

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
October 8, 2019

BOARD MEMBERS:

Anthony Serna, President
Rick Rodriguez, Vice President
Valda Lewis, Secretary
Alberto Cantu
Eugene Austin

STAFF:

Courtnee Dinkins
Dawn Dawkins-Legal
Mayra Acosta

Reported by: Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR
Fissinger & Associates

Call to Order: 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Roll Call: Present: Anthony Serna, Valda Lewis,
Gilberto Cantu, Eugene Austin,
Rick Rodriguez.

Staff Present: Dawn Dawkins, Legal Counsel
Courtnee Dinkins, Recording Secretary
Mayra Acosta, Park & Recreation Director

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

MR. SERNA: First thing, I would
entertain a motion to approve meeting minutes of
September 24, 2019. Entertain a motion to approve.
Motion to approve minutes of September 24, 2019 made by
Valda Lewis. Second by Gilberto Cantu.

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

(All signify aye.)

MR. SERNA: Motion carries. Next, we
have approval of payroll dated October 4, 2019.
Entertain a motion to approve payroll dated October 4,
2019.
Motion to approve payroll of October 4, 2019 made by
Gilberto Cantu. Second by Valda Lewis.

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

1 (All signify aye.)

2 MR. SERNA: Motion carries. Next,
3 approval Warrant Report 100819 PB, in the amount of
4 \$11,110.77. Entertain a motion to approve Warrant
5 Report.

6 Motion to approve Warrant Report 100819PB made by
7 Gilberto Cantu. Second by Eugene Austin.

8 MR. SERNA: All in favor signify by
9 saying aye?

10 (All signify aye.)

11 MR. SERNA: Motion carries. Move on to
12 Old Business. We have the agreement on the ATM
13 terminal. I believe, Counsel, I was talking with our
14 Director, Mayra, saying that we are indeed going to have
15 the skating rink again at MacArthur Golf Course. She
16 would definitely like to get this done. Is it ready?

17 MS. DAWKINS: As far as I know, she had
18 indicated to me that the owner was willing to make
19 whatever adjustments we requested. So, I did send it to
20 the owner to ask her to try to get back with me before
21 today's meeting, but she has not, and I don't think she
22 is going to have a problem with it. Mayra didn't think
23 that she would, so it's in here.

24 MR. SERNA: I think we should pass it.
25 What was the major change that we requested on there,
Counsel? I know it had something to do -- was it a
minimum? Was there something with a minimum --

MS. DAWKINS: Minimum was 60 days for
written notice, we reduced it to 30 days in two
sections. Also the unrestricted view of the ATM from
the front entrance, to delete that provision. And then
the final change was dealing with the percentage, in the
event there was an early termination and the company
wanted 90 percent of what the past monthly revenue was,
if we terminated early, we would be responsible for that

MR. SERNA: And Madame Secretary did
place that on the agenda with all those changes that you
made.

So, Board members, you feel
comfortable to go ahead and vote on accepting this ATM
agreement with these changes.

1 MR. AUSTIN: Well, only thing I have,
2 that since they didn't get back with you to make sure
3 this is okay.

4 MS. DAWKINS: Right. I sent it to her
5 Sunday. I forgot -- whenever I sent it to Courtnee on
6 Friday, I forgot to send it to the owner, the lady
7 that's going to sign it, who's the owner. So when I
8 realized I hadn't sent it to her, I did send it to her.
9 We had already discussed this.

10 MR. SERNA: And you said Mayra said she
11 probably wouldn't have any issues with the change?

12 MS. DAWKINS: Mayra said she didn't have
13 any changes. That the owner was saying whatever we
14 changed it to was okay with her.

15 MR. SERNA: So, I think it's going to be
16 all right. If we approve it today it would be all
17 right.

18 MR. AUSTIN: This is about getting the
19 machine?

20 MR. SERNA: We had a machine there before
21 and want to get one back in there before the skating
22 rink starts. It would be good to vote on it now so it's
23 ready to go.

