

MINUTES
HAMMOND SANITARY DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2025
www.hammondsd.com

The Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the Sanitary District of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana held a regular meeting at 4:01 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 4:01 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
Rachel Montes, Business Manager
Jeffrey Massey, HSD
Sharon Szany, HSD
Dan Zander, HSD
Jack Smith, Hammond Sewer Department
Kaleigh Boyle, HSD
Jessie Amezcua, HSD

District Personnel Present via Zoom: N/A

Others Present: Mike Hickey, MJHY
Terry Steagall, Highland Resident

Others Present via Zoom: Natalie Cook, Donohue

President Dimopoulos stated the first order of business is the consideration of the January 14, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes.

Rubio **moved** and Miller **seconded** to approve the January 14, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 5-0.

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DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

District Manager, Milan Kruszynski, stated that hopefully all came up the beautiful, new stairs with the handrails today. Everything is working extremely well with that, so thank you very much. That is the start to taking care of the front door entrance. They are going to do some work on the indoors as well to make sure they are in compliance.

Milan said he would go over his department reports next. His report from IT is that Bob is working on pulling the data for the conversion, so thank you Bob. In Personnel, Sharon does not have a report today. In Sewer, Jack reported that his rule number 13 has been completed and is on Jeff's desk. He also has some issues in the 600 block of 131st Place- that is between Calumet and Sheffield. There is some calcium buildup in the sewers, and they are going to be doing additional investigation tomorrow. As of right now, it looks like there may be an illegal tap into the sewer manhole so they will be addressing that in the next few days and they are happy that the weather will permit for that to happen.

Milan explained that in the Maintenance department they have caught up hauling all of the biosolids to the farms. There is only a little bit of class A left that is also going to be taken out there. Mix Tank #5 needs to be cleaned out and hopefully they will be talking about the Sohler Avenue rakes in a little bit. Primary tank #9 parts are in and will be installed soon. Southeast Hessville sump (this was talked about two weeks ago) will need to be cleaned. Staff met out there earlier this week and are putting a game plan together as to getting a crane out there to pull the pump and the motor. Right now, there is still a lot of sand out there so they will have to get that vacuumed out as well and Dan and Jeff are going to look into the source of where that sand is coming in from at that station. In Safety, Matt reported that we will be doing CPR and AED training being led by the Hammond Fire Department and right now we have 27 folks signed up here at the District. That is a really good start. Then those 27 will be able to act as a trainer if need be and help train others along the way as well.

Milan said financially, Rachel reported that she is working on the end-of-year Gateway reports. She also reported that Kaleigh got out the W2s and she will be sending out the 1099s by the end of the week as well. Regarding plant operations, the plant is running well. They did have the chemist out looking at the blowers in the facility. Jeff has sent off all of the required reports that he needed to. He had a mountain on his desk to get out and he has done that. He also wanted to report that the new chlorination equipment is on site and will be ready to be installed as soon as they are able to get the folks out here to do that. This all needs to be done by April when chlorination season starts.

Milan concluded the District Manager's report.

PERSONNEL REPORT

There was no personnel report.

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The Board considered the Bank Reconciliation Document dated November 30, 2024.

Dye **moved** and Miller **seconded** for the approval of the Bank Reconciliation Document dated November 30, 2024.

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

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

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

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

The Board considered the Claims Approval Docket 01-28-25.

Rubio **moved** and Miller **seconded** for the approval of the Claims Approval Docket 01-28-25.

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

There was no new business to discuss.

President Dimopoulos commented that Consultants are not on the agenda today, but since Mike Hickey is here, he asked if he had anything to report.

Mike Hickey explained that he is not on the agenda, but he was out of town at the last meeting. The next quarterly Consent Decree report is due February 10th and they are working on it.

Natalie Cook was attending via Zoom, so President Dimopoulos asked her if she had anything to report.

Natalie replied that she is also not on the agenda but is just a fly on the wall today.

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President Dimopoulos stated that the next thing is the HWC Engineering Specifications for the Sohl Avenue Pump Station Bar Screen Equipment Procurement. They have been waiting a while for these specifications and finally have them. He would like to entertain a motion to allow the District to go through and put this out for bids to get this project rolling.

Dye **moved** and Hawkins **seconded** to authorize staff to advertise and to put this project out for bid and set a date and any other requirements needed to produce this project.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 5-0.

President Dimopoulos called for Reports from Commissioners

There were no reports from Commissioners.

President Dimopoulos called for Public Expression

Terry Steagall stated that he is a resident of Highland, one of your sewer partners and part of this community. He lives at 8577 Kleinman Road. He is here today to get some clarification on some things that we need to do. He thinks there has been some misinformation that has been floating between the Town Council and the Mayor's Night Out about the Hammond Sanitary District. He figured he should come to the place where they actually know the facts. First thing he was wanting to know- there is the Consent Decree of 2017 and there are quarterly reports- he sent Mr. Kruszynski an email and he was hoping there is a government file or file cabinet where you can actually go view the documents and he didn't know if that applies to this or not. He asked if they know what he is talking about.

President Dimopoulos explained they are under public expression, so they do not answer questions, but just the public an opportunity to express themselves.

Terry Steagall said that's fine. As he said earlier, he provided an email to the District Manager here because he believes there has been some misconception about things because under the consent decree there have been some comments made. He has heard it is Biden's fault, it is Obama's fault, now Trump is going to fix it. His expression is that this is the Clean Water Act- the consent decree. Who is going to fix it is all of us working together. If we do not do our job, the judge is going to do it for us. His goal is to make sure we are all working together and getting in the right direction. He knows when Marty Wielgos was the District Manager then, he set a plan in place. He basically had a whole plan for that South Hammond wastewater treatment plant, and he had a timeline and everything. He is wondering if this has been halted, are we working on it, are we not going to do it, are we at an impasse, do we need to get people together to figure out how we can move this project forward. Highland is already spending 70 million dollars on the infrastructure to feed into that wastewater treatment plant. He thinks it is very important that we all work together and be a community as one. The things he has seen in the paper in the past we're not. At one meeting, the Mayor said he is shutting this down because he

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is fighting with Munster and you do not operate like that. That is a separate issue that can be taken care of through the proper channels and the proper procedures. Then, he hears they are not doing anything because Trump got elected and they are going to change everything because he is going to do away with the EPA. That does not do away with the Clean Water Act. We need to make sure we are adhering to the Clean Water Act; we are adhering to the Consent Decree and all of the parties subject to that are working together for a solution and that is what he is all about. He wants to see Hammond, Highland and Griffith fix this problem. He also wants to see Hammond and Munster fix their problems because we seriously need to be a united community on this. He thinks our goal is all the same among all of us. We want to have a good operation that fulfills the needs of the community now and in the future. He will tell you; he grew up over on Wilcox Street and most of you know where that is at and as a kid, this place here was like a toxic pit along the banks. They spent millions of dollars, maybe even a billion to clean this river out here which is good because when he was a kid, you didn't have that. He played little league over there in the retention pond. There were still issues with the smells from here and some guys from the neighborhood even used to sneak over here and rat hunt. Like he said, we need to work together to make sure this thing moves in the right direction, and he just wants to make sure you folks are in sync with where he is at. He is not here to create problems. He is here to make solutions and wants to get people working together. There is too much misinformation going around in politics today and it turns his stomach, and we need to come together now. Just like the saying, it is a come to Jesus moment. We need to do this and do it right and work together. That is his goal. He is looking to know where the status of this construction of the South Hammond wastewater treatment plant is. He thinks Marty got the engineering started at least he knows and he does not know if they got any further than that. Highland is already digging the hole for the big pipeline, and we need to make sure we are all in sync. Marty had a timeline, and he believes he was planning in 2026 to have that wastewater treatment facility built and he doesn't think a hole has been dug yet. That's a problem. The last thing we want to do is get the lawyers involved because they are expensive, and you do not want to go back in front of that federal judge.

President Dimopoulos called for a motion to adjourn the meeting

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

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

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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