

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF WATERWORKS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Regular Meeting Minutes
March 15, 2021, at 5:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS:

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

STAFF:

Winna Guzman
Ben El Harit
Ed Santen
Joseph Allegretti
Bill Biller
Anthony Herrera

Reported by: Fissinger & Associates, Ltd.

By: Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR

Call to order: 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Present in Chambers: Henry Ventura, John
Bakota, Anthony Askounis
Present Via Telephone Conference: Joseph
Ochoa, Ray Lopez

Staff: Present in Chambers: Winna Guzman
Present Via Telephone Conference: Edward
Santen, Joseph Allegretti, Anthony Herrera

MR. VENTURA: I'd like to call the
meeting to order for the Waterworks Board of Directors
for March 15, 2021.

Approval of minutes from March 1st,
2021. Do I have a motion to approve?

MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

MR. OCHOA: Second.

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

(All signify aye.)

MR. VENTURA: Motion carries.

Next we have check warrants.

WARRANT 031521 WB- \$325,067.76.

MR. BAKOTA: Motion to approve.

1 MR. OCHOA: Second.

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

3 (All signify aye.)

4 WARRANT 031521 WF - \$175,392.47.

5 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

6 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

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

8 (All signify aye.)

9 WARRANT 031921 WB - \$135,802.75.

10 MR. OCHOA: Motion to approve.

11 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

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

13 (All signify aye.)

14 WARRANT 031521 WT - \$1,253.98.

15 MR. ASKOUNIS: Motion to accept.

16 MR. OCHOA: Second.

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

18 (All signify aye.)

19 WARRANT 031521 CD - \$2,041.57.

20 MR. ASKOUNIS: Make a motion to approve.

21 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

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

23 (All signify aye.)

24 WARRANT 031521 WU - \$3,046,925.41.

25 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

1 MR. BAKOTA: Second.

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

3 (All signify aye.)

4 MR. VENTURA: Motion carries. Approval
of payroll warrants.

5 WARRANT 030521 - \$40,296.63.

6 Payroll 2-13-21 to 2-26-21

7 MR. ASKOUNIS: Motion to approve.

8 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

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

10 (All signify aye.)

11 MR. VENTURA: Motion carries.

12 WARRANT 030521 - \$25,926.49

13 Utilities Payroll 2-13-21 to 2-26-21

14 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

15 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

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

17 (All signify aye.)

18 MR. VENTURA: Motion carries.

19 Next, Filtration Report. (None)
Water Report?

20 MS. GUZMAN: No report.

21 MR. VENTURA: Distribution Report.

22 MR. SANTEN: Thank you, Mr. President. I
don't have any report this evening.

23 MR. VENTURA: New business. We have a
24 proposal from Calumet City Plumbing. This is for Exxon
25 Mobile/Arcadis, amount of \$32,600, and this is for 3821
Indianapolis Boulevard.

MR. SANTEN: I will give you a little
background. This proposal that you have before you is
part of the commercial water meters that need to be
installed as part of our meter program throughout the
City. This particular one is a little bit challenging.

1 the pipeline that goes into this meter building is broke
2 at the valve, outside the building. So there is quite a
3 bit of work involved to not only repair the waterline,
4 but to also install the water meter.

5 So it's off the edge of the bridge
6 embankment, which makes it even more complicated and
7 difficult. The reason for the high price is because of
8 the ground and site conditions.

9 So I am asking the Board this
10 evening to approve the proposal for the work and to also
11 keep in mind that this is on the property side of the
12 buffalo box. The management of Mobile/Arcadis has
13 agreed to the reimbursement of the City for the exact
14 amount that's before you. So at this point I would ask
15 that you consider this proposal so we can fix the water
16 main break, fix the water meter installation, and also
17 to be reimbursed by Mobile/Arcadis.

18 MR. LOPEZ: I've got a question. \$32,000
19 is the cost, plus the 1890?

20 MR. SANTEN: I think the proposal is from
21 Calumet City, there is, I think, \$495.00 needs to be
22 added to that amount for the actual meter installation.
23 So it's roughly just under 32,000 -- \$33,000

24 MR. LOPEZ: On my sheet here it says
25 approximate cost, \$32,600 and then additional cost
1,890.

MR. SANTEN: I don't have that in front
of me. Does anyone --

MR. LOPEZ: For additional wall.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: The foundation, the
foundation wall.