24 MR. AUSTIN: Do we have to check this
25 out -- you know they're stealing machines really fast
now. Are we going to be responsible for the machine
once they set it in there? Are we going to have to
protect the machine or who is going to do that?

MR. SERNA: That's in the contract.

MR. AUSTIN: In the contract we have?

MR. SERNA: If you had time to look it
over, if you looked at it, the location and everything
is spelled out in the contract.

MS. DAWKINS: That's the reason why we
added the provision about it not being unrestricted, the
view. We didn't want it in plain view because of that
reason, so it won't be anyway. But they know where it
is going to be, but we took that aspect -- that part of

1 what the addendum is for.

2 MR. SERNA: I'll entertain a motion to
3 approve the agreement for ATM with the addendum that you
4 all have in your packet.
5 Motion to approve ATM Agreement made by Rick Rodriguez.
6 Second by Valda Lewis.

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

(All signify aye.)

9 MR. SERNA: Motion carries. Next we have
10 under Old Business -- the Nipsco claim. How are we
11 progressing on that, Counsel?

12 MS. DAWKINS: I haven't gotten anything
13 from them.

14 MR. SERNA: Okay, nothing yet. We'll
15 leave this under Old Business and hopefully -- we did
16 leave on a positive note, where they did say they would
17 take our claim under advisement.

18 MS. DAWKINS: I thought that was very
19 good, but I'll send another reminder. It came to me
20 that maybe they might like pictures. I was going to get
21 with Mayra, maybe give them an idea of the front of the
22 building since the location seemed to be the issue, but
23 I hadn't talked to her about that yet.

24 MR. SERNA: Okay. We'll keep that on the
25 agenda, Madame Secretary.

Next, we'll move on to New Business.
We have invoice -- past due invoice memo. These past
due invoices are from Fissinger & Associates, our court
reporter. So we have two invoices, both from the month
of July. Maybe you can tell us about the past due
invoices from Fissinger.

MS. ACOSTA: These invoices were sent to
Loretta, our old secretary, and they were just never
forwarded to us.

MR. SERNA: Okay. All right. Any
questions on the late invoices? (None) I'll entertain a
motion to approve payment of the late invoice No. 20170,
dated July 1st, 2019, in the amount of \$241.60; and

1 invoice 20200 dated July 11, 2019, in the amount of
2 \$180.00, both to Fissinger & Associates, our court
reporters.

3 Motion to approve past due invoices to Fissinger &
4 Associates made by Valda Lewis. Second by Rick
Rodriguez.

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

6 (All signify aye.)

7 MR. SERNA: Motion carries. Next, we
8 have quote for fountain for MacArthur Golf Course, from
Aquatic Control.

9 MS. ACOSTA: Yes, this is for the
10 fountain we are going to purchase, so it could be right
behind the gazebo that we are going to be installing,
and I've put a picture of it as well.

11 MR. SERNA: The grand total for the
12 fountain is \$7,477.06, correct?

13 MS. ACOSTA: That is correct.

14 MR. SERNA: All right. Any questions,
15 Board members? (None) Entertain a motion to approve
the fountain by Aquatic Control, in the amount of
\$7,477.06.

16
17 Motion to approve fountain by Aquatic Control made by
Rick Rodriguez. Second by Valda Lewis.

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

19 (All signify aye.)

20 MR. SERNA: Motion carries.

21 MS. LEWIS: I did have one question. Is
22 this installation too or just the fountain?

23 MS. ACOSTA: Just the fountain.

24 MR. SERNA: Next, we have under New
Business, request for use of Unity Center. This is from
25 Mr. Balbo, School City of East Chicago, and this letter
I will read into the minutes. The School City of East

