In The Matter Of:

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO

DEPARTMENT OF REDEVELOPMENT

MEETING HELD ON

March 17, 2026

REGION REPORTERS LLC

219-400-6070

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Region REPORTERS

Min-U-Script® with Word Index

STATE OF INDIANA)
)
COUNTY OF LAKE)

BEFORE THE EAST CHICAGO
REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
EAST CHICAGO, INDIANA

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had at the meeting before the East Chicago Redevelopment Commission, reported by April D. Hargett, CSR, Notary Public in and for the County of Lake, State of Indiana, taken via Zoom Video-Conferencing to be held at City Hall Council Chambers, 4525 Indianapolis Boulevard, East Chicago, Indiana 46312, on March 17, 2026, scheduled to begin at 5:00 p.m. in the evening.

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APPEARANCES (IN PERSON):

Anthony Serna, Board President

Christine Russell, Board Vice President

Randy Artis, Board Commissioner

James Portalatin, Board Secretary

Shelice Tolbert, Board Attorney

Frank Rivera, Executive Director

Alysia Dunbar, Program Director

and

Members of the Public

APPEARANCES (VIA ZOOM):

Region Reporters

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PRESIDENT SERNA: I'd like to call to order the East Chicago Redevelopment Commission regular meeting for today, March 17, 2026. The time is now 5:07 p.m. If we could all please raise and renew our allegiance to the flag.

(PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.)

PRESIDENT SERNA: We'll call our agenda.

Roll call, Mr. Secretary.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Nava?

(NO RESPONSE.)

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Artis?

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: Here.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Portalatin? Present.

Vice President Russell?

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Here.

THE COURT: President Serna?

PRESIDENT SERNA: Present.

Next item on the agenda is approval of the regular meeting minutes from March 3rd, 2026. I'll entertain a motion to approve.

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Christine Russell, so moved.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Second.

THE COURT: Motion made by Vice President

Russell, second by Secretary Portalatin. Any questions on the motion?

Mr. Secretary, roll call.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Artis.

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: Abstain.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Portalatin? yes.

Vice President Russell?

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: President Serna?

PRESIDENT SERNA: Yes. Motion carries.

The next item on the agenda is approval of the dockets.

Director Rivera.

DIRECTOR RIVERA: Yes. Good evening, Mr. President, Vice President, Commissioners, and everyone else.

Our first Accounts Payable Warrant Report for the City of East Chicago is dated 3/11/26, warrant number is 031726RD, in the amount of $315,851.90. If I could have a motion, please.

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: So moved.

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Christine Russell, second.

THE COURT: Motion made by Commissioner Artis,

second by Vice President Russell. Any questions on the motion?

Mr. Secretary, roll call.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Artis?

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Portalatin? Yes.

Vice President Russell?

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: President Serna?

PRESIDENT SERNA: Yes. Motion carries.

DIRECTOR RIVERA: Thank you, Commissioners.

Our next City of East Chicago Accounts Payable Warrant Report is dated 3/11/2026, Warrant No. 031126RD, in the amount of $47,425. If I could have a motion, please.

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: So moved.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Second.

PRESIDENT SERNA: Motion made by Commissioner Artis, second by Secretary Portalatin. Any questions on the motion?

Mr. Secretary, roll call.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Artis?

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Portalatin?

Yes.

Vice President Russell?

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: President Serna?

PRESIDENT SERNA: Yes. Motion carries.

DIRECTOR RIVERA: Thank you.

We'll start off with our first action item, which is a very important action item, that we've been waiting for a long period of time in order for us to do a NRSA over here in the West Calumet area.

So it will be a motion to approve a request for the 2026 purchase order in the amount of $37,5000 for Urban Design Ventures, LLC, as our consultant, to pay for expenses for the CDBG program.

The East Chicago Department of Redevelopment needs approval to create a purchase order for Urban Design Ventures, LLC, to pay for the preparation of a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area Plan (NRSA) for the Calumet neighborhoods utilizing CDBG funding. The total amount needed to fund the purchase order is $37,500.

Action is recommended to approve the request for the 2026 purchase order in the amount of $37,500 for Urban Design Ventures, LLC, and to

authorize the executive director to sign the necessary documents.

It is recommended that the following motion be adopted verbatim.

PRESIDENT SERNA: I'll entertain a motion to approve a request for the 2026 purchase order in the amount of $37,500 for Urban Design Ventures, LLC, to pay for expenses for the CDBG program and to authorize the executive director to sign the necessary documents.

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: So moved.

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Christine Russell, second.

PRESIDENT SERNA: Motion made by Commissioner Artis, second by Vice President Russell. Any questions on the motion?

Mr. Secretary, roll call.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Artis?

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Portalatin? Yes.

Vice President Russell?

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: President Serna?

PRESIDENT SERNA: Yes. Motion carries.

DIRECTOR RIVERA: Thank you.

Our next action item is a motion to approve payment of past due Invoice No. 6 from NIPSCO for Harborside Apartments in the amount of $18,588.17.

The East Chicago Department of Redevelopment received a past due invoice from NIPSCO for Harborside Apartments dated 9/11/2024 for Account No. 580-485-007-4 that has not been paid. This invoice is now more than 90 days past due. The amount of the invoice is $18,588.17. This invoice was never received as originally dated and billed.

Action is recommended to approve payment of the past due invoice and to authorize the executive director to sign the necessary documents.

It is recommended that the following motion be adopted verbatim.

PRESIDENT SERNA: Motion to approve payment of past due Invoice No. 6 from NIPSCO for Harborside Apartments in the amount of $18,588.17 and to authorize the executive director to sign the necessary documents.

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: So moved.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Second.

PRESIDENT SERNA: Motion made by

Commissioner Artis, second by Secretary Portalatin. Any questions on the motion?

Mr. Secretary, roll call.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Artis?

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Portalatin? Yes.

Vice President Russell?

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: President Serna?

PRESIDENT SERNA: Yes. Motion carries.

DIRECTOR RIVERA: Thank you.

Our next action item is a motion to approve federal HUD funds for the "Emergency Rehab" project located at 5625 Northcote Avenue, East Chicago, Indiana 46312.

The Department of Redevelopment, on behalf of the City of East Chicago, receives and administers federal funds from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990. The federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are used to finance various residential repair (rehab) programs, in which grants and loans are offered to eligible, owner-occupied homeowners for

home repairs. Household income limits for these funding sources are prescribed yearly through HUD. The rehab programs' objective is to sustain suitable living environments for owner-occupied homeowners of the City of East Chicago.

For the owner-occupied "Emergency Rehab" (HVAC systems) project located at 5625 Northcote Avenue, East Chicago, Indiana 46312, which is participating in the Residential Repair Program, the owner's total project cost is $14,520, which will be allocated as follows: a $5,000 CDBG grant for home repairs, an $8,600 CDBG financed loan to cover the remaining home repairs, and $920 CDBG grant for project delivery costs. Therefore, it is requested of the East Chicago Redevelopment Commission to approve the funding for this owner-occupied rehab project.

It is recommended that the following motion to be made verbatim.

PRESIDENT SERNA: I'll entertain a motion to approve federal HUD funds in the amount of $14,520 for the "Emergency Rehab" project located at 5625 Northcote Avenue, East Chicago, Indiana 46312, which will be allocated as follows: a $5,000 CDBG grant for home repairs, an $8,600 CDBG financed loan

to cover the remaining home repairs, and $920 CDBG grant for project delivery costs; and authorize the executive director to execute any related documents.

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: So moved.

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Christine Russell, second.

PRESIDENT SERNA: Motion made by Commissioner Artis, second by Vice President Russell. Any questions on the motion?

Mr. Secretary, roll call.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Artis?

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Portalatin? Yes.

Vice President Russell?

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: President Serna?

PRESIDENT SERNA: Yes. Motion carries.

DIRECTOR RIVERA: Thank you.

Our next action item is a motion to approve federal HUD funds for the "Emergency Rehab" project located at 3939 Butternut Street, East Chicago, Indiana 46312.

For the owner-occupied "Emergency Rehab" (flat roofing systems) project located at

3939 Butternut Street, East Chicago, Indiana 46312, which is participating in the Residential Repair Program within the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA), the owner's total project cost is $13,820, which will be allocated as follows: a $5,000 CDBG grant for home repairs, a $7,800 CDBG financed loan to cover the remaining home repairs, and $1,020 CDBG grant for project delivery costs. Therefore, it is requested of the East Chicago Redevelopment Commission to approve the funding for this owner-occupied rehab project.

It is recommended that the following motion be made verbatim.

PRESIDENT SERNA: I'll entertain a motion to approve federal HUD funds in the amount of $13,820 for the "Emergency Rehab" project located at 3939 Butternut Street, East Chicago, Indiana 46312, which is participating in the Residential Repair Program within the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA), of which the funds shall be allocated as follows: a $5,000 CDBG grant for home repairs, a $7,800 CDBG financed loan to cover the remaining home repairs, and $1,020 CDBG grant for project delivery costs; and authorize the executive director to execute any related documents.

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: So moved.
SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Second.
PRESIDENT SERNA: Motion made by Commissioner Artis, second by Secretary Portalatin. Any questions on the motion?
Mr. Secretary, roll call.
SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Artis?
COMMISSIONER ARTIS: Yes.
SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Portalatin? Yes.
Vice President Russell?
VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Yes.
SECRETARY PORTALATIN: President Serna?
PRESIDENT SERNA: Yes. Motion carries.
DIRECTOR RIVERA: The next item is a motion to approve CDBG HUD funds for Change Order No. 1 for the "Residential Rehab & Lead Abatement" project located at 3711 Ivy Street, East Chicago, Indiana 46312.
For the owner-occupied "Residential Rehab & Lead Abatement" project located at 3711 Ivy Street, East Chicago, Indiana 46312, the owner's agreed total Change Order No. 1 cost is $1,200, which will be additionally allocated to the homeowner's CDBG financed loan to cover home repairs

using federal CDBG HUD funds. This is considered acceptable for this project. Therefore, it is requested of the East Chicago Redevelopment Commission to approve the funding allocation of Change Order No. 1 for this owner-occupied rehab project.

It is recommended that the following motion be made verbatim.

PRESIDENT SERNA: I'll entertain a motion to approve the federal CDBG HUD funds in the amount of $1,200 for Change Order No. 1 for the "Residential Rehab & Lead Abatement" project located at 3711 Ivy Street, East Chicago, Indiana 46312, which is participating in the Residential Rehabilitation Program. The $1,200 shall be additionally allocated to the homeowner's CDBG financed loan; and authorize the executive director to execute any related documents.

Mr. Secretary, roll call.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Artis?

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Portalatin? Yes.

Vice President Russell?

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: President Serna?

PRESIDENT SERNA: Yes. Motion carries.

DIRECTOR RIVERA: We have two action items remaining. And the first of those is the motion to approve two purchase order requests for AA Masonry in the total amount of $22,400 to pay additional costs of construction services at properties located in Marktown.

The East Chicago Department of Redevelopment needs approval for two separate purchase order requests for AA Masonry for additional work at two properties located in Marktown. The first property is located at 418 Riley Street and requires installation of vinyl fencing in the amount of $15,500.

The second property is located at 515 School Street and requires final exterior repairs to the stucco, foundation wall, and the installation of new window well grates in the amount of $6,900. The combined total cost is $22,400 utilizing US Gypsum TIF funding.

Action is recommended to approve the two purchase order requests for AA Masonry and to authorize the executive director to sign the necessary documents.

It is recommended that the following motion be adopted verbatim.

PRESIDENT SERNA: I'll entertain a motion to approve the two purchase order requests for AA Masonry in the total amount of $22,400 to pay additional costs of construction services at properties located in Marktown, and to authorize the executive director to sign the necessary documents.

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Christine Russell, so moved.

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: Second.

PRESIDENT SERNA: Motion made by Vice President Russell, second by Commissioner Artis.

Mr. Secretary -- I'm sorry. Are there any questions on the motion?

Mr. Secretary, roll call.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Artis?

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Portalatin? Yes.

Vice President Russell?

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: President Serna?

PRESIDENT SERNA: Yes. Motion carries.

DIRECTOR RIVERA: Okay. We'll go on to the

last action item. There is a correction to be made here. Instead of Kennedy Manor Project, it's going to be the Catalpa Street Project. Again, that's Catalpa Street Project.

It's a motion to approve a request for purchase order in an amount not to exceed $2,129.73 for Rieth Riley Construction Company, Inc., for additional work at the Catalpa Street Project.

The East Chicago Department of Redevelopment needs approval for a request for purchase order for 2026 (3/17/26) for Rieth Riley Construction Company, Inc., to pay the final invoice totaling $2,219.73 for the Catalpa Street Project utilizing the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funds. The total amount of the funding for this project is not to exceed $2,129.73 for fiscal year 2026.

Action is recommended to approve a request for purchase order in the amount of $2,129.73 for Rieth Riley Construction Company, Inc., and to authorize the executive director to sign the necessary documents.

It is recommended that the following motion be adopted verbatim.

PRESIDENT SERNA: I'll entertain a motion to

approve a request for purchase order in an amount not to exceed $2,129.73 for Rieth Riley Construction Company, Inc., for additional work at the Catalpa Street Project, and to authorize the executive director to sign the necessary documents.

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: So moved.

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Christine Russell, second.

PRESIDENT SERNA: Motion made by Commissioner Artis, second by Vice President Russell. Any questions on the motion?

Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Just a quick clarification of the first paragraph. We had totaling 2,219.73. I think that would be 2,129.73.

PRESIDENT SERNA: You are correct, Secretary Portalatin. There's a discrepancy in the numbers, that amount, that's in the first paragraph that does not match the amount in the motion that I read.

Which is the correct amount, Director Rivera?

MS. TOLBERT: It looks like the one -- it was the correct amount that was put in the motion.

PRESIDENT SERNA: So that amount that is in

the paragraph that you read was incorrect, but the motion is correct; is that right?

DIRECTOR RIVERA: Yes.

THE COURT: All right. Any further questions on the motion?

Mr. Secretary, roll call.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Artis?

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Portalatin? Yes.

Vice President Russell?

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: President Serna?

PRESIDENT SERNA: Yes. Motion carries.

Next item on the agenda is public expression. Is there any public expression? Any public expression?

I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: So moved.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Second.

PRESIDENT SERNA: Motion made by Commissioner Artis, second by Secretary Portalatin.

Mr. Secretary, roll call.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Artis?

COMMISSIONER ARTIS: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: Commissioner Portalatin? Yes.

Vice President Russell?

VICE PRESIDENT RUSSELL: Yes.

SECRETARY PORTALATIN: President Serna?

PRESIDENT SERNA: Yes. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned.

(PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED AT 5:21 P.M.)

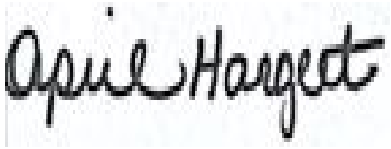
CERTIFICATE

OF

CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER

I, APRIL D. HARGETT, a Certified Shorthand Reporter of the State of Illinois, CSR License No. 84-4735, do hereby certify that I stenographically reported the proceedings had at the meeting, as aforesaid, and that the foregoing is a true and accurate record of the proceedings had therein.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I do hereunto set my hand at Chicago, Illinois, this 19th day of March, 2026.

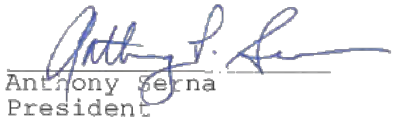


April D. Hargett, CSR
License No. 084-004735

APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

OF TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2026

APPROVED & SIGNED TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2026



Anthony Serna
President



Christine Russell
Vice President



James Portalatin
Secretary



Randall Artis
Commissioner



Frank Rivera
Executive Director