MR. SANTEN: So the two figures, total
those up, and that's the cost for the work.

MR. LOPEZ: What is the total amount that
we are voting on, the 32,600?

MS. GUZMAN: The approximate cost is
32,600 -- and this is from the Water Department -- and
additional cost of 1,890 to install the foundation wall
to the area. So there is two different costs.

25

1 MR. SANTEN: So what is the total
amount, Winna?

2 MS. GUZMAN: \$34,490.00.

3 MR. SANTEEN: That is what I would be
4 requesting for approval this evening.

5 MR. LOPEZ: All right, thank you.

6 MR. BAKOTA: Motion to accept.

7 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

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

9 (All signify aye.)

10 MR. VENTURA: Motion carries.

We have a rate sheet for Devine
Landscaping. I believe this is for lawn maintenance
11 proposal that's in the packet. Do we have a motion to
approve?

12 MR. BAKOTA: Are you satisfied with their
13 work?

14 MS. GUZMAN: Yes, we are satisfied with
the work. We used them last year for the same type of
15 work.

16 MR. BAKOTA: It looks good.

17 MS. GUZMAN: We're trying.

18 MR. ALLEGRETTI: I spoke with Lilia Ramos
today and there was some discussion that perhaps we
19 should try to coordinate -- it's kind of unclear
sometimes, that the Sanitary District and Utilities
20 piggybacks on the City. We use the unit cost and as a
City, we have a separate contract. There was some
21 discussion that maybe we would have some kind of unified
global kind of agreement, that everyone would
22 participate in. And I don't want the Board approving
this in the event there is a more official way of doing
23 this. I'm going to talk to Carla Morgan tomorrow and
I'll bring it back at the next meeting. Although, this
24 is consistent with what we have done in the past and
Winna just said it worked out pretty well.

25

1 MR. VENTURA: So should we table this
2 matter?

3 MR. ALLEGRETTI: No. I'd go ahead and
4 approve it. If there is a change in direction, I'll
5 bring it up in the next meeting.

6 MR. LOPEZ: I have a question, Joe. On
7 the unit price, where it says 1350, and then there is
8 another one that says 1350. The first one says install
9 flowers, flowers not included, include bushes, trim,
10 weed removal in flower beds. And the other one says,
11 Fall clean up, plant and removal, includes bushes, trim,
12 weed and remove in flower beds. They are doing the same
13 thing twice?

14 MR. ALLEGRETTI: I think it's Spring and
15 Fall. I guess -- I apologize -- I can't answer that
16 question. But if there is an inconsistency that should
17 be looked into, I promise you that we'll look into it.
18 All right. Thank you.

19 MS. GUZMAN: Just so that you know, we
20 have clean up during the springtime and the Fall. And
21 then at the Fall we have the area cleaned up and various
22 items need to be replaced. So they have been doing
23 this -- Devine has a breakdown on the rate sheet.

24 MR. VENTURA: So it's two separate things
25 they are doing?

MS. GUZMAN: Yes, that's correct.

MR. VENTURA: Any further questions?
(None) Do I have a motion to approve?

MR. BAKOTA: Motion to accept.

MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

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

(All signify aye.)

MR. VENTURA: Motion carries.

Next we have past due invoices. The
first one is from Gasvoda & Associates, for the amount
of \$2,462.40. And the reason for delinquent, invoice
was sent to the person from waste water. Do I have a
motion to approve?

1 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

2 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

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

4 (All signify aye.)

5 MR. VENTURA: Motion carries.

6 Next we have past due from Microbac,
and the amount is \$26.00. And the reason for the
delinquency was invoices were sent to secretary
March 12, 2021. Do I have a motion to approve?

7

MR. OCHOA: Make a motion.

8

MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

9

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

(All signify aye.)

11 MR. VENTURA: Motion carries.

12 The last past due invoice is for
Department of Waterworks, for \$230.97. And the
delinquency is bills have been preprinted in March. Do
we have a motion to approve?

13

14 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

15

MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

16

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

17

(All signify aye.)

18 MR. VENTURA: Motion carries.

19

Next is Compliance Report. (None)
Report from legal counsel, Joseph

Allegretti.

20

MR. ALLEGRETTI: No report today.

21

MR. VENTURA: Financial report. There is
a cash report dated for February 2021 in your packet for
review. Motion to accept?

22

23 MR. ALLEGRETTI: We don't need it.

24

MR. VENTURA: Okay, that's just for
information.

25

Next we have Unfinished Business.

1 (None) Public Comment?

2 MR. M. LOPEZ: Yes, Michael Lopez, 4204 -
3 4204 Euclid, installation of our meter. It's in regards
4 to the installation of the new meter that I made an
5 appointment to have installed, agreed to it. I was told
6 while they were there that -- I wasn't told -- the
7 person that's renting the building was told by the
8 installer, he mentioned a bypass and he couldn't make
9 the installation, after I made the appointment.

10 As it turned out, there was a bypass
11 according to the installer. I've been there since 2002.
12 I had no clue. I didn't put the bypass in and I am
13 being charged \$1700 or thereabouts. I never shut a
14 valve off. Never put a valve on for bypass to work.
15 But like I said, if I knew about the bypass, I certainly
16 would not have invited the installer to come and put a
17 new meter in without me taking the old one off. I had
18 no knowledge, and the Water Department tells me they
19 have been reading those meters in person. He's never
20 had an issue.

21 MR. BAKOTA: Mr. President, I think it's
22 clear on this first page. You can see we have a report
23 from the Water Department.

24 MR. VENTURA: Then it says, subject is
25 4204 Euclid, Speed Wash Laundromat at this location. It
has a one and a half inch meter, that the valve will not
hold and no room to free. Anyway, couldn't find the
B-box for this one. We looked, but could not find
anything. This meter is currently off and running water
through the bypass. This is dated March 2, 2019. This
is from who?

MS. GUZMAN: This is an internal e-mail.

MR. M. LOPEZ: What does that have to do
with me?

MR. BAKOTA: Well, I am concerned about
that we knew about it. I am not questioning whether
Mickey knew about it or not.

MR. M. LOPEZ: I had no knowledge of it.

MR. BAKOTA: The question is, we knew
about it?

25

1 MS. GUZMAN: We knew about it at the time
2 when they went to install the new meter. That's when we
3 were informed of the bypass.

4 MR. BAKOTA: It says right here, free
5 water March 26, 2019.

6 MS. GUZMAN: That's when they initially
7 went out there. That's when we started the process of
8 replacing the meter. So this is Calumet City Plumbing,
9 they are the contracted licensed plumbers that the City
10 hired to perform the meter replacement.

11 MR. M. LOPEZ: I agreed to have somebody
12 come in.

13 MR. BAKOTA: When was the meter replaced?

14 MR. M. LOPEZ: If I was notified about
15 the bypass -- I never have been notified, number one.
16 Number two, why would I agree to a
17 new meter if I had anything to do with the bypass. I
18 would have taken it out. I'm capable of doing that. I
19 had no knowledge. When I bought it there was a meter
20 reading. I went and applied for the bill. Somebody
21 came in, read the meter, and we exchanged information.
22 The bill went into my name in 2000. So from 2000 until
23 then I was getting water.

24 MR. ASKOUNIS: How was he getting a bill?

25 MR. M. LOPEZ: There was no valves I had
to turn on or off. If you have bypass, my understanding
there is a valve you shut off and put another valve on.
I never tampered with any valve or anything.

MR. BAKOTA: They got pictures.

MR. M. LOPEZ: You can have all the
pictures you want. I didn't put them on. If they knew
it about it before then, somebody -- certainly the water
meter reader would have said something I would think. I
have been there since 2000 and never had any knowledge
of a bypass.

MR. VENTURA: This is the first time it
was brought up, in 2019.

MS. GUZMAN: Yes, this was the first time

1 is 2019.

2 MR. M. LOPEZ: The water readers were
3 reading since 2000. I never hid it or anything. I
4 complained once, I think, that I was paying too much.

5 MR. ALLEGRETTI: May I ask, this is a
6 laundromat being operated here?

7 MR. M. LOPEZ: Yes.

8 MR. ALLEGRETTI: Well, what I guess,
9 there's been a bypass, that means there is some water
10 being consumed and not paid for. So has there been a
11 significant increase in the water bill now that the
12 water meter is installed and being read?