1 Chicago is requesting the assistance of East Chicago
2 Parks and Recreation Department providing Lincoln
3 Elementary Schools, students and staff, with permission
4 to access and utilization of Unity Center, 3620 Guthrie
5 Street as an emergency evacuation site in the event that
6 a manmade or natural disaster takes place that requires
7 immediate evacuation of school building. In an
8 emergency evacuation Lincoln Elementary School building
9 students will be led and be supervised by staff members
10 to the Unity Center. On arrival Lincoln Elementary
11 staff will continue to supervise students until such
12 time it is determined that they are either able to
13 return to the school building or they can safely be
14 transported from the Unity Center to the established
15 reunification site. Our request for emergency access to
16 the Unity Center is limited to your standard hours of
17 operation, Monday through Friday, on scheduled school
18 days, only from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. We would also
19 ask that we be allowed to schedule 30-minute drills each
20 school year, one in early Fall and one in the Spring.
21 These drills are limited to students and staff walking
22 to the Unity Center, attendance will be taken, and then
23 they would immediately return to the school. Scheduling
24 these drills would be done in cooperative and
25 coordination with Unity Center and would only take place
after the safety manager concurrence and authorization.
If further information is required, please contact me
directly. Thank you for this consideration in the
interest of public school safety.

16 He has called fire department on
17 number of occasions to advise us of different school
18 drills. As a matter of fact, they had one at Harrison,
19 where they practice evacuating students out of their to
20 location.

18 Basically what this is for -- when
19 he put manmade, that means a shooter, a school shooter
20 or active shooter. Those kinds of situations where they
21 need to evacuate the building. Unfortunately in our day
22 and age, they have to plan and practice for these
23 things. But also if there is a natural disaster, like
24 some natural disaster -- mostly for active shooter --
25 they have to evacuate the students out of school. They
are asking -- and Mayra, what is your recommendation?

MS. ACOSTA: So, I think the only issue
-- and I think this is second request -- we had the same
request sent over to the Park Board a little earlier
this year. But the issue is the type of floor that was
installed in the new centers, that we do not allow

1 street shoes to go inside the gym. I know they want to
2 do a few drills during the year, and then, you know, I
3 don't know how we would address that. Public Works the
4 entire day to cover the gym with mats.

5 MR. SERNA: There's a way to advise them
6 of this, put it in a letter to him, that -- you know --
7 we would be willing to help, but that every student
8 would have to take off their shoes because that's the
9 only way they can walk on that floor, because we can't
10 have school shoes on. At least we would present him
11 with that information rather than just a cold no. So
12 that way they understand, and maybe they will come back
13 and say, okay, we'll tell all our kids to take their
14 shoes off or maybe we'll find another location. Board
15 members?

16 MS. LEWIS: My only -- maybe you can
17 suggest to them, each teacher be provided with a large
18 garbage bag and they can put their kids shoes in the bag
19 as they come in the building. The teacher can keep them
20 with her class. And another aspect of that not
21 addressed, they do have students over there in
22 wheelchairs.

23 MR. SERNA: That's correct.

24 MR. AUSTIN: I want to know what type of
25 shoes are you going to play on that floor with, what are
the kids using?

MS. ACOSTA: Right now for regular
residents or this issue specifically?

MR. AUSTIN: That's what I'm asking, for
residents.

MS. ACOSTA: For residents. So they are
suppose to bring a pair of gym shoes that have not been
worn outside. Something clean on the bottom. So they
have to walk in with a pair of shoes and switch over to
different pair once they walk in. And we do provide
free lockers where they are able to store all their
personal belongings in, their extra pair of shoes.

MR. AUSTIN: Okay. You know, I think
that's going to be a slow start because when people --
you have kids and they will want to participate, you
have to say, hey, we've got rules and you need to have

1 two pair of shoes. Maybe they can rent from us and do
that instead of when you push that on them.

2

MR. SERNA: How long have Unity Center
3 and Heritage Hall been open?

4

MS. ACOSTA: June of last year, so little
bit over a year. And Unity was open in November, so
5 almost a year next month.

6

MR. SERNA: So about 15 months on the
Heritage Hall and almost a year. And in that time has
7 there ever been a need or anyone asked for shoes, if we
could provide shoes or anything?

8

MS. ACOSTA: No, we haven't had an issue.

9

MR. SERNA: Everybody that comes in
10 brings their own shoes.

11

MS. ACOSTA: We have about 1500 members
total.

12

MR. SERNA: So 1500 members, they have to
13 bring in their own shoes.

14

MR. AUSTIN: All in East Chicago.

15

MS. ACOSTA: Yes.

16

MR. SERNA: At Heritage Hall, new
Heritage Hall has been open for 15 months and Unity
17 Center.

18

MR. AUSTIN: Okay. I just thought I'd
ask because we don't want to get caught up -- we don't
19 want to push the people away. We want to bring them in.

20

MR. SERNA: Also, Board members, what do
you think about sending a letter to Mr. Balbo with the
21 school, advising him of our issue -- our policy with the
floor. Do you think that's a good idea to send that
22 letter?

23

MR. RODRIGUEZ: I think it's appropriate
to do that that way so he will be aware.

24

MS. LEWIS: I do too, and maybe the
25 wheelchair people can sit in the foyer.

1 MR. SERNA: They couldn't go in the gym.
2 They'd have to sit in the hallway or one of the
3 classrooms. Actually there's an all purpose room now
4 that your office isn't there any more.

5 MR. CANTU: As I recall, you know, we
6 already denied one time, they requested before. And she
7 brought up about the floor at that time, that it would
8 be messed up for the kids to come around. And you said
9 we are going to deny because we cannot have that.

10 Also, what is going to happen if
11 Harrison School asks you to use --

12 MR. SERNA: Harrison School already has a
13 place to go to, that's why I mentioned that. They
14 called -- Mr. Balbo called on Monday, yesterday.
15 Harrison School goes to the church.

16 MR. CANTU: To the church, okay. What I
17 am saying, you already denied before, now they come back
18 again, and already she told us that she is afraid it
19 would damage the gym floor. We already deny once.

20 MR. SERNA: I will entertain a motion and
21 you can vote yes or no. I will entertain a motion to
22 approve sending a letter to Mr. Balbo advising him of
23 our rules so he's aware. I will entertain that motion.

24 MR. CANTU: I won't motion. Deny like we
25 did before.

MR. SERNA: I'll entertain a motion.

MR. CANTU: We need to be consistent.

MR. SERNA: The motion -- if there is a
motion that I am entertaining -- is to send a letter
advising Mr. Balbo that we would have to require the
kids to take their shoes off because they can't walk on
the floor. That's what the letter would say, so it
wouldn't be just a no. It would be, here's what they
would have to do and the ball would be in his court. We
would have to reply and say, well, then we can't do it
or okay. We'll make sure our kids but their shoes in a
plastic bag a garbage bag. I'll entertain that motion.
Anybody like to make that motion?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Mr. President, why not
send him the letter first before we accept or deny?

1 MR. SERNA: We can do that. We can do
2 that. Just for the purpose of Mr. Cantu's dissent, I
3 was offering an option to have him express his dissent
4 in the form of a motion, by voting no. But if the Board
5 -- I still think I would like to send that letter, but I
6 would like us to put it on record that maybe four out of
7 five wanted to send the letter.

8 MR. RODRIGUEZ: The letter is good for
9 me. I just want maybe not to vote on it yet, table it,
10 send the letter first.

11 MR. SERNA: Are you fine with that, Mr.
12 Cantu, tabling it and sending a letter advising him what
13 our rules are?

14 MR. CANTU: They did it before. And he
15 say to recommend to deny because of the damage to the
16 floor of the gym. So why do we have to come back on
17 ourselves, yes, it is okay now.

18 MR. SERNA: That's why I wanted to put
19 this in a motion. Mr. Cantu has expressed dissent.

20 MR. CANTU: We have to be consistent,
21 denied one time, next time they say okay this time.

22 MR. RODRIGUEZ: They are setting rules.
23 Last time it wasn't set, right?

24 MR. CANTU: We sent a letter, you recall
25 that?

MS. ACOSTA: From what I remember.

