

MINUTES  
HAMMOND SANITARY DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSISONERS MEETING  
JANUARY 12, 2021  
[www.hammondsd.com](http://www.hammondsd.com)

The Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the Sanitary District of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana held a regular meeting at 4:07 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 4:07 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
Commissioners Present Remotely:	Dye, Hawkins, Miller
Commissioners Absent:	Garay
District Personnel Present:	Marty Wielgos, District Manager Joseph Allegretti, HSD Attorney Rachel Montes, Business Manager Kaleigh Boyle, HSD Jeffrey Massey, HSD
District Personnel Present Remotely:	Matthew Muta, Deputy District Manager Robert Szczudlo, HSD Jack Smith, Sewer Department Rebecca McKinley, GIS Department
Others Present Remotely:	Mike Hickey, MJHY, LLC Natalie Cook, Donohue

There was a roll call of attendees for the meeting to be documented in the minutes.

The same rules and guidelines will apply as previous meetings. Before somebody makes a statement/motion, they need to state their name so they know who is talking. There will be roll call votes on everything.

President Dimopoulos stated that the first order of business was the 2021 Election of Officers. He asked for a motion for the Board President.

Dye **moved** and Miller **seconded** to nominate Sam Dimopoulos as 2021 Board President.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 4-0.

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Dimopoulos **moved** and Miller **seconded** to nominate Michael Dye as 2021 Board Vice-President.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller  
Nays: None  
Motion **carried** 4-0.

Dimopoulos **moved** and Miller **seconded** to nominate Rachel Montes and Kaleigh Boyle as 2021 Board Secretary and Assistant Secretary.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller  
Nays: None  
Motion **carried** 4-0.

President Dimopoulos joked that they were going to now vote on their attorney.

**District Manager's Report**

District Manager, Marty Wielgos, stated that he is glad to be into a new year. It is hard to believe that they are already almost halfway into the month of January. He is proud to report on the Headworks project that he should be able to announce a cutting of the ribbons sometime in February. Final touchups are being done as they speak. He saw the plaque for the building today and it should be put up within the next couple of weeks and then they will set a date and time. The Mayor is looking forward to it and he hopes to have all the Board members present if it works for their schedules and he will try to schedule it so that it can be conducive because he knows a lot of the Board members work, so he can do it in a way where he can get a majority of them to attend. Other than that, they had all of the new hires that they hired for both Operations and Maintenance and some of the laborers at the end of the year and they have been inundated November and December and have been up and running pretty much in January. He is happy to say that he thinks they hired seven or eight total between all of those departments and they all had a chance to meet the Mayor and the report he is getting from the Department heads is that they are all doing very, very well. He is very happy to hear that. They are finishing up on the contracts for both 399 and 142. They technically are done- they are doing some housekeeping on the 399 contract. The Mayor wants to sign those this year and have a ceremony up in the Mayor's office so as soon as he gets the last contract back from 399 which he is expecting by the end of the week, he will be lining up a date to have the official signing in the Mayor's office and would love to have a couple of the Board members attend that also. Other than that, that is all he has.

It was brought to President Dimopoulos's attention that he skipped the consideration of the December 15, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes.

President Dimopoulos stated that the next order of business was the consideration of the December 15, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes.

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Dye **moved** and Hawkins **seconded** to approve the December 15, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 4-0.

**PERSONNEL REPORT**

There was no Personnel Report.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Business Manager, Rachel Montes, commented that she has nothing to highlight on this. She will have a period 13 financial to do some cleanup in period 13 for the year 2020, so if she has anything to highlight in that one. They did repay a loan from O&M to the Debt Fund that was paid in December- the Board passed a Resolution on that. They had property tax collections and normal collections so—

Marty wanted to add to that as they discussed in Executive session, they had their S&P rating phone meeting a couple weeks ago and it was about an hour long. They always have very good questions and very detailed. As the Board knows as compared to nine years ago, the Sanitary District is in excellent financial health. They were able to do the Stormwater Program with the help of Owana's Department to the tune of almost \$600,000 without having to borrow funds or anything. \$200,000 came from a Federal Grant through Owana's Department and the other \$400,000 plus came directly out of the Operating funds of the Stormwater Department. Very happy to report even with all of those positive signs over the last nine years, the one area that S&P wanted to stay focused on was the COVID virus. He was a little confused on why they wanted to spend so much time talking about COVID, he could understand if it affected their income, but he indicated to them that he watches that every day and it has been almost a year now since the COVID started that there has been no impact on their income from residential, commercial or their industrial users or their customer communities for that matter. They were still concerned that it might be in the future. So because of that, they decided to keep the rating the same- BBB of which he was not happy with obviously because they worked very hard to get themselves where they are today, but he wanted the Board to understand that. They see the positive signs and the progress that the District has made over the many years, but because of COVID which he believes has no relation to the rating, they do believe that it does, that they decided to keep the rating the same. He will take any questions the Board has.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Safety Report**

There were no questions or comments.

**GIS Report**

There were no questions or comments.

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**Sewer Maintenance Report**

There were no questions or comments.

**CONSULTANT REPORTS**

**MJHY, LLC**

Mike Hickey stated that he would like to start with the Long-Term Control Plan update. He received a call last from the US EPA and he as giving an update on the status of the EPA's reviewal of the Long-Term Control Plan. They are going to have two sets of comments. One is technical comments which are completed. The second set of comments are on the Financial Capability Analysis (FCA). They are delayed getting those comments from their contractor. So, he said he is going to forward the technical comments. He said that he would get them Monday, but he hadn't received those yet. When he does, he will forward those. Since they are waiting on the FCA comments, they wanted the technical comments to be reviewed so that when they get the FCA, the District can respond more quickly. That is the Long-Term Control Plan update. The board should have a copy of his status report and he would be happy to take any questions on that.

Marty wanted to add one comment to that. It is interesting to say that the S&P considers the COVID to be a major part of the financial outlook for an entity like theirs which relies almost 100% on collections from the different entities that they collect. On the other hand, it looks like the Federal Government doesn't seem to want to talk about any of the COVID and the financial ability. He asked Mike Hickey if he has sent that type of message back to them to see if that buys them more time or if that changes something. He asked Mike Hickey what that does.

Mike Hickey responded that as far as them having to respond more quickly to them, they have given them a break with COVID. They are going to have to see what the FCA comments are. he talked to Max about this and they are better off seeing what their comments are on the FCA and then they can certainly address that with them. The EPA is very well aware of COVID. The gentleman he is speaking with has not been in his office since March 17<sup>th</sup>.

Marty said he understand that. His point is how can they expect the District to make any kind of commitment and sign a final document when in fact they do not know what COVID is going to do in the near future. They have no clue so he hopes they would say something back to recognize that and for them all to be on the same page.

Mike Hickey replied that his point is well taken, but he has not seen their comments yet.

Commissioner Hawkins asked if with the changes in administration from Trump to Biden, he wonders if there is any knowledge of any changes ahead as far as EPA or governmental restrictions or changes.

Attorney Allegretti and Mike Hickey both replied that it is too soon to know.

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Attorney Allegretti that he guesses they can expect the climate will be cloudier than it was the last four years. That is the conventional wisdom anyway.

**DONOHUE**

Natalie Cook stated that at this point they are looking forward to assisting Mike Hickey with the Long-Term control Plan comments when they come back. Aside from that, they are supporting HSD as needed with the disinfection bench testing. Anything else that they are working on currently is in the status report in their packets and she can answer any questions regarding that as well.

**RESOLUTIONS**

**The Board considered Resolution No. 1-2021: RE: A Resolution by the Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the Sanitary District of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana Amending Salaries and Wage Rates for the Hammond Sanitary District for the Year 2021.**

Dye **moved** and Hawkins **seconded** to approve Resolution No. 1-2021.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 4-0.

**The Board considered Resolution No. 2-2021: RE: A Resolution Amending Resolution No. 33-2020 Being a Resolution by the Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the Sanitary District of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana Fixing Salaries and Wage Rates for the Sanitary District for the Year 2021 by Renaming the Position of District Manager.**

Dye **moved** and Miller **seconded** to approve Resolution No. 2-2021.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 4-0.

**The Board considered the Bank Reconciliation Document dated December 31, 2020.**

Hawkins **moved** and Miller **seconded** for the approval of the Bank Reconciliation Document dated December 31, 2020.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 4-0.

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**The Board considered the Claims Approval Docket 01-12-21.**

Dye **moved** and Miller **seconded** for the approval of the Claims Approval Docket 01-12-21.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller  
Nays: None  
Motion **carried** 4-0.

**President Dimopoulos called for Old Business**

There was not any old business to discuss.

**President Dimopoulos called fort New Business**

Marty stated that he wanted to add on behalf of all of the staff at the Sanitary District including the Sewer Department, they wanted to wish the Board members and residents of the City of Hammond and the Town of Munster a very happy new year.

President Dimopoulos thanked him and said that he is sure on behalf of the Board he can wish everyone a happy new year as well. Hopefully, and he does not see how it can be worse than 2020, he hopes it is not worse than 2020. They are all looking forward to a brand-new year.

He asked Owana if she wanted to do it now.

Owana replied she was ready.

President Dimopoulos stated that he is turning the microphone over to Owana now.

Owana commented that she is a strong believer in giving honor and respect to individuals who do an awesome job and are well-deserving. A leader is someone that has integrity, innovative and has strong decision-making skills. The list goes on and on. These are just a few of the attributes of a great leader and the leader that they have at the Hammond Sanitary District. It gives her the honor and privilege to present Marty with a plaque. She is going to read what the plaque says.

The plaque reads. "With our greatest appreciation we the Board members of the Hammond Sanitary District hereby present Marty J. Wielgos for your unwavering supporting and unrelenting guidance that has helped lead the District on a path to success. You are being honored with much appreciation and gratitude. Presented this 12<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2021." The plaque includes the names of Mayor Thomas M. McDermott, Jr. and the five Board members.

Owana congratulated Marty.

Marty thanked her.

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President Dimopoulos said that he wanted to add something too. Since he has been on the Board and he thinks he is the oldest member on the Board as far as how many years he has served on it. Marty was a Board member when he came on board and he has been a key to the success of this organization here at the Hammond Sanitary District. Before Marty took his position as District Manager, there were issues that the Hammond Sanitary District was working through. Marty took the bull by the horns. Basically, in Layman's terms, fixed it and now they are looking at an organization that us profitable. They are no longer in the red. Things are working smoothly. They are advancing the technology here at the Sanitary District through Marty's leadership and he does not see that anybody else could have done a better job than Marty at the role that he has had. Thank you very much.

Marty thanked the Board President and Owana. He said it is very humbling. He does have to say that it is a group effort. It is not just him. It is working with Rachel and the rest of the staff. All going and buying in to the direction they are heading. Without that buy in, things that have happened here at the District would've never happened. So, because of all of their support, he accepts this for all of them. Thank you.

Pictures were taken of Marty, President Dimopoulos and Rachel.

President Dimopoulos commented that he has to tell Marty that this was Owana that initiated the plaque. She contacted him and as he was reading her text, he was thinking why haven't they done this in the past. They should have done this a long time ago. Without him, he does not think the Sanitary District would be as far along as it is.

Marty thanked him again and said he appreciates that.

Commissioner Dye stated that he wants to saddle the Board President's comment. Marty has been a great leader since he has been on the Board going on seven years now and he has done a great job turning things around. He has been a great leader that they look up to and he is proud to call him a friend and also their CEO of the District. Thank you, Marty, for everything.

**President Dimopoulos called for Reports from Commissioners**

There were no reports from Commissioners.

**President Dimopoulos called for Public Expression**

Attorney Allegretti said that he wanted to clarify his earlier statement in response to the Commissioner Hawkins question about will the Biden Administration present any kind of change in the future. His comment was not political. He was only referring to the conventional wisdom that normally the Democrats are a little more aggressive in enforcement and activities with environmental matters. The past administration through enactment of some administrative orders (executive orders) kind of relaxed the environmental playing field and they can just anticipate under the new administration the environmental regulatory climate will be a little more aggressive. That is all he was referring to in case there was any misunderstanding.

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Marty wanted to remind everybody since it is the first of the year in January, their next board meeting is the 26<sup>th</sup> of January. That will be their second meeting of the month.

**President Dimopoulos called for a motion to adjourn the meeting**

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

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 4:32 p.m.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Sam Dimopoulos, President

/S/

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Dye, Vice-President  
(attending and voting via teleconference)

/S/

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Hawkins, Sr., Member  
(attending and voting via teleconference)

/S/

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owana Miller, Member  
(attending and voting via teleconference)

/S/

\_\_\_\_\_  
Heather Garay, Member  
(attending and voting via teleconference)

ATTEST:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Rachel Montes, Secretary

Kaleigh Boyle, Assistant Secretary

Board Minutes Prepared By: Kaleigh Boyle