someone has reached out to her asking if this was a restaurant or a bar. She wanted to make him aware that if his bar is open the kitchen must be open.

There was a motion by Councilman Wells and second by Councilman DiVittorio to approve Brady's located at 110 SW Railroad Ave. Hammond, LA 70403 to obtain an alcohol permit for a restaurant. The owner is Shamrock Hospitality.

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

X. REPORTS:

Mayor: No report

Council:

Councilman Wells Called up Ms. Pam Haynes, Maryland Street, discussed her concern regarding a letter she received from the post office that addressed changes to the mailboxes. She reached out to the post office with no satisfaction. She reached out and got signatures from her neighbors. She is asking for help.

Councilman DiVittorio spoke about the mail and the leash law. He asked the City Attorney if there is anything that can be done.

City Attorney Coudrain, suggested that the council pass a resolution. The Federal Government controls the post office, but the council can express that they do not want the mailboxes relocated to the street and send it to all of the federal representative and see if they could get someones attention.

Councilman Andrews asked City Attorney Coudrain to draft a resolution.

Alton McCrany, 204 Maryland Street, stated that he has the same concern and is asking for help.

Councilman Wells, asked that the city council chamber and water department building be tested for mold.

Mayor explained what was taking place concerning the mold.

Councilman Wells asked to get a top sign on Harold Street and Mooney Ave. He also asked about name change of Carolina Street to Willie Grant. He asked about the police officer using the restroom in a closet at the court house.

Mayor explained what happened.

Councilman Wells, asked about the action/disciplinary action of the police officer. He talked about the gentleman who had to pay for his personal file. He stated that HR was not qualified, they sent his file to different departments and that should not have happened. Councilman Wells, asked that the council slow down. He stated the City Council needs their own lawyer.

Councilman DiVittorio, asked about a speed hump on Rosewood and it needs to be a priority. He also asked about the grass on the sidewalk on Harden Dr.

Councilman Andrews, asked where they were in the process of the study regarding garbage and water.

Councilman Wells, stated they are spending one million and five hundred dollars on garbage.

XI . ADJOURN

There was a motion by **Councilwoman Gonzales** and second by **Councilman Andrews** to adjourn. All members were in favor and the meeting was adjourned. 5-0 to adjourn

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 REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD August 27,

2024

BEING 6 PAGES IN LENGTH

LISA COCKERHAM
HAMMOND CITY COUNCIL CLERK

PRESIDENT, KIP ANDREWS
HAMMOND CITY COUNCIL