

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF WATERWORKS  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Regular Meeting Minutes  
March 16, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS:	STAFF:
John Bakota, President	Winna Guzman
Henry Ventura, Vice-President	Anthony Herrera
Joseph Ochoa, Member	Ben El Harit
Anthony Askounis, Member	
Ray Lopez, Member	

Reported by: Fissinger & Associates, Ltd.

By: Peggy S. LaLonde

Call to Order: 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Present: John Bakota, Henry Ventura,  
Anthony Askounis

MR. BAKOTA: First item, Board's approval of minutes from March 2, 2020, as presented.

Motion to approve minutes from March 2, 2020 made by Henry Ventura. Second by Anthony Askounis.

MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

Check Warrants next. I will go through these and we can consider all of them. Check Warrant 031920 WB, \$135,623.66; 031620 WB, \$186,628.69; 031620 CD, \$438.34; 031620 WF, \$34,712.

Motion to approve all check warrants as presented made by Henry Ventura. Second by Anthony Askounis.

Questions/Comments: None

MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

Let the minutes show that Joe Ochoa has joined us.

1                   These are payroll warrants next.  
2     WARRANT 030620 - \$35,805.85 - Payroll of 2/15/20 to  
3                   2/28/20

4     Motion to approve Payroll Warrant 030620 made by Anthony  
5     Askounis. Second by Henry Ventura.

6     Questions/Comments: None.

7                   MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by  
8     saying aye?

9                   (All signify aye.)

10                  MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.  
11     Warrant 030620 - \$26,233.92 - Utilities Payroll  
12                  Dates of 2/15/20 to 2/28/20

13     Motion to approve Utilities Payroll Warrant 030620 made  
14     by Henry Ventura. Second by Anthony Askounis.

15     Questions/Comments: None.

16                  MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by  
17     saying aye?

18                  (All signify aye.)

19                  MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.  
20                  Filtration Report.

21                  MR. EL HARIT: I'm going to make it sweet  
22     and fast. So basically we are starting to do some  
23     repairs and preventative maintenance. One of the  
24     measures of the preventative maintenance we are going to  
25     do is the modules, the one we spent the money on last  
   year. The modules is the filters basically. So we are  
   doing some preventative maintenance on. We are going to  
   Evoqua is the company, which is suppose to take care of  
   our equipment. This is normal. This is something  
   routine we have to do it. They never did it. Now we  
   are going to start and see maybe. Maybe, I cannot  
   promise everything. Maybe they might last for long  
   time. And depends how we take care of them and how we  
   maintain them and all that.

                  So then I have quote for you guys  
there. So what they do, they will come -- I'm going to  
say that normally they send us the first time, the  
quote. They come four times to the plant, but it was  
too late -- already in March -- start like from April  
and then come like three times. Next year we see how  
the modules are going to act up for this year. If we go  
with like four times or two times or three times. We'll

1 find out then. Basically will cost us like \$27,450 and  
2 I'm going to need approval for this.

3 MR. BAKOTA: It's the DuPont one. That's  
4 on the agenda here?

5 MR. EL HARIT: Correct. So when you see  
6 it, we can sign it -- if you want.

7 The other thing I have is  
8 Wonderware. This is -- every year you see this. This  
9 is like Scada. This is normal. You see this every  
10 year, which is \$11,146.00.

11 MR. BAKOTA: That is also on the agenda.

12 MR. EL HARIT: The other thing I have is  
13 SDR. So, last year you guys approved to have a fence.  
14 This is on Michigan and the main brain, so we have like  
15 new fence. The fence is old and we have the money for  
16 that. However, they did work in some area in the fence  
17 that need to be repaired. So basically right here -- if  
18 you see this -- we already have the money to change all  
19 the fence. We already approved all that. We good to  
20 go.

21 However, they are doing some work  
22 here. You see where the pipes, right here. So they had  
23 to move the fence so they can use the crane and all  
24 that, so that they can put the pipes in -- all that --  
25 to connect it to the new tank. So they have to move it,  
that 130 feet fence, which is going to cost us like  
\$5,000.

MR. VENTURA: It's in here?

MR. EL HARIT: Yes.

MR. VENTURA: \$5,400.00?

MR. EL HARIT: Yes.

MR. BAKOTA: We'll get to it as it comes  
up on the agenda.

MR. EL HARIT: The last thing I have is,  
there is one actuary. This is old plant. The old plant  
filters -- like six filters -- and each filter has left  
and right, and left and right has valve. That valve is  
old. It is really old. And I mean not the valve, the  
actuary. So our people -- maintenance -- they have to

1 go there to help the operator. So when he told them  
2 close it, he goes in and close it; and open it, open it  
3 all the time. Then also the operator has to go every  
4 eight hours to fill up that filter.

5 The reason why, because the actuary  
6 doesn't close all the way. So what it is, you have the  
7 valve and you have the actuator. The actuator is the  
8 one who turns the valve. The actuary doesn't turn the  
9 valve all the way, so there is leak in the valve, so the  
10 water keeps going. When it keeps going, it makes the  
11 filter go down. If it goes down all the way, that's a  
12 problem. You have to call the State to clean it, blah,  
13 blah, blah. There is a lot of things to it. We don't  
14 want to get there.

15 So, our people get there every eight  
16 hours. So hopefully with change in actuaries we would  
17 prevent this going every eight hours and have  
18 maintenance go there and all that. We do have  
19 actuators. We bought them last year. This is the price  
20 you have there, which I have two companies here, that  
21 they are going to install the actuaries for us.

22 MR. BAKOTA: There is two quotes.

23 MR. VENTURA: One from Morrison and one  
24 from Hayes.

25 MR. EL HARIT: Morrison, what they are  
saying is lump sum proposal, ten-inch valve, which is  
for each valve. We have ten, so ten times \$8,600.

MR. BAKOTA: You think that's a mistake  
on there?

MR. EL HARIT: I asked them. I look at  
it per valve. I was like, that's not right. I called  
them right away. That was the right rate.

MR. BAKOTA: Of course we favor Hayes.

MR. EL HARIT: Hayes is for everything.

MR. OCHOA: That's 8,000 per valve and we  
have ten valves?

MR. EL HARIT: The other company would be  
\$90,275.

MR. ASKOUNIS: For ten valves?

1 MR. EL HARIT: For ten valves.

2 MR. ASKOUNIS: What's wrong with that  
3 quote?

4 MR. EL HARIT: The one did a lot of work  
5 for us. We know they are always lower. They did a lot  
6 of work for us. But, however, like I called the guy  
7 before we sign. I mean we have to make sure.

8 MR. ASKOUNIS: You're talking 90,000 to  
9 8,000?

10 MR. EL HARIT: I call. It's correct,  
11 because I was shocked too. And I was like, okay, let me  
12 call him. And I asked my co-worker; is that correct?  
13 So Hayes does a lot of work for us and they are a good  
14 company.

15 MR. ASKOUNIS: Did you call the lower  
16 bid?

17 MR. EL HARIT: I mean actuator probably.  
18 Anyway, they do good job. I mean like they work with  
19 Sanitary as well, they do some work for them too. They  
20 are a good company.

21 Other than that, I don't have  
22 nothing else, except if you have any questions.

23 MR. BAKOTA: No questions. Water Report.

24 MS. GUZMAN: I just have one item under  
25 report. If I could read this -- it will be brief --  
press release, which will be put or uploaded to our  
website, and it's effective today. So I will just read  
this:

City of East Chicago, effective immediately,  
as part of City's response to the threat  
posed by the coronavirus, the East Chicago  
Water Department is implementing the  
following measures for the safety, health and  
wellness of our residents, customers and  
employees. To reduce in-person transactions,  
the Water Department's walk-in payment option  
will not be offered until further notice. So  
our walk-in lobby will be closed effective  
today. We would like to remind customers of  
other payment options available and that  
remain accessible, which are online water

1 payment, bill payments link at  
2 www.eastchicago.com, United States Postal  
3 Service or mail, First Merchants Bank-East  
4 Chicago branch, People's Bank-East Chicago  
5 branch, Strack & Van Til-East Chicago store,  
6 after hour depository box, only checks and  
7 money orders, located at the Water Department  
8 office on the east side of the building and  
9 below the drive-up window. Drive through  
10 option will remain open accepting payment  
11 during normal working hours.

12 As far as inspections of Water  
13 Department, Distribution, staff are  
14 instructed to suspend any in-house customer  
15 services, leak inspections, meter  
16 replacements, until further notice; unless  
17 it's an emergency where we have to go in.  
18 And for further information contact the East  
19 Chicago Water Department at 219-391-8487 or  
20 visit the website at www.eastchicago.com to  
21 the Water Department link.

22 So, just like to inform the Board.  
23 That was issued today. Actually it's been posted and it  
24 will be uploaded. I will be sending out to everyone  
25 within the City in hopes to reach to all our customers.  
That pretty much completes that portion of the agenda.

MR. BAKOTA; Distribution Report.

MS. GUZMAN: None at this time.

MR. BAKOTA: Okay.

Next is New Business, emergencies of  
Calumet City Plumbing. I'll handle these all at once,  
we'll go down the list of them. If the Board has any  
questions, you can maybe answer them at the end. So we  
have emergencies, Calumet City Plumbing: Carroll  
Street, Michigan Avenue, and White Oak, \$25,943.00; 3610  
Canal Street, \$2800.00; 151st and Indianapolis  
Boulevard, \$6,228.81; 4828 Magoun Avenue, \$5,936.86; 415  
Broad Street, \$5,273.60. They show a total of  
\$36,182.37. Do I have a motion?

Motion to approve payment of emergencies to Calumet City  
Plumbing made by Henry Ventura. Second by Anthony  
Askounis.

MR. BAKOTA: If anybody needs more time  
to scrutinize.

1 Questions/Comments: None

2 MS. GUZMAN: I would just say that these  
3 are leaks and they are addressed as emergencies for each  
4 one of these.

5 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by  
6 saying aye?

7 (All signify aye.)

8 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

9 Next is Hessville Plumbing. I'll go  
10 through them all again. 4117 Grand Boulevard,  
11 \$3,826.50; 5027 - 5031 Homerlee, \$4,245; 3734 Grand  
12 Boulevard, \$2,412; 3834 Deodar Street, \$3,417; 4026  
13 Euclid, \$3,487. Showing a total of \$17,396.00.

14 Motion to approve payment of emergencies for Hessville  
15 Plumbing made by Henry Ventura. Second by Anthony  
16 Askounis.

17 Questions/Comments:

18 MS. GUZMAN: I have a comment. Maybe I  
19 misheard, but the item for 3734 Grand Boulevard, for  
20 Hessville, is \$2,421.00. I thought you said \$2,412.00.  
21 I want to make sure it's the correct amount.

22 MR. BAKOTA: I have \$2,421. I might have  
23 misread it. Thank you. All in favor signify by saying  
24 aye?

25 (All signify aye.)

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

Next is agreements. We have a  
Facility Encroachment Agreement, CSX, Water, \$4,250.00.

Motion to approve Facility Encroachment agreement with CSX  
made by Athony Askounis. Second by Henry Ventura.

MR. BAKOTA: Any comments or questions?

MS. GUZMAN: I would just explain what  
this is for. Over at 4506 Cline Avenue, adjacent to the  
railroad, we had a leak, pretty nice size leak. We did  
insert two valves. The cost for the first phase of that  
project was over -- I'm going to say 255,000 -- I can't  
recall the exact amount. I think it was 254 some odd  
dollars. That was the first phase. This is the second  
phase which will allow us to correct the issue with the  
line, which we have been working on. This is the

1 agreement that we have to enter into with CSX to allow  
us to work near their railroad.

2 I have reviewed this with Attorney  
3 Allegretti and we need to submit it in order for us to  
be able to proceed with the next phase. This is one of  
4 our 24-inch lines, so we really need to get that done as  
soon as possible, so I'm trying to push for it.

5 MR. BAKOTA: Any other questions? (None)  
All in favor signify by saying aye?

6 (All signify aye.)

7 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

8 Next is Wonderware North,  
Filtration, for \$11,146. That's for one year.

9 Motion to approve agreement with Wonderware North made  
by Henry Ventura. Second by Anthony Askounis.

10 Questions/Comments:

11 MS. GUZMAN: That's \$11,146.00.

12 MR. BAKOTA: That's what I said.  
All in favor signify by saying aye?  
13 (All signify aye.)

14 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

Next is DuPont, Filtration,  
\$27,450.00.

15 Motion to accept Agreement with Dupont made by Anthony  
16 Askounis. Second by Henry Ventura.

17 MR. BAKOTA: On page 2, they list Rich  
Carr. He's no longer employed with us.

18 MR. HERRERA: That's attention to, that's  
19 not who is taking control of the matter.

20 MR. OCHOA: Maybe they should be notified  
when an employee leaves.

21 MR. HERRERA: After we notify them, they  
22 still do it.

23 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by  
saying aye?

24 (All signify aye.)

25 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

Next we have Dream Builder of



1 America, Filtrations. It's a rate sheet.

2 Motion to approve 2020 rate sheet of Dream Builder of  
3 America made by Anthony Askounis. Second by Henry  
4 Ventura.

4 MR. HERRERA: There's an error. This is  
5 suppose to be Water.

6 MR. ASKOUNIS: Amend the motion for  
7 Water.

8 MR. VENTURA: Second.

9 Questions/Comments: None

10 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by  
11 saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

12 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

13 Next is GPRS, Water. That's the  
14 service to locate utilities, right?

15 MS. GUZMAN: That is correct.

16 Motion to approve 2020 rate sheet for GPRS made by Henry  
17 Ventura. Second by Anthony Askounis.

18 Questions/Comments:

19 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by  
20 saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

21 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

22 Next is Commonwealth Engineers,  
23 Inc., Filtration.

24 Motion to accept 2020 rate sheet for Commonwealth  
25 Engineers, Inc., made by Anthony Askounis. Second by  
Henry Ventura.

MR. BAKOTA: That was an hourly rate they  
quote in here. Any other comments or questions? (None)  
All in favor signify by saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

Next is Devine - restripe parking  
lot, Water, \$2,350.

1 Motion to approve rate sheet for Devine, restripe  
2 parking lot, made by Henry Ventura. Second by Anthony  
3 Askounis.

3 Questions/Comments: None

4 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by  
5 saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

6 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

Next, Devine - lawn maintenance.

7 Motion to approve 2020 rate sheet for Devine, lawn  
8 maintenance, made by Anthony Askounis. Second by Henry  
9 Ventura.

9 Questions/comments:

10 MS. GUZMAN: I would just note one thing.  
11 This is what we did with them last year and what we  
12 added here, we are going to have them cleaning our front  
13 windows and the side windows so it will be appealing  
14 from the outside.

13 MR. BAKOTA: And they also plant the  
14 flowers?

15 MS. GUZMAN: They did plant the flowers  
16 and we'll have them do it again. We are trying. It  
17 takes a little effort, but it looks better.

18 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by  
19 saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

20 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

21 Next is Security Door Incorporated,  
22 Filtration, \$5,433.00.

23 Motion to approve rate sheet for Security Door made by  
24 Henry Ventura. Second by Anthony Askounis.

25 Questions/Comments:

MR. OCHOA: Where is the security door?

MR. BAKOTA: That's the fence around the  
26 tank at the plant. Any other comments? (None)

All in favor signify by saying aye?  
(All signify aye.)

1 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.  
2 Next, Hayes Mechanical, Filtration,  
3 \$9,275.00.  
4 Motion to approve contract from Hayes Mechanical made by  
5 Henry Ventura.

6 MR. OCHOA: Is that for the contract?

7 MR. BAKOTA: It's a contract, not a rate  
8 sheet. There are two contractors that bid on that.  
9 That's the one we were talking about, one for \$80,000  
10 and the other is \$9,000.

11 MR. OCHOA: So we already talked to the  
12 other contractor, right, is that what he said?

13 MR. VENTURA: Yes, he talked to them.

14 MR. OCHOA: For him to get this price of  
15 8,000 some dollars per valve, that's what he said that  
16 he got quoted?

17 MS. GUZMAN: I'm not sure because I was  
18 --

19 MR. BAKOTA: He said Hayes.

20 MR. VENTURA: He has both of them in  
21 there.

22 MR. HERRERA: They are the company who  
23 they have been working with for the last three years to  
24 install these valves, so because they are so familiar.

25 MR. BAKOTA: The other company quoted per  
valve.

MR. HERRERA: They are bundled in there  
for Hayes.

MR. OCHOA: He's going to charge us per  
valve and Hayes is going to charge us for the whole lot.  
I mean there is a big discrepancy.

MR. BAKOTA: I questioned him about that  
and he said he called that second contractor.

MS. GUZMAN: Maybe you should table this

1 to be sure.

2 Motion to approve contract from Hayes Mechanical made by  
3 Anthony Askounis. Second by Henry Ventura.

4 MR. BAKOTA: Other comments or questions?  
5 (None) All in favor signify by saying aye?  
6 (All signify aye.)

7 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.  
8 Next we have past due invoices. We  
9 have Lindys Ace Hardware, Filtration, \$97.51. Invoice  
10 couldn't be found so had to request another invoice to  
11 get this paid.

12 Motion to approve past due invoice for Lindys Ace  
13 Hardware made by Henry Ventura. Second by Anthony  
14 Askounis.

15 Questions/Comments: None

16 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by  
17 saying aye?

18 (All signify aye.)  
19 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.  
20 Next is Granger, \$248.96. Invoices  
21 were being sent to Thomas Uran and it was sent to me on  
22 March 3, 2020.

23 Motion to approve past due invoice of Granger made by  
24 Henry Ventura. Second by Anthony Askounis.

25 Questions/Comments: None

MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by  
saying aye?

(All signify aye.)  
MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.  
Next is Gateway Triangle  
Corporation, Water, \$76.00. Department was waiting on  
proposal approved by the Board of Works, which approved  
rate sheet on 2/12/20. Also not enough funds in 2019.

Motion to approve past due invoice of Gateway Triangle  
Corporation made by Joseph Ochoa. Second by Henry  
Ventura.

Questions/Comments: None

MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by

1 saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

2 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

3 Next is Bray Sales, Filtration,  
\$4,796.29. Invoices were being sent to former AP clerk  
4 who is no longer employed with the City of East Chicago.

5 Motion to approve past due invoice of Bray Sales made by  
Joseph Ochoa. Second by Henry Ventura.

6 Questions/Comments: None

7 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by  
saying aye?

8 (All signify aye.)

9 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

10 Next is Fissinger, Water, \$572.80.  
Vendor sent invoices in 3/12/2020.

11 Motion to approve past due invoices of Fissinger &  
Associates made by Henry Ventura. Second by Joseph  
Askounis.

12 Questions/Comments: None

13 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by  
14 saying aye?

15 (All signify aye.)

16 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

17 Report from legal counsel, Joseph  
Allegretti. (None)

18 Financial Report. There is a report  
19 in the packet for February 2020.

20 Unfinished Business: None.

21 Public Comment: None.

22 Our next meeting will be April 6,  
2020, at 5:00 p.m., here in the Council Chambers.

23 Do I have a motion for adjournment?

24 Motion to adjourn meeting made by Joseph Ochoa. Second  
by Henry Ventura.

25 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor signify by  
saying aye?

26 (All signify aye.)

27 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries. Meeting  
adjourned.

28 \*\*\*\*\* Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.\*\*\*\*\*

Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of  
March 16, 2020

Approved and signed \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_  
John Bakota, President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Henry Ventura, Vice-President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph Ochoa, Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ray Lopez, Member

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Anthony Askounis, Member



\_\_\_\_\_  
Anthony Herrera, Secretary

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Peggy S. LaLonde, a competent and duly qualified court reporter, do hereby certify that I did report in machine shorthand the foregoing proceedings and that my shorthand notes so taken at said time and place were thereafter reduced to typewriting under my personal direction.

I further certify that the foregoing typewritten transcript constitutes minutes of the said proceedings taken at said time and place, so ordered to be transcribed.

Dated at Munster, Indiana, this 18th day of March, 2020.

*Peggy S. LaLonde*



Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR