

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF WATERWORKS

BOARD MEMBERS

Joseph Ochoa, President
John Bakota, Vice President
Henry Ventura, Member
Anthony Askounis, Member
Ray Lopez, Member

Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 7, 2022 @ 5:00 p.m.
Reported for Fissinger & Associates
By: Lisa Pena

CALL TO ORDER: 5:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLIANCE:

ROLL CALL: Present: Joseph Ochoa, John Bakota, Henry
Ventura, Anthony Askounis, Ray Lopez

STAFF PRESENT: Alysia Dunbar, Winna Guzman, Allan Lee,
Joseph Allegretti, William Biller

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: December 6, 2021

Motion to approve December 6, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes
made by John Bakota. Second by Henry Ventura.

Comments/Questions: None.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
Opposed: None Motion Carries.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 20, 2022

Motion to approve January 20, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes
made by Ray Lopez. Second by Anthony Askounis.

Comments/Questions: None.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
Opposed: None Motion Carries.

1 APPROVAL OF WARRANTS:

2 Payroll

3 MR. OCHOA: Payroll 012122 in the amount of \$12,871.41.
4 Utilities Payroll 1/1/22 to 1/14/22.

5 Motion to approve Payroll Warrant 012122. Utilities Payroll
6 1/1/22 to 1/14/22 made by Ray Lopez. Second by Henry
7 Ventura.

8 Comments/Questions: None.

9 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
10 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

11 MR. OCHOA: Payroll 012122 in the amount of \$40,823.70.
12 Payroll 1/1/22 to 1/14/22.

13 Motion to approve Payroll Warrant 012122. Payroll 1/1/22 to
14 1/14/22 made by John Bakota. Second by Anthony Askounis.

15 Comments/Questions: None.

16 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
17 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

18 Accounts Payable

19 MR. OCHOA: Accounts Payable 020722 WB in the amount of
20 \$155,449.08.

21 Motion to approve Accounts Payable Warrant 020722 WB made by
22 Henry Ventura. Second by Anthony Askounis.

23 Comments/Questions: None.

24 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
25 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

MR. OCHOA: Warrant 123121 WB in the amount of
\$204,365.41.

Motion to approve Accounts Payable Warrant 123121 WB made by
Ray Lopez. Second by Henry Ventura.

24

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1 Comments/Questions: None.

2 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
3 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

4 MR. OCHOA: Warrant 020122 WB in the amount of
5 \$24,565.73.

6 Motion to approve Accounts Payable Warrant 020122 WB made by
7 Ray Lopez. Second by Henry Ventura.

8 Comments/Questions: None.

9 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
10 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

11 REPORTS:

12 Filtration

13 MR. OCHOA: Filtration Report, Obed Perez.

14 MS. GUZMAN: I'm sorry. He was not able to come today
15 due to working the day shift. We are short of staff. So he
16 is working. So he wasn't able to make it.

17 Water None

18 Distribution

19 MR. OCHOA: Distribution Report, Allan Lee.

20 MR. LEE: Hi, guys. Pretty much everything there is
21 almost the same. Sort of like stalled until somebody comes
22 in.

23 Some of the big valves are broke in the system. We
24 had a pretty good 12-inch break over the weekend. Always
25 just leaks. This morning there's already a three-quarter
service stat on there.

26 Tomorrow Hasse is going to go down Chicago Avenue.
27 We got a break in a 16. But we're going to wait until
28 tomorrow to schedule an emergency.

29 MR. OCHOA: You said it was a 16 inch valve?

30 MR. LEE: 16-inch valve. We broke it in. It's small.
31 But it's icing up. But we've got these and plus two more.

1 So that's where we are.

2 Sort of waiting to get money back from last year so
3 we can start in some businesses try to get some big valves
4 changed out and we can always get the little ones later.

4 MR. OCHOA: Thank you.

5 Legal Counsel

6 MR. OCHOA: Legal Counsel, Joseph Allegretti.

7 MR. ALLEGRETTI: Our financial advisors are working
8 diligently on our preparation of filing our rate case with
9 the IURC.

9 The rate case to raise the sewage charges has begun
10 and is ongoing. Three of our large industrial customers have
11 joined together hired a lawyer demonstrating against our
12 proposed rate. We expect they would be doing the same thing
13 against our rate for the Water Utility once it's filed.

12 We scheduled a meeting with them. We did try to
13 talk and explain all the things, the resources that the City
14 provides that are not being built into the rates.

14 It's ongoing. There's a lot of overlap between the
15 two utilities. We expect that's it's not going to be easy.
16 But it's ongoing. I know they're working likewise.

16 MR. OCHOA: Do you think it will be done by this year?

17 MR. ALLEGRETTI: Yes, sir.

18 MR. BAKOTA: Do you think we'll have a meeting prior to
19 asking for approval so we can be familiar?

19 MR. ALLEGRETTI: Absolutely. We're going to have a
20 meeting and work study session. And there will be a
21 resolution for you to authorize it.

21 It's ongoing. And there's just so much work to be
22 done in advance.

23 It's known that a rate is needed. We're looking
24 for money to pay for the main breaks. And there's just not
25 enough money in your rate structure to efficiently operate
our utilities.

1 We don't raise enough money to do it and it's
2 subsidized. It's just really not good.

3 But it's subsidized from other sources of funding
4 from Civil City, from other seeded and general fund surplus
5 which one of these days is going to go away. So we have to
6 achieve self-sufficiency.

7 MR. BAKOTA: Does that have to go in front of the City
8 Council too?

9 MR. ALLEGRETTI: No. It's just Indiana Utility
10 Regulatory Commission.

11 Sewer user charges traditionally once had to go
12 through Council. We had a bill passed in 2020 giving us the
13 option of filing a rate case. So if the Council wouldn't
14 cooperate, we had an alternate method of modifying our rates
15 so it's a success.

16 MR. BAKOTA: Thanks, Joe.

17 Financial Report

18 MR. OCHOA: Financial Report, William Biller.

19 MR. BILLER: It's in the package. If there's any
20 questions, I'll be happy to answer them.

21 NEW BUSINESS WATER:

22 MR. OCHOA: New Business Water. WD 22-01, a Resolution
23 of the City of East Chicago, Indiana Department of Waterworks
24 Board of Directors Approving a Debt Policy and Cash Reserve
25 Policy.

 Motion to approve Resolution WD 22-01 made by John Bakota.
 Second by Anthony Askounis.

 Comments/Questions: None.

 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

 MR. ALLEGRETTI: This is just boilerplate required by
 the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission. Policy provision
 is one that would necessarily be followed by the Utility for
 issuance of debt whether it be general obligation debt or
 billing back debt requiring the appropriate amount of reserve

1 procurement for placing of the bond issue.

2 It's all kind of boilerplate. No surprises.
3 Doesn't add any additional burden upon us. It's just
4 checking a box.

5 MR. BAKOTA: Do we do this every year?

6 MR. ALLEGRETTI: No. We only do it when go through the
7 process with the IURC.

8 MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions?

9 MR. ALLEGRETTI: You already passed it. Sorry.

10 MR. OCHOA: WD 2022-02, a Resolution of the Board of
11 Directors Authorizing the Write-off of Certain Delinquent
12 Water Charges and Penalties.

13 Motion to approve Resolution WD 2022-02 made by Ray Lopez.
14 Second by Henry Ventura.

15 Comments/Questions: None.

16 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
17 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

18 MR. OCHOA: WD 22-03, East Chicago Water Utility Bond
19 and Interest Fund.

20 Motion to approve Resolution WD 22-03 made by Henry Ventura.
21 Second by Anthony Askounis.

22 Comments/Questions: None.

23 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
24 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

25 Agreements

MR. OCHOA: Agreements. Microbac Service Proposal,
Filtration.

Motion to approve Microbac Service Proposal Agreement made by
Anthony Askounis. Second by Henry Ventura.

1 Comments/Questions: None.

2 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
3 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

4 MR. OCHOA: Low Income Household Water Assistance
5 Program Memorandum.

6 Motion to approve Low Income Household Water Assistance
7 Program Memorandum of Agreement made by John Bakota. Second
8 by Henry Ventura.

9 Comments/Questions: None.

10 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
11 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

12 MR. OCHOA: MOA Agreement, Water.

13 MS. GUZMAN: It's the same.

14 MR. LEE: That proposal is for M.E. Simpson. What they
15 do is they come and test to make sure they're reading the
16 right amount of water going out.

17 We usually do it once a year. So we know exactly
18 how much water is going out. Then they look at our meters.
19 Then we know how much water is going somewhere else.

20 I'm sorry.

21 MS. GUZMAN: Just a mixup.

22 MR. LEE: Rookie.

23 MR. OCHOA: We're back to the Agreements, MOA.

24 MS. GUZMAN: That was the same as approved.

25 MR. BAKOTA: There's two different letters in the
package.

MS. GUZMAN: It's the same.

MR. VENTURA: Are we back on M.E. Simpson?

MR. OCHOA: Go ahead and finish.

MR. LEE: That's the cost for coming in and doing the

1 test. It usually takes a day.

2 The computer goes inside the main. The computer
3 tells exactly how much water is coming into the plant. Then
4 they check the meter to make sure that it's accurate.

5 MR. BAKOTA: So they verify it for a year then?

6 MR. LEE: Well, no. When they come in and test it, they
7 give us a reading. Then they check the master meter to make
8 sure it's the same.

9 Once we get the pipe on it then we can see all the
10 other readings. Then we can see if there's lost water, 1
11 percent or 20 percent.

12 I know American Water, they don't want it to be
13 like that. We want it to be as low as possible. We're
14 making water. We want to sell it, not lose it.

15 MR. BAKOTA: They're only checking if there is a water
16 loss?

17 MR. LEE: All they're doing is just giving a reading how
18 much water comes in.

19 MR. BAKOTA: And then you determine from that?

20 MR. LEE: That's the cost to come in.

21 MR. ALLEGRETTI: On top of the IURC I think it's 10
22 percent loss. If it's more than 10 percent, supposedly their
23 eyebrows raise.

24 MR. BAKOTA: Years back we hired a company to do a
25 search on water leaks. Do you remember that? Differential
was way high.

Motion to approve M.E. Simpson Master/Production Meter
Testing Proposal made by John Bakota. Second by Ray Lopez.

Comments/Questions: None.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
Opposed: None Motion Carries.

MR. OCHOA: M.E. Simpson Fire Hydrant Maintenance,
\$25,800.

1 MR. LEE: They come in and check all the hydrants. We
2 have 32 to change.

3 MR. BAKOTA: I've got a question just as a matter of
4 information. That's all. I called the Fire Department
5 because the hydrant was froze. Usually when you close the
6 hydrants it trips off more than others.

7 MR. LEE: Not necessarily. There's just a hole like
8 this that's at the bottom. So water is going out a hole and
9 goes into the ground.

10 MR. BAKOTA: Normally if it's closed it should drain?

11 MR. LEE: Yes. If the hydrants work like they're
12 supposed to in East Chicago.

13 Motion to approve M.E. Simpson Fire Hydrant Maintenance
14 Proposal made by Ray Lopez. Second by Anthony Askounis.

15 Comments/Questions: None.

16 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
17 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

18 MR. OCHOA: M.E. Simpson 2022 Water Audit to Reflect
19 2022, \$19,900, Water.

20 Motion to approve M.E. Simpson 2022 Water Audit to Reflect
21 2022 made by Anthony Askounis. Second by Henry Ventura.

22 Comments/Questions: None.

23 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
24 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

25 MR. OCHOA: ATS 2022 Leak Detection and Location Survey
Proposal.

Motion to approve ATS 2022 Leak Detection and Location Survey
Proposal made by Henry Ventura. Second by Anthony Askounis.

Comments/Questions: None.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
Opposed: None Motion Carries.

1 Rate Sheets

2 MR. OCHOA: Rate Sheets. Cintas Rate Sheet and
3 Agreement, Ratify 2022.

4 Motion to approve Cintas 2022 Rate Sheet and Agreement made
5 by Ray Lopez. Second by Anthony Askounis.

6 Comments/Questions: None.

7 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
8 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

9 MR. OCHOA: GPRS Agreement 2022, Water.

10 Motion to approve GPRS 2022 Agreement made by Anthony
11 Askounis. Second by Henry Ventura.

12 Comments/Questions: None.

13 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
14 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

15 MR. OCHOA: Hessville Plumbing 2022, Water.

16 Motion to approve Hessville Plumbing 2022 Rate Sheet made by
17 Henry Ventura. Second by Anthony Askounis.

18 Comments/Questions: None.

19 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
20 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

21 MR. OCHOA: Austgen Electric 2022, Filtration.

22 Motion to approve Austgen Electric 2022 Rate Sheet made by
23 Ray Lopez. Second by Anthony Askounis.

24 Comments/Questions: None.

25 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
Opposed: None Motion Carries.

MR. OCHOA: Hamandy's Service 2022, Water.

Motion to approve Hamandy's Services 2022 Rate Sheet made by
Anthony Askounis. Second by Henry Ventura.

25

1 Comments/Questions: None.

2 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
3 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

4 Past Due

5 MR. OCHOA: Past Due Invoices. 610 Auto \$2,822.15.
6 Transfer of appropriations was not completed prior to PO
7 requisition deadline.

8 Motion to approve 610 Auto Past Due Invoice made by Henry
9 Ventura. Second by Anthony Askounis.

10 Comments/Questions: None.

11 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
12 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

13 MR. OCHOA: EC Auto Repair. Transfer of appropriations
14 was not completed prior to requisite deadline.

15 Motion to approve EC Auto Repair Past Due Invoice made by
16 Henry Ventura. Second by John Bakota.

17 Comments/Questions: None.

18 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
19 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

20 MS. GUZMAN: Mr. President, I would request that you
21 note the invoice number, invoice date and the invoice amount
22 please.

23 MR. OCHOA: Okay. Trevino's Auto Service and Sales in
24 the amount of \$2,027.86. Invoice 4416. Transfer of
25 appropriations was not completed prior to requisition
26 deadline. Total amount \$2,027.86.

27 Motion to approve Trevino's Auto Service and Sales Past Due
28 Invoice made by John Bakota. Second by Ray Lopez.

29 Comments/Questions: None.

30 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
31 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

32 MR. OCHOA: Mechanical Concepts in the amount of
33 \$3,644.30. Invoice Number SD 3657. Transfer of

1 appropriations was not completed prior to requisition
2 deadline. Total amount \$3,644.30.

3 Motion to approve Mechanical Concepts Past Due Invoice made
4 by Ray Lopez. Second by Henry Ventura.

5 Comments/Questions: None.

6 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
7 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

8 MR. OCHOA: NIPSCO, \$2,326.33. I will just read all the
9 invoices. 403661 in the amount of \$324.94. Invoice Number
10 405756 in the amount of \$30.42. Invoice 404044 in the amount
11 of \$553.46. Invoice 403662 in the amount of \$135.71.
12 Invoice 403632 in the amount of \$322.94. Invoice 404006 in
13 the amount of \$791.13. Invoice 403633 in the amount of
14 \$167.73. For a total amount of \$2,326.33.

15 Funds were not available on the 2021 PO. Now we
16 are waiting for a transfer of appropriations to be completed
17 as moneys were not originally allocated prior to.

18 Motion to approve NIPSCO Past Due Invoices made by John
19 Bakota. Second by Anthony Askounis.

20 Comments/Questions: None.

21 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
22 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

23 UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

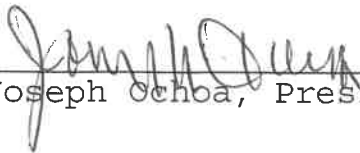
24 PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

25 * Next Regular Meeting Date: February 21, 2022
@ 5:00 p.m.

Motion to adjourn was made by John Bakota. Second by Henry
Ventura.

* Meeting ended at 5:26 p.m.

1 Approval of the Meeting Minutes of
2 Monday, February 7, 2022
3 Approved and Signed February 21, 2022
4

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6 _____
7 Joseph Ochoa, President

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9 _____
10 John Bakota, Vice President

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12 _____
13 Henry Ventura, Member

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17 _____
18 Anthony Askounis, Member

19 
20 _____
21 Ray Lopez, Member


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23 
24 _____
25 Alysia Dunbar, Board Secretary

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, LISA PENA, 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 said proceedings taken at said time and place, so ordered to be transcribed.

Dated at Portage, Indiana, this 18th day of February, 2022.



Lisa Pena
Notary Public, Porter County
Certified Shorthand Reporter
License Number 084-003484

