

MINUTES
HAMMOND SANITARY DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
DECEMBER 10, 2024
www.hammondsd.com

The Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the Sanitary District of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana held a regular meeting at 4:06 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Administration Building located at 5143 Columbia Avenue, Hammond, Indiana.

President Dimopoulos called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m. He stated that the Board held an Executive Session prior to the meeting to discuss personnel and litigation matters in accordance with Indiana Codes.

Commissioners Present: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio

Commissioners Present via Zoom: N/A

Commissioners Absent: N/A

District Personnel Present: Milan Kruszynski, District Manager
Jeffrey Massey, HSD
Sharon Szany, HSD
Jack Smith, Hammond Sewer Department
Kaleigh Boyle, HSD
Jessie Amezcua, HSD

District Personnel Present via Zoom: Joseph Allegretti, Attorney

Others Present: Mike Hickey, MJHY, LLC
Natalie Cook, Donohue
George Stoya, Hammond Resident

Others Present via Zoom: N/A

President Dimopoulos stated that the first order of business is the consideration of the November 12, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes.

Rubio **moved** and Dye **seconded** to approve the November 12, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 5-0.

FINANCIAL REPORT

President Dimopoulos asked if they had anything from Rachel because she was not at meeting.

Financial Report for October 2024 was included in board packet. No questions or comments.

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President Dimopoulos said they would vote on 2025 Board Meeting Dates under New Business.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

District Manager, Milan Kruszynski, stated that the annual meeting of the Hammond Building Corporation met this afternoon at 3 pm at the District in the Administration offices. He would like the Board to know that all is in order and the Hammond Sanitary District staff have continued to make the required, necessary payments to be sent to the trustee and no levy is needed to meet the Corporation's obligations. We are taking care of our obligation to pay the building down.

Moving on to plant operations and his report from Jeff Massey, Milan said the plant is running well. They are hauling off biosolids to the farms. The basin across the street has been cleaned out. Just today, a chemist came out and visited the District to observe, inspect and experience the odors of the plant. He is going to be giving us some suggestions on how we can minimize the odors coming out of the plant.

Jack in the Sewer Department let him know that they have completed 126 miles of sewers that were cleaned this year. Next year, in 2025, with all of the cleaning they are going to do, the entire City of Hammond will have been cleaned. This was done in a 4-year period. 2025 is the last year of the 4-year period and he thinks that is pretty good with all of the streets that we have in the City of Hammond.

Finance, Rachel is on vacation. Staff is very busily compiling all of the end of year numbers, reports and checks.

In Maintenance, both Jeff and Dan reported to him that they are going out to bid for rakes at the Sohl and Southside stations and it looks like they are going to be ready to bring the bid documents forward to the Board at the first meeting in January and then ask to go out to bid for both of those. These are both very expensive projects- close to one million dollars each.

Safety- Matt is out on family leave, so Jeff and Sharon have both stepped in to fill his role.

IT- Bob is on vacation. Just to let them know, he and Bob have met with four different IT consultants within the last two weeks and are comparing the plans, costs, and equipment. They have looked at the current contract expenses. The current contract will end in March, but they wanted months to prepare to make sure they get the right plan in place. When Bob returns, they are going to revisit everything and then come back with a recommendation to the Board to fulfill that contract beginning in the spring of 2025. Jessie reported that Austgen Electric installed three servers for the SCADA system and they will be doing a total start up at the beginning of next year.

Lastly, he would just like to wish everybody happy holidays. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you.

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PERSONNEL REPORT

There was a personnel report passed out to the Board today.

Dye **moved** and Miller **seconded** for the approval of the Personnel Report.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 5-0.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Sewer Maintenance

No questions or comments.

Safety

No questions or comments.

CONSULTANT REPORTS

MJHY

Mike Hickey said that the Board should have a copy of his status report. The only thing to highlight is the CD (Consent Decree) status report was submitted on time. He believes he reported that last month.

Donohue

Natalie Cook from Donohue stated that she was told by the Geotech consultant that they were going to be on site this week. She has not heard if they are yet, but they should be. The preliminary engineering report as well as a specific list that needs to be updated and submitted to IDEM. That should be done and out of their hands next week. If there are any questions on the status report, please just let her know.

Commissioner Hawkins asked if the area that the CMDF is supposed to go- he asked if that is on stable soil.

Natalie answered that is what they are waiting for the Geotech to confirm. They had some concerns about that. The areas along the highway- during an initial visit, they found just a bunch of garbage that had been dumped there, so that is a major reason they are doing this. It is still the most feasible site location wise. What they are doing is trying to figure out how much it is going to cost to build the structure and make sure it is stable there.

Commissioner Hawkins thanked her.

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RESOLUTIONS

The Board considered Resolution No. 23-2024: RE: A Resolution by the Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the Sanitary District of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana Authorizing the Permanent Transfer of \$634,514 for the 4th Quarter of 2024 from the Operation and Maintenance Fund (6201) to the Replacement Fund (6206).

Miller **moved** and Dye **seconded** for the approval of Resolution No. 23-2024.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio
Nays: None
Motion **carried** 5-0.

The Board considered Resolution No. 24-2024: RE: A Resolution by the Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the Sanitary District of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana Fixing Salaries and Wage Rates for the Hammond Sanitary District for the Year 2025.

Vice-President Dye asked if all of these were approved by City Hall.

Milan responded of course.

Dye **moved** and Rubio **seconded** for the approval of Resolution No. 24-2024.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio
Nays: None
Motion **carried** 5-0.

The Board considered Resolution No. 25-2024: RE: A Resolution of the Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the Sanitary District of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana Acknowledging Certain Executive Orders Modifying the Compensation of District Employees in the Current Budget Year.

Dye **moved** and Miller **seconded** for the approval of Resolution No. 25-2024.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio
Nays: None
Motion **carried** 5-0.

The Board considered Resolution No. 26-2024: RE: A Resolution by the Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the Sanitary District of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana Approving and Ratifying a Pest Control Service Agreement.

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Haakwins **moved** and Dye **seconded** for the approval of Resolution No. 26-2024.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio
Nays: None
Motion **carried** 5-0.

The Board considered Resolution No. 27-2024: RE: A Resolution by the Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the Hammond Sanitary District, Lake County, Indiana Adopting the 2025 Financial Expenditure Plan for the Pretreatment Fund (6209) in the Amount \$592,636.

Dye **moved** and Miller **seconded** for the approval of Resolution No. 27-2024.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio
Nays: None
Motion **carried** 5-0.

The Board considered Resolution No. 28-2024: RE: A Resolution by the Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the City of Hammond Sanitary District, Lake County, Indiana for the 2025 Long Term Control Plan & Consent Decree Professional Engineering Services.

Miller **moved** and Dye **seconded** for the approval of Resolution No. 28-2024.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio
Nays: None
Motion **carried** 5-0.

The Board considered Resolution No. 29-2024: RE: A Resolution by the Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the City of Hammond Sanitary District, Lake County, Indiana for 2025 On-Call Professional Services.

Miller **moved** and Dye **seconded** for the approval of Resolution No. 29-2024.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio
Nays: None
Motion **carried** 5-0.

The Board considered Resolution No. 30-2024: RE: A Resolution by the Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the City of Hammond Sanitary District, Lake County, Indiana for 2025 CMDF Property Procurement Related Design Services.

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Dye **moved** and Rubio **seconded** for the approval of Resolution No. 30-2024.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio
Nays: None
Motion **carried** 5-0.

The Board considered the Bank Reconciliation Document dated October 31, 2024.

Hawkins **moved** and Miller **seconded** for the approval of the Bank Reconciliation Document dated October 31, 2024.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio
Nays: None
Motion **carried** 5-0.

The Board considered the Claims Approval Docket 12-10-24 (Amended).

Dye **moved** and Miller **seconded** for the approval of the Amended Claims Approval Docket 12-10-24.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio
Nays: None
Motion **carried** 5-0.

President Dimopoulos called for Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

President Dimopoulos called for New Business

The Board considered Resolution No. 31-2024: RE: A Resolution Authorizing the Grant of a Temporary Highway Easement to the State of Indiana Acting Through the Indiana Department of Transportation to Allow Improvements to US Highway 20 (Michigan Avenue)

President Dimopoulos explained that this is a new resolution that was asked of them by the State. This happened recently which is why it is under new business.

Dye **moved** and Miller **seconded** for the approval of Resolution No. 31-2024.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio
Nays: None
Motion **carried** 5-0.

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2025 Board Meeting Dates

Dye **moved** and Rubio **seconded** for the 2025 Board Meeting Dates.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 5-0.

Vice-President Dye asked if Rachel could send out the meeting invites like she has in the past that would be extremely helpful.

President Dimopoulos called for Reports from Commissioners

Commissioner Hawkins asked if there has been any thought by the District and/or the City of Hammond with the new Trump administration who is known to be rather lenient in the environmental sector regulations to challenge or possibly modify the Long Term Control Plan which is very costly in its current state.

Milan replied that everything could be under consideration depending on what transpires and comes out of Washington D.C. He is sure it will be a wait and see and then react as the Sanitary District. There is nothing that would preclude them from doing that if it is going to be in our favor to do.

President Dimopoulos called for Public Expression

George Stoya, a Hammond resident, stated that firstly he wanted to thank everyone for the job they do. He truly appreciates it and thinks we do a bang-up job. The crews are outstanding, so he wanted to give his thanks and appreciation because he thinks it is deserved. One thing that brought him here today is that yesterday at Council meeting the Mayor said he was exploring the idea with a law firm down in Indianapolis about maybe being able to loosen the grip of some of these agencies like the Commissioner was just talking about. In addition, to the Chevron deference case, the Supreme Court has said we do not owe all these things that much deference anymore. At least in some cases. His concern was mainly with the lawsuit pending with the Town of Munster. What worries him the most and he knows they cannot discuss it, but he is just wondering and hoping that they get a chance to discuss with the attorneys paragraph 31 of their complaint in regards to prevailing parties and legal fees they are asking for. They are asking for millions and he does not know the merit of the suit, but this is the same outfit that sued the Water Department a couple of years ago about the rates and they are good. When reading the complaint himself, in paragraph 31 talks about contractually speaking there is a provision for attorney fees if you lose. He does not know how many claims there are- five or six. There was a case that came out in 2022 about prevailing parties and how the Court views various claims when there are multiple claims. You do not have to win or lose on all of them to be responsible for attorney fees on a prorated basis and this can get real expensive. He just wanted to make the Board aware in case the attorneys have not made you aware on what is transpiring here. He just wanted to get

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it off of his chest because it has been bothering him, especially about the prevailing parties because that is generally not a part of lawsuits.

President Dimopoulos called for a motion to adjourn the meeting

Dye **moved** and Miller **seconded** for adjournment.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 4:24 p.m.

Sam Dimopoulos, President

Michael Dye, Vice-President

Michael Hawkins, Sr., Member

Owana Miller, Member

Monica Rubio, Member

ATTEST: _____

Rachel Montes, Secretary

Kaleigh Boyle, Assistant Secretary

Board Minutes Prepared By: Kaleigh Boyle