13 MR. M. LOPEZ: I can answer that there
14 were five machines running. I never did anything to it.
15 So the lady that's got it now, put 20 machines in and
16 four big machines. So there is actually a larger -- I
17 think there is -- I haven't even checked to be honest
18 with you -- I gave it to her on a contract. And I told
19 her, let me pay the bill. When you decide to buy it,
20 then we can change it. They decided to buy it. But we
21 didn't get those bills and I'm going to tell you, when I
22 bought it, that laundromat had only five machines
23 running. I bought it as an investment and my kids
24 didn't want it, so I got stuck with it.

25 Like I said, I had no interest in
putting a bypass in. I found out at the time of the
installer -- the installation was going to be made. The
lady I bought it from didn't tell me about a bypass,
believe me.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: No one is accusing you,
Mr. Lopez, of intentionally doing wrong. Mr. Lopez, you
don't pay the water bill, the laundromat person pays the
water bill; is that right?

MR. M. LOPEZ: I had it for probably ten
years. I can tell you it was barely open. Like I said,
I bought it as an investment. I couldn't sell it. The
lady that came in is a good friend of mine. She decided
to buy it. She invested about \$80,000 in new machines,
new driers, the whole thing. She spent an awful lot of
money.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: So the bill should go to

1 the customer, not you.

2 MR. M. LOPEZ: What now? Right.

3 MR. ALLEGRETTI: The invoice for -- the
4 monthly invoice for water consumption, user charge,
5 should go not to you, but to the customer, who is the
6 person who runs the business enterprise there.

7 MR. M. LOPEZ: She is not responsible for
8 the new meter. I am still the responsible party until,
9 you know -- they are in the process of buying it. I'm
10 not going to stick her with a \$1700 bill.

11 MR. ALLEGRETTI: I guess she could either
12 pay for the plumbing work or they can pay for the water
13 that was not paid for. I mean people shouldn't have
14 their cake or eat it too, or am I missing something?

15 MR. M. LOPEZ: I agree were you. All I'm
16 telling you, why didn't someone discover this for the
17 last 20 years?

18 MR. ALLEGRETTI: I don't know if the
19 meters readers are that astute or are that
20 knowledgeable. I don't have a clue.

21 MR. M. LOPEZ: I thought the meter reader
22 that was there in 2000, he wasn't going to say anything,
23 but I didn't know why they didn't tell me about it. Why
24 would they send a meter reader and not say anything? I
25 don't get that. I can tell you three people have told
me I am not the only one in town that has bypasses. I'm
in demolition. I have taking buildings down with meter
line -- waterlines attached to the meter and second
waterline to the back of the building with no meter. So
I am not -- I know what I'm saying. And I did not know
that that would be handled like that.

MR. VENTURA: I'm looking back to 1998
and there was no water all the way to 2001.

MS. GUZMAN: We changed the installation
so that's why you don't see billing from that. But he
purchased it in 2004, correct.

MR. ASKOUNIS: So activity ceased from
2005 to now?

25

1 MR. M. LOPEZ: It was basically closed.
2 There was five washers running and I didn't want to put
3 money in. Prior to that I had five driers and now there
4 is 20 driers in there and big washers.

5 MS. GUZMAN: The City contractor, Calumet
6 City Plumbing, being the contractor, as a result
7 discounted the bill to \$1,777.53 and that's the exact
8 amount that we billed Mr. Lopez for.

9 As you will note, consumption
10 history report from April 2019 going back, charges were
11 much less than what it is currently being assessed under
12 this account. For 22 months, February of 2020, the
13 average billing \$334.12. Full amount paid for the 22
14 months is \$7,350.57. That's since the new meter.
15 Previous to installing the new meter, the 22 months from
16 July 2017 to April 2019, the average billing was
17 probably \$98.63 per month. The total amount assessed
18 for these 22 months, total, \$2,109.87. The amount
19 billed under the new meter and previous meter system for
20 the 22 months reference in this property is \$5,180.77.

21 So note that the City did not pursue
22 any legal action because at the time -- you know -- we
23 filed the report and no charge for the water that
24 apparently was bypassed as noted by the licensed
25 plumber, and provided all the documentation pertaining
to them -- to this property. For your reference, before
and after pictures are submitted and the correspondence
relating to it.

MR. VENTURA: Any other questions?

MR. BAKOTA: Was Mr. Lopez offered a copy
of that?

MS. GUZMAN: I can give him this copy.

MR. M. LOPEZ: Here, I didn't put that
in. I'm not putting that on the new owner. Actually I
am still responsible for something that I didn't do and
I think it is negligence on the City's part. They knew
about it in 2004. I mean -- I'm not the only person
that has a bypass. Come on. If you think I would have
--

MR. SANTEN: We can talk about that point
continually. This is Ed Santen, the Water Department
supervisor. I just came to the City here recently and
we can talk about what happened in the past

1 for all a night long. But I think --

2 MR. M. LOPEZ: What has happened in the
3 past --

4 MR. SANTEEN: The problem is there's been
5 a bypass. And from the Water Department perspective, we
6 are in the business of selling water, not give water
7 away for free. If there is a bypass in the City and we
8 find out about it, the plumbing inspector is going to be
9 called out and have your water shut off. That's what we
10 are going to do now. What happened in the past, we have
11 a situation and we have to deal with it. We've got the
12 bypass, that needs to be corrected. We looked at your
13 usage report, and if we go based on your usage alone,
14 you were almost three times the normal amount. You went
15 from \$90 to 300.

16 MR. M. LOPEZ: But I had five machines
17 versus 20 machines. The laundromat had five machines,
18 now there's 20 machines running and five big machines.
19 But still, when you look at it that way --

20 MR. ALLEGRETTI: The Board thinks it's a
21 compelling argument. And I know Mr. Lopez for a long
22 time. Because we didn't catch this and you think that's
23 neglectful for getting someone water and not being
24 aware; that's a compelling argument. I don't think it
25 is, but maybe it is not for me to say.

MR. M. LOPEZ: I wasn't even there. If I
knew this situation was existing, I probably -- I would
have said, no, you can't come because I was going to
remove the bypass. I had no clue there was a bypass
there. I'm not an imbecile. I mean I know really.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: Mr. Lopez, we removed
the bypass and it cost \$1800. So, I mean, where is the
argument? And you might clearly say, if you knew, we
all know there is a bypass that cost \$1800 to remove and
it's been removed and somebody should pay the bill.
That bill should be paid.

MR. M. LOPEZ: I didn't put it in. And
it's the City negligence for not finding it sooner.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: The City's not negligent
for --

25

1 MR. M. LOPEZ: They took a meter reading
and I happen to be there. Take the meter reading, I
2 just want to transfer my bill over. Why didn't they say
something then? You know, that's on the City.

3 MR. BAKOTA: They probably should have.

4 MR. M. LOPEZ: I understand your side and
5 you have to understand my side. I pay a lot of water.

6 MR. BAKOTA: The bypass is on your
7 property, that's what it comes down to. The City should
have been aware, they weren't.

8 MR. M. LOPEZ: They were neglectful not
me. So I have to pay for the City's neglect is what you
9 are saying?

10 MR. OCHOA: That situation is not
neglectful of the City. That situation is committed
11 fraud.

12 MR. M. LOPEZ: Fraud?

13 MR. OCHOA: Right, it's fraud.

14 MR. M. LOPEZ: Put me in jail. Put me in
jail. How much time do I serve for that? I'll go. Do
15 whatever you have to. I'm sorry, I'm not going to live
with it. You can arrest me tomorrow. You can arrest
16 me.

(Mr. Michael Lopez left Council
17 Chambers.)

18 MR. ALLEGRETTI: I guess when your
argument doesn't sell, you claim the victim status.
19 I like Mickey Lopez a lot. He's
robbing the bank and he's blaming the police or
20 apparently the operator, over getting water and not
paying for it. That's all I am saying.

21 MR. BAKOTA: Joe, I have said some time
22 ago that we needed a workman to dollar amount fine and
police report made out when a bypass is found.

23 MR. ALLEGRETTI: I remember that.

24 MR. ASKOUNIS: We should have a special
25 meeting to discuss this.

1 MR. ALLEGRETTI: Well, John, we couldn't
hear what you were saying.

2
3 MR. BAKOTA: I asked some time ago that
we put a little meat in this and issue a dollar amount
4 when a bypass is found and police report made. He said
it wasn't his fault. Well, it was on his property and
5 the police report wasn't made out. I know we have
pictures here and all. I think we need to have some
6 legal point on this, as far as the police report.

7 MR. ALLEGRETTI: Well, in the past we
have -- when there's been significant -- what is a
8 diplomatic word for theft -- taking water without paying
for it. We have in the past made police reports. But
9 apparently the person benefits by saying the bypass
wasn't known. Mr. Lopez -- I am not accusing him of
10 theft. But apparently the beneficiary of the bypass is
the person that operates the laundromat. Clearly
11 somebody is using water and not paying for it. Mr.
Lopez said if he would have known about the bypass, he
would have taken it out. We did that for him.

12 Mr. Santen and Miss Guzman sent our
contractor over and he did it. And all we are doing is
13 sending Mr. Lopez the bill for what he said he was happy
to do by himself. I don't know what the argument is.

14
15 MR. BAKOTA: I understand that. I think
he's responsible for it. But I think we need to
16 establish that we'll call the police and have a police
report made out. If somebody stole something out of a
17 City car or truck, we'd have a police report. This is
water being stolen and dollar amount to it, and we need
18 a police report.

19 MR. ALLEGRETTI: This is unpleasant I
know. He's got a long standing relationship with the
20 City. Everyone knows him and everybody likes him. We
are not accusing him of doing anything, him personally,
21 of doing anything unwholesome. But accusing the City of
being wrong because we didn't catch them stealing our
water is a bit of a stretch, if I may say.

22
23 MR. BAKOTA: Ed, did you have something
to say?

24 MR. SANTEN: No, I just wanted to
piggyback on what Joe said. You know, going forward, we
25 can look at something ordinance wise as to when these

1 things are spotted. You know, immediately get a police
2 report or what other systems we are going to follow so
this doesn't occur in the future.

3 But like what Joe said, the problem
was found. The problem was fixed. The meter is
4 installed. It's working correctly. You know, the only
other idea would be, if you don't want to pay for the
meter installation, you need to pay for the water.
5 Something needs to be paid here because we are not in
the business for free. We have to take care of our
6 expenses, and bypass -- there was a reason for that. I
wasn't here. I didn't see it. But that was there for a
7 reason and that was to bypass the water meter. So it
was there for a reason. Now it's fixed and we are going
8 forward. There's got to be another option here. I mean
the dollar amount for the plumbing is very reasonable.
9 It's very reasonable.

10 MR. ALLEGRETTI: And we would have shut
the water off frankly months ago except the B-box is
11 apparently not functioning. The valve was not working
and physically unable to do it. So am I wrong with
12 that, Ed?

13 MR. SANTEN: No, you're correct. And
that would have been another four or \$5,000 to fix, just
14 for that alone. So maybe that property owner wants to
pay for that too. But, you know, I think this was done
15 very reasonably. I think everything is fair for 1700.
That's very reasonable, for the amount of work.

16 MR. BAKOTA: We are talking now, but the
17 property owner, Mr. Lopez, left the room. He's no
longer here.

18 MR. ALLEGRETTI: Yes, I know.

19 MR. BAKOTA: It was on his property and
20 his responsibility there. Like I say, we need from now
on to make a police report.

21 MR. ALLEGRETTI: I will say it again, Mr.
22 Lopez said if he would have known about the bypass, he
would have taken steps to repair it. We did that for
23 him and sent him the bill. I don't know what the
argument is.

24 MR. ASKOUNIS: They should have fixed the
25 piping before too. That should come out to cost a lot

1 of money. We shut the water off. You fix it or we are
2 fixing it. If you don't know how, then we'll come and
3 fix it.

3 MR. SANTEN: There was a lot of work
4 there.

4 MR. ASKOUNIS: You have to change
5 everything.

6 MR. ALLEGRETTI: Director Askounis is
7 absolutely correct.

7 MR. VENTURA: If we find something again,
8 we will shut the water off.

9 MS. GUZMAN: I would agree, we shut the
10 water off.

11 MR. BAKOTA: What I am saying, if we do
12 it that way, there could be favoritism. I think once
13 the bypass is found, they make out a theft report and
14 then go from there. And then you are still going to
15 charge the homeowner, whether he does it himself or the
16 company does it. He's still going to have to pay for
17 the cost of the water.

18 MR. ALLEGRETTI: When your water bill
19 comes -- if you are not getting a water bill every
20 month, that's a pretty good tip off that something is
21 wrong.

22 MR. GUZMAN: I would just want to know,
23 one of these papers, the documentation, the City had
24 done a good job of documenting every step that they
25 follow through in each process. But at the owners
request, they were aware we were going to perform the
work. It says, owners request of re-pipe.

MR. ASKOUNIS: Can we put a lien on the
property if he decides not to pay?

22 MS. GUZMAN: Then we proceed with the
23 shut off.

24 MR. BAKOTA: It's part of his bill now.

25 MR. ASKOUNIS: He says he's running a
business -- the other guy is running it from him.

1 MR. BAKOTA: Somebody has got to pay it.

2 MS. GUZMAN: Like any other delinquent
3 account, if they do not pay, then we go forth with the
4 shut off process.

5 MR. ASKOUNIS: How about if there's a
6 sale between then?

7 MS. GUZMAN: They still have to pay.
8 That bill is still due regardless of the transfer. We
9 have to proceed with our process.

10 MR. BAKOTA: I think it was handled
11 properly.

12 MR. ALLEGRETTI: Criticizing the City for
13 this situation is a bit of a stretch as I said. I don't
14 want to criticize Mr. Lopez personally, but his
15 explanation of the situation and rationalization is not
16 very rational if I may say.

17 MS. GUZMAN: We can go back the 22 months
18 and obviously you will see. I just noticed it's about
19 five thousand dollars. Either pay the 1700 versus the
20 5,000.

21 MR. BAKOTA: I make a motion we figure on
22 the side of the City and Mr. Lopez, the property owner
23 of that address, be charged that amount.

24 MR. LOPEZ: Can you say that again, I
25 didn't hear you?

MR. ALLEGRETTI: I think, Mr. Lopez, that
the petition not be granted, that it be denied.

MR. BAKOTA: Exactly. And that the
homeowner in that property be charged the cost of
re-piping and removing of the bypass. Director, I don't
know who actually that goes to, the water utility
customer or it may be the operator of the laundromat or
may be Mr. Mickey Lopez. Whomever it is, I guess that
person is responsible. It may be it is Mr. Lopez.

MR. OCHOA: The homeowner is responsible
for the bill.

MS. GUZMAN: It's Mr. Lopez.

1 MR. ALLEGRETTI: And Director Ochoa,
that's kind of the way we always did it, but the General
2 Assembly of the State Legislature is making that more
difficult and a challenge for us. But we can talk about
3 that another time also.

4 MR. LOPEZ: I need you to clarify your
motion -- okay -- so I know what we are going to vote
5 on.

6 MR. BAKOTA: The motion was in favor of
the City. That the homeowner, the owner of the
7 property, be billed the cost of removing the bypass and
the motion is in favor of the City.

8 MR. LOPEZ: I second the motion.

9 MR. VENTURA: Any other questions or
10 comments on the motion?

11 MR. SANTEN: I will add in that motion
you include, for the purposes of installing the City's
12 water meter.

13 MR. ALLEGRETTI: That's kind of
selective. If there is another reason, if we need
14 another clarification, we can make another at the next
meeting.

15 MS. GUZMAN: The initial visit was to
16 change the water meter.

17 MR. BAKOTA: We put the new water meter
in, that was the reason, right?

18 MS. GUZMAN: Yes, that is the reason for
19 Calumet City to go on the property, to replace the
meter.

20 MR. ALLEGRETTI: And disassembling the
21 bypass and putting in the corrected plumbing.

22 MR. SANTEN: That's correct. That's what
I was referencing.

23 MR. VENTURA: Any other questions or
24 comments? (None) All in favor?
(All signify aye.)

25 MR. VENTURA: Motion carries.

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Any other public comment? (None)
Next meeting will be April 5, 2021,
at 5:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers. Do I have a
motion to adjourn?

MR. BAKOTA: Motion to adjourn.

MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

MR. VENTURA: All in favor?
(All signify aye.)

Motion carries. Meeting adjourned.

***** Meeting adjourned *****

Approval of the Meeting Minutes of
March 18, 2021

Approved and signed _____



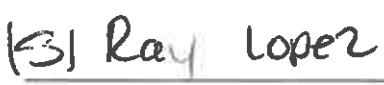
Henry Ventura, President

Joseph Ochoa, Vice-President



John Bakota, Member

Anthony Askounis, Member



Ray Lopez, Member



Anthony Herrera, Secretary

C E R T I F I C A T E

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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 19th day of March, 2021.

Peggy S. LaLonde



Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR