CITY OF EAST CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF WATERWORKS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 2, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS:
Joseph Ochoa, President
Esteban (Steve) Hernandez, Vice-President
John Bakota, Member
Anthony Askounis, Member
Ray Lopez, Member

STAFF:
Joseph Allegretti
Winna Guzman
Allan Lee
Rebecca Sliger
Alysia Dunbar

Reported by: Fissinger & Associates, Ltd.
By: Peggy S. LaLonde

Call to Order: 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Present in Chambers: Joseph Ochoa, Steve Hernandez, John Bakota, Anthony Askounis, Ray Lopez

Staff Present in Chambers: Alysia Dunbar, Secretary
Winna Guzman, Director Water
Allan Lee, Director Operation
Rebecca Sliger, Financial
Joseph Allegretti, Legal

MR. OCHOA: The meeting of the East Chicago Department of Waterworks Board of Directors will now come to order for March 2nd, 2026.

First item, Confirmatory Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Department of Waterworks of the City of East Chicago, Indiana regarding the rebuilding, repairing, extending, and improving of the Waterworks system of the City.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: This is a component, necessary component of our borrowing financing. This confirms the Declaratory Resolution already previously approved by the Board identifying projects and giving not-to-exceed amounts for the ultimate borrowing of the

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bond issue that's going to pay for these Public Works projects.

MR. OCHOA: Can I get a motion to approve minutes from the February 16th, 2026 meeting as written?

MR. BAKOTA: Motion to approve.

MR. LOPEZ: Second.

MR. OCHOA: All in favor?
(All signify aye.)
MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: You have to gavel opening of the meeting and ask for any public comments on the Confirmatory Resolution.

MR. OCHOA: Do I have any comments for this Confirmatory Resolution?

MR. ALLEGRETTI: The publication advertised more than ten days before today advertising the public hearing on the Confirmatory Resolution as I just described. President has opened the public meeting for any persons, interested persons, in favor of or against, or make any comment on the subject. If no one is making comment, Mr. President, you can close the public hearing.

MR. OCHOA: Are there any comments? (None) Meeting is closed over this.
Approval of Warrants - Payroll. Warrant 021326, amount $41,783.66, payroll dates of 2-7-26 to 2-20-26; Warrant 021326, amount $16,719.01, payroll dates of 2-7-26 to 2-20-26.
Do I have a motion?

MR. HERNANDEZ: Motion to approve.

ASKOUNIS: Second.

MR. OCHOA: All in favor?
(All signify aye.)
MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.
Accounts Payable - Warrant 030226 WB, amount $246,501.59; Warrant 030226 WT, amount $35,153.72; Warrant 030326 WM, amount $24,200.00.
Do I have a motion?

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MR. BAKOTA: Motion to approve.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

MR. OCHOA: All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

Reports: Water Report, Winna Guzman. No report.

Distribution/Filtration Report, Allan Lee, Director of Operations.

MR. LEE: Just mostly the same as before with one extra comment, the cyber security and SCADA is being implemented and should be completely online with all new servers by the end of the month. And, also, the new membrane train is almost complete and those will be also online before the end of the month.

MR. OCHOA: Thank you. Legal Council, Joseph Allegretti.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: No report, Mr. President.

MR. OCHOA: Financial Report, Rebecca Sliger.

MS. SLIGER: It's included in your packet. If you have any questions, I'll be more than happy to answer them here or at your earliest convenience.

MR. OCHOA: New Business. We have bid opening. Where are the bids at?

MR. ALLEGRETTI: Mr. President, John Caruso, our designing consultant engineer is here and he has prepared the bid packets, and he's got a pocket knife and knows where the important numbers are.

MR. CARUSO: We have two projects to open bids on tonight. The first bid is for the rehabilitation of the elevated water tank.

MR. BAKOTA: Is that with the booster pump?

MR. CARUSO: The other bid is the booster

pump station. This bid is for the painting of the tank.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: Who is the first bid from?

MR. CARUSO: Clearcreek Coatings, Ltd., from New Carlisle, Ohio. Addendums have been received and acknowledged. Total bid amount is $2,435,953.00.

MR. OCHOA: Is that the only bid on that project?

MR. BAKOTA: Is this also tank painting?

MR. CARUSO: Yes. I believe there are six bids.

Next bid is from D & M Painting Corporation, Washington, Pennsylvania. Addendums have been received and acknowledged. Total bid amount is $2,292,540.00.

Next bid from Dixie Painting & Sandblasting, from Andalusia, Alabama. Addendums received and acknowledged. Total bid amount is $2,328,219.00.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: Once the bids are opened, anybody present go come and review them at the end of the meeting.

MR. CARUSO: Next from Seven Brothers Painting, Incorporated, Shelby Township, Michigan. Addendums received and acknowledged. Total bid amount $1,431,600.00.

The next one is from Neumann Company Contractors from Merrillan, Wisconsin. Addendums received and acknowledged. Total bid amounted to $2,597,300.00.

The next one I have is two bids from the same contractor.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: Same project?

MR. CARUSO: Yes. This one was submitted at 10:00 a.m.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: Consider the latest one as the final one.

MR. CARUSO: That was at 4:00 p.m.

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MR. ALLEGRETTI: What was the name again?
MR. CARUSO: L.C. United Painting Company, Sterling Heights, Michigan. Addendums received and acknowledged. Total bid amount of $3,120,000.00. Should I hold the 10:00 o'clock one?

MR. ALLEGRETTI: You may as well open it.

MR. CARUSO: So this one does not acknowledge the four addendums, so this is probably a nonresponsive bid because they didn't include the four addendums.
MR. ALLEGRETTI: So they cured that problem with the later one.

MS. GUZMAN: There's a note advising bid form acknowledging addendum on the front.
MR. ALLEGRETTI: Mystery resolved.
MR. CARUSO: Next bid is from O & J Coatings, Inc., Hurst, Texas.

MR. SLIGER: Still for the tank painting?

MR. CARUSO: Yes. Acknowledgement of addendums. Total bid amount is $1,566,170.00. Dynamic Industrial Services, Incorporated, Crete, Illinois. Addendum received and acknowledged. Total bid amount of $2,691,000.00. That concludes the bid opening for the tank painting project. We'll take the bids back to our office and review them, tabulate them, and make a recommendation with advice of counsel.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: Before you take them, anybody can take a look at them immediately after the meeting before John takes them away.

MR. CARUSO: The next project is the Chicago Avenue booster pump station. First bid from Grimmer Construction, Highland, Indiana. Addendums acknowledged. Total bid of $2,167,930.00. Next one from Performance Construction and Engineering, LLC, Plano, Illinois. Addendum acknowledged. Total bid amount of

$2,100,232.00.

Next is Linden & Sons Sewer & Water Incorporated, Plano, Illinois. Addendums acknowledged. Total bid amount of $1,886,940.00.

The next one is Hasse Construction, Calumet City, Illinois.

MR. BAKOTA: What is that again?

MR. CARUSO: Hasse Construction. Addendums acknowledged. Total bid amount of $1,969,000.00.

Next bid is from Airys, Incorporated, out of Joliet, Illinois. Addendums have been acknowledged. Total bid amount of $2,125,617.00.

That concludes the bid opening.

MR. OCHOA: There was suppose to be three.

MS. DUNBAR: Just the two.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: Next meeting we will have some more.

MR. OCHOA: Resolution WD 26-05, a Resolution of the Board of Trustees of the East Chicago Water Department authorizing the transfer of appropriations into different budget categories (Water). Amounts of transfer is $2,000.00.

MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions? (None) All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

Resolution WD 26-06, Confirmatory Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Department of Waterworks of the City of East Chicago, Indiana regarding the rebuilding, repairing, extending, and improving the Waterworks system of the City (Water).

Is that the same one we already read?

MS. SLIGER: The original one was suppose to be the notice of the public hearing. This is the

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actual resolution that the Board has to approve.

MR. BAKOTA: Motion to approve.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

MR. OCHOA: All in favor?
(All signify aye.)
MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.
Resolution WD 26-07, a Resolution supplementing and amending Resolution number WD 24-21 adopted by the Board of Directors of the Department of Waterworks of the City of East Chicago, Indiana on September 5, 2024 (Water).

MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions? (None) All in favor?
(All signify aye.)
MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.
Proposal and Quotation: Clean Harbors - quote #5178925, amount $4,920.00 (Water/Filtration).
Do I have a motion?

MR. ASKOUNIS: Motion to accept.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions? (None) All in favor?
(All signify aye.)
MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.
Past Due: M.E. Simpson, invoice #45376, amount of $41,328.00 (Water). Explanation: Invoice was received on February 19, 2026, after inquiry by vendor.
Do I have a motion?

MR. BAKOTA: Motion to accept.

MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

MR. OCHOA: All in favor?
(All signify aye.)
MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

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Informational: Cancellation of Warrants (Water). That's just information.

MS. SLIGER: Actually action is needed. It does need to be signed by the Board, just by the Board President.

MR. OCHOA: Do I have a motion?

MR. BAKOTA: Motion to accept.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

MR. OCHOA: All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

Unfinished Business: None

Public Comment: None

Next meeting is Monday, March 16, 2026, at 5:00 p.m., here in Chambers.

Do I have a motion for adjournment?

MR. BAKOTA: Motion to adjourn.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

MR. OCHOA: All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned. Thank you. Have a good evening.

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

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Approval of the Meeting Minutes of
March 2nd, 2026

Approved and signed March 16, 2026

Joseph Ochoa, President

Steve Hernandez, Vice-President

John Bakota, Member

Anthony Askounis, Member

Ray Lopez, Member

Alysia Dunbar, Recording Secretary.

Electronically signed by Peggy LaLonde (301-364-327-3860)

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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 5th day of March, 2026.



Peggy S. LaLonde

Electronically signed by Peggy LaLonde (301-364-327-3860)

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