MR. CANTU: You brought them up they
would damage -- some damage on the gym.

MS. ACOSTA: Yes.

MR. CANTU: We deny one time and now yo
are going to say okay. That's wrong. You have to be
consistent.

MR. SERNA: That's why I'm asking for the
motion that we sent School City a letter advising them
of our rules with the Unity Center, so that way they
understand. Then the ball would be in his court.

1 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I make a motion to send a
2 letter.

3 MR. SERNA: We have a motion on the
4 table.

5 MS. LEWIS: Second.

6 MR. SERNA: Is there discussion on the
7 motion? (None) Any questions?

8 MR. AUSTIN: Well, obviously I was saying
9 that we table this until they get back and then we'll
10 say no?

11 MR. SERNA: The motion on the floor is to
12 send the letter and you also can dissent if you would
13 like to vote no on the motion, that's what the
14 conversation that Rick Rodriguez was having with Mr.
15 Cantu to try send a letter, find out what they say, but
16 that was not amenable to Mr. Cantu. So by having the
17 motion on the floor, that allowed everyone here on the
18 Board to either express their agreement or their dissent
19 with sending the letter. So motion was made by Rick,
20 second by Miss Lewis. All in favor signify by saying
21 aye?

22 MS. LEWIS: Aye.

23 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

24 MR. SERNA: Aye. Opposed? (No response)
25 Abstain? (No response) Motion carries. So we'll send
that letter to School City. So it's not a yes, but
advising them that this is the rules that we have for
the floor, and then they will get back to us and let us
know.

Madame Secretary, please send that letter
to Mr. Balbo and work on the wording with Mayra, if you
like.

MR. AUSTIN: One thing I was saying --
only thing I'm saying, like one of the members say, we
send them a letter and we table this until the letter
gets back to us.

MS. LEWIS: I think the letter is putting
us on that level already. It's going to table it
anyway. We are not making a decision yes or no. We are

1 just sending them a letter telling them our rules and
regulations, and what we would like to see them do.

2 That automatically -- I think -- tables their request.

3 MR. SERNA: Thank you, Miss Lewis. Next,
price list for Greenhouse items.

4

5 MS. ACOSTA: So earlier this year you
approved all the pricing of the products on the top
6 portion, but now we have some seasonal items that will
be available during the winter, and we want approval for
selling and pricing of these items.

7

MR. SERNA: All of these items listed?

8

9 MS. ACOSTA: Yes, what we have listed and
need approval, including where it says, any combination
of lettuce or greens will be the \$3 per half pound.

10

11 MR. SERNA: Up to where it says, any
combination of.

12 MS. ACOSTA: Yes.

13 MR. SERNA: Any questions on this, Board
members? (None) I'll entertain a motion to approve the
14 price list, which now includes the oregano, fresh mint,
and the special order combination of lettuce, greens
15 charge extra \$3.00 half pound. Motion to approve?
16 Motion to approve Greenhouse price list made by Rick
Rodriguez. Second by Valda Lewis.

17

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

(All signify aye.)

19

20 MR. SERNA: Motion carries. Final item,
we have Service Agreement with Sample Soil at Veterans'
Park and Roxana Park.

21

22 MS. ACOSTA: So we are doing trails at
Veterans and Roxana. Last year we had an issue when we
did the walking path over at Riley Park and we ended up
23 having contamination soil there.

24 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I thought they cleaned it
up.

25

1 MS. ACOSTA: We cleaned it, but we didn't
2 check the soil before we started the trail. This time
3 we need to check the soil first before we can move
4 forward.

5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I thought that EPA
6 already cleaned up all that?

7 MS. ACOSTA: At Riley.

8 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Except for the baseball
9 field.

10 MS. ACOSTA: But this is for Veterans and
11 Roxana.

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: But they are still
13 contaminate soil?

14 MS. ACOSTA: No. There was when we did
15 the trails.

16 MR. RODRIGUEZ: That was cleaned up.

17 MS. ACOSTA: In order to avoid this again
18 in these two parks, we need to check the soil. This is
19 a contract to have that soil checked. These are the
20 rates for the pricing, per collection, and then for
21 analysis.

22 MR. SERNA: All right. So are there any
23 questions on the rates and the Service Agreement with
24 Americo? (None) I'll entertain a motion to approve the
25 Service Agreement for sampling the soil with Americo for
Veterans Park and Roxana Park.

Motion to approve Service Agreement for Sample Soil at
Veterans' and Roxana Parks made by Valda Lewis. Second
by Rick Rodriguez.

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

(All signify aye.)

MR. SERNA: Motion carries. Anything
else for us, Mayra?

MS. ACOSTA: No, unless you have
questions for me.

1 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I have one. Are they
putting lights on these trails?

2
3 MS. ACOSTA: For here, Veterans
specifically, we are adding some lights. There's
4 already electrical on most of the trees because we do
the regular lighting. We are extending it over to the
5 Community Center so we can light up the walking path.
So that people that come to Lighting Of The Tree, could
6 do the lighting of the tree and then walk over to the
Community Center.

7 MR. SERNA: Mayra, I think I noticed on
Parrish, the sculptor is starting work on a tree there.

8
9 MS. ACOSTA: Fifth and final tree, the
sculptor is calling Eye C, so it's going to have various
eyes that actually are carved in. It's going to be a
10 community event. So the sculptor is going to actually
make metal eyes or the shape of the eye, and then he's
11 going to go through all the community centers and have
the kids paint those. And once he makes the selection
12 from them, he's going to put them up on the tree.

13 MR. SERNA: I did see someone doing work
on the tree on the 4100-block of Washington Park.

14 MR. AUSTIN: What is the cost of that?

15
16 MS. ACOSTA: Of the tree sculptor? It's
about \$5,000 per tree, but that includes transportation
17 for the sculptor, transportation, materials, hotel
stays, whatever they need to get here.

18 MR. AUSTIN: The only thing, is that
going to be left out during the year or using a certain
19 type of tree.

20 MS. ACOSTA: It's permanent. They are
dying trees that they are making into sculptures.

21
22 MR. AUSTIN: Do we know something about
the company that's doing it?

23 MS. ACOSTA: I think you guys signed the
agreement earlier this year for the tree sculptor or
24 signed last year.


25 MR. SERNA: Something we all approved

Approval of the Meeting Minutes of Tuesday

October 8, 2019

Approved and signed

October 22nd, 2019



Anthony Serna, President



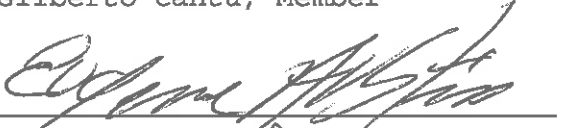
Rick Rodriguez, Vice-President



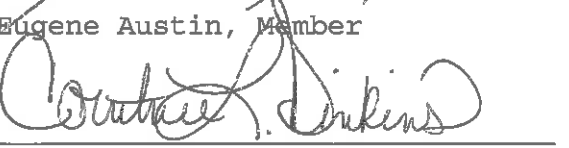
Valda Lewis, Secretary



Gilberto Cantu, Member



Eugene Austin, Member



Courtnee Dinkins, Recording Secretary

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1 last year.

2 MR. ALLEGRETTI: CSI.

3 MR. SERNA: Thank you, Mayra. Any public
comments? (None)

4 Our next Board meeting is two weeks
from today, right here at City Hall Council Chambers,
5 second floor.

6 No further business, I'll entertain
a motion to adjourn.

7 Motion to adjourn made by Rick Rodriguez. Second by
Valda Lewis.

8 MR. SERNA: All in favor signify by
9 saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

10 MR. SERNA: Motion carries.

11

***** Meeting Adjourned *****

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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 17th day of October, 2019.

Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR

