



HAMMOND CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
312 EAST CHARLES STREET
HAMMOND, LOUISIANA

March 11, 2019

5:30pm

I. CALL TO ORDER: Council President, Gonzales called the Public Hearing to order @ 5:30pm

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

III. Pledge: Councilwoman Gonzales

IV. Prayer: Councilman Kip Andrews

V. PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Obtain public and council input, comment, evaluation, and discussion of the appointee of the Mayor for the position of chief of police.

Councilwoman Carlee Gonzales, read rules and procedures and stated the purpose for this meeting is to obtain comments on the Mayor's nominee for police Chief Edwin Bergeron.

Public Comments:

Xavier Ramirez: Hammond, La- Member of the Hammond Police Department- stated he is in favor of the appointment

Arden Wells: Ponchatoula, La. – stated Edwin is a former business partner of Mayor Panepinto and he's in business with Blair Edwards the wife of the Sheriff. There is corruption at the Sheriff's office and the Police Department. Mr. Wells stated there is also a suit against Bergeron

Oscar Dantzer: Hammond, La- stated that Taxpayers should vote on Police Chief

Karen Mauriner: Hammond, La.- Stated she reviewed a Civil Suit of Courtney Garza and this topic is very disturbing.

Daniel Lambert: Hammond La. – stated Edwin Bergeron is hardworking & honest and Spoke in favor of the appointee

Douglas Brown: Hammond, La. – spoke In support of the appointee and stated Edwin has the character & experience to do the job.

Henry DeJean: Hammond, La. – Stated the Council should make sure the Police Chief cares about the community and must set a good example of leadership.

Tranell Williams: Denham Springs, La. - Spoke in favor of the appointee. He stated Edwin knows the community & the people and he will be a good fit.

Anthony Ranataza: Hammond, La. - He stated that small crimes were in his neighborhood and Officer Bergeron assisted them and held a neighborhood meeting. He also provide his cell phone number to everyone and he has seen a reduction in crime and he supports the appointment of Edwin Bergeron.

Juan Durand: Amite, La. – Spoke in support of the appointee and stated he should be given a chance to show what he can do

Gwen Sweeney: Hammond, La. – stated she is concerned about the lawsuits and the allegations need to be investigated.

Lemar Marshall: Hammond, La. – stated he is concerned about lawsuit from prior Chief of Police and sees no need to rush the appointment. Also, he is concerned about all the allegations including the video.

Brian McCormick: Albany, La. – Stated he has been with Hammond Police Department since 1996 and he is for someone that's dedicated to do the job. He is in favor of the appointee

Daniel Boudreaux: Hammond, La. – Has been a member of the Hammond Police Department for 17yrs. Edwin has keen business sense and everyone respects him. He is in support of the appointee

There were no other public comments:

Mayor, Panepinto: stated he has watched Edwin grow from a 23 year old. He's done right by his family and he has a good work ethic. Edwin can motivate and he gets things done.

Sgt. Edwin Bergeron: Informed everyone he has been with the department over 20 yrs. He was in business with the Mayor before he was Mayor. Blair Edwards created an app for a driving service he owns. The app has not been developed. In the lawsuit, stated he was exonerated from any wrong doing and the City settled for \$5,000 to dismiss the suit. He stated he's from New Orleans and had a rough upbringing- he came to Southeastern and made his home in Hammond. He wants to bring Community Policing, Crime Awareness Program, & group leadership to the Department. He looks forward to the opportunity to lead the department.

Councilman Devon Wells: stated everyone has had the chance and opportunity to say something.

There was a motion by Councilman Steven Leon and second by Councilman Devon Wells to adjourn the meeting. All members were in favor meeting Adjourned. 5-0

CERTIFICATION OF CLERK

I TONIA BANKS, CLERK OF COUNCIL, DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE AND FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECITATION OF THE BUSINESS TRANSACTED AT THE PUBLIC HEARING MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD **March 11, 2019** BEING **6 PAGES** IN LENGTH

**TONIA BANKS
HAMMOND CITY COUNCIL CLERK**

**PRESIDENT, CARLEE WHITE GONZALES
HAMMOND CITY COUNCIL**