

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF WATERWORKS  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
April 17, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS:

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

STAFF:

Joseph Allegretti  
Winna Guzman  
Allan Lee  
Ateria Allen

Reported by: Fissinger & Associates, Ltd.

By: Peggy S. LaLonde

Call to Order: 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

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

STAFF Present in Chambers: Alysia Dunbar,  
Winna Guzman, Rebecca Sliger, Joseph  
Allegretti

STAFF Present via Zoom: Obed Perez

MR. BAKOTA: Call to order the meeting of  
the East Chicago Board of Waterworks, April 17, 2023.

\*\*\*\* OPEN PUBLIC HEARING \*\*\*\*

MR. BAKOTA: I will now open the Public  
Hearing for the Preliminary Engineering Report to obtain  
assistance from the Drinking water State Revolving Fund  
Loan Program.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: Mr. President, our  
consultant, Mr. Caruso is on Zoom. If he could give a  
brief, if the Board would like, a brief description of  
the financing and what is being financed and what the  
improvements are at the water utility.

MR. BAKOTA: Please, go ahead.

1 MR. CARUSO: Thank you. John Caruso,  
2 Christopher Burke Engineering. This is an amendment to  
3 the preliminary engineering report that was initially  
4 submitted in 2016. There are remaining funds from that  
5 initial loan program that the City would like to spend  
6 on two projects. The first project is an installation  
7 of a variable frequency drive on one of the high service  
8 pumps at the water membrane filtration plant. There are  
9 three high service pumps existing. Two out of three  
10 have variable frequency drivers on them to control our  
11 operation. The third pump does not. We would like to  
12 install a variable frequency drive on that third high  
13 service pump so that it will be incorporated into the  
14 regular rotation of all three pumps to create less wear  
15 time on all three pumps, also providing redundancy for  
16 the pumping system.

17 These high service pumps -- a little  
18 background -- take the water from the ground storage  
19 tanks and pump it into the water distribution system of  
20 the City, providing pressure and flow for domestic use,  
21 fire flow and for the industrial users. The estimated  
22 cost for this project is approximately \$250,000.00. We  
23 have had proposals from electrical contractors, however  
24 this project, under the requirements of the loan, needs  
25 to go to bid. So Christopher Burke Engineering will be  
preparing plans and specifications for the variable  
frequency drive to be publicly bid by qualified  
electrical contractors.

The sign note here is, and you may  
be aware of this, the supply chain issues are still  
being problematic for this type of equipment. We are  
seeing -- this is a 400-horsepower electric motor, which  
requires 400-horsepower variable frequency driver.  
These are in the order of 50 weeks lead time on this  
equipment. So we'll put the plans and specs out to bid  
as soon as we can, and within probably four weeks we'll  
get a bid and then award to a contractor. However, the  
lead time will push us towards, you know, end of this  
year, if not into the Spring of 2024 for actual  
construction.

The second project -- any questions  
on that project?

MR. BAKOTA: You can go ahead.

MR. CARUSO: The second project is  
replacement of halgon gas -- argon gas fire suppression  
system at the membrane plant in specific rooms, the  
server room, sulfuric acid room, and the raw water room.

1 this project is estimated at approximately \$350,000.00.  
2 The project scope is to replace the gas cylinders, the  
3 nozzles, and some of the controls for the existing  
4 argon gas system. The requirements to replace these  
5 argon gas cylinders is every ten years and we are at or  
6 exceeded, or at least near the ten-year life cycle of  
7 this equipment. This equipment does not fall under some  
8 of these change issues and we would expect this  
9 equipment to be readily available in probably 4 to  
10 6-week lead time category.

11 So, again, with the \$350,000.00  
12 budget, also required because of the loan requirements,  
13 is required to go out to bid. Christopher Burke  
14 Engineering will be providing plans and specifications  
15 and bid documents for this project to be publicly bid  
16 and awarded to a qualified mechanical contractor.

17 We expect as well in the next four  
18 weeks to be going out to bid with these projects and  
19 awarding them to the most responsive bidder. Any  
20 questions on those projects?

21 MR. LOPEZ: How many tanks are going to  
22 replaced?

23 MR. CARUSO: They are providing a tank in  
24 each room, as well as a spare.

25 MR. LOPEZ: The total, how many total?

MR. CARUSO: I believe there would be  
six, one for each room and then a spare tank for each  
room.

MR. LOPEZ: Thank you.

MR. BAKOTA: Any other questions? (None)  
Thank you for your input.

MR. CARUSO: Thank you.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: Since there are no  
members of the public present to make public comment, if  
you don't mind, maybe just declare the public hearing is  
now closed.

MR. BAKOTA: As of now, with the  
information we've gotten, the public hearing is now  
closed. Thank you.

1 MR. CARUSO: Thank you.

2 \*\*\*\* CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING \*\*\*\*

3 MR. BAKOTA: We'll continue with our  
4 regular meeting.. We'll move on to approval of minutes  
of April 3rd, as written.

5 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

6 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

7 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

8 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

9 Next approval of Warrants. Warrant  
041423, amount of \$11,573.75, Utilities Payroll, dates  
of 3-25-23 to 4-7-23.

10 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

11 MR. VENTURA: Second.

12 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

13 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

14 Warrant 041423, amount of  
\$45,636.40, payroll dates of 3-25-23 to 4-7-23.

15 MR. VENTURA: Make a motion to approve.

16 MR. OCHOA: Second.

17 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

18 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

19 Accounts Payable Warrants: Warrant  
20 041123 WB, amount of \$135,840.69.

21 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

22 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

23 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

24 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

25 Warrant 041223 WB, amount of  
\$9,100.00.

1 MR. ASKOUNIS: Motion to accept.

2 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

3 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?  
(All signify aye.)

4 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.  
Warrant 041723 WB, amount of  
5 \$350,114.11.

6 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

7 MR. VENTURA: Second.

8 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?  
(All signify aye.)

9 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.  
Warrant 041723 CD, amount of  
10 \$1,509.99.

11 MR. ASKOUNIS: Motion to accept.

12 MR. VENTURA: Second.

13 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?  
(All signify aye.)

14 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.  
Reports: Filtration Report, Obed  
15 Perez.

16 MR. PEREZ: No report.

17 MR. BAKOTA: Water report, Winna Guzman.

18 MS. GUZMAN: No report at this time.

19 MR. BAKOTA: Distribution Report, Allan  
20 Lee.

21 MS. GUZMAN: We have forwarded the report  
to you. If you have any questions, please feel free to  
let us know.

22 MR. BAKOTA: Next is Legal Counsel,  
23 Joseph Allegretti.

24 MR. ALLEGRETTI: No report.

25 MR. BAKOTA: Financial report, William

1 Biller or Rebecca Sliger.

2 MS. SLIGER: They are included in your  
3 packet. If you have any questions, just let us know, I  
4 will be more than happy to answer.

5 MR. BAKOTA: Thank you.

6 Next is New Business. We have  
7 Resolution WD 23-07, a resolution of the Board of  
8 Directors authorizing the write off of certain  
9 delinquent water charges and penalties.

10 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

11 MR. VENTURA: Second.

12 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?  
(All signify aye.)

13 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

14 Resolution WD 23-08, a resolution of  
15 the EC Water Utility Board of Directors replenishing the  
16 established Water Department Change Fund.

17 MR. ASKOUNIS: Motion to accept.

18 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

19 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?  
(All signify aye.)

20 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

21 Resolution WD 23-09, a resolution of  
22 the Board of Trustees of the East Chicago Water  
23 Department authorizing the transfer of appropriations  
24 into different budget categories.

25 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to accept.

MR. OCHOA: Second.

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

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

Next is awarding 2023 fire hydrant  
and hydrant valve replacement.

MS. GUZMAN: This is for 2023 hydrant and  
hydrant valve replacement #1 project. April 3rd, 2023  
we received sealed proposals and opened them before this  
Board relating to this project. And, again, this

1 relates to replacement of five hydrant fixtures and  
2 valves.

3 The Water Department recommends  
4 awarding contract to the lowest most responsive proposal  
5 or bid, which is Calumet City Plumbing, in the amount of  
6 \$43,980.00. Just to note, the other proposal was  
7 received from Hasse Construction, in the amount of  
8 \$104,859.00.

9 It's our recommendation that the Board  
10 execute the notice of award of contract and notice to  
11 proceed so we can move forward and replace these  
12 hydrants and valves.

13 MR. BAKOTA: On the table is awarding the  
14 bid to Calumet City Plumbing.

15 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to accept.

16 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

17 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?

18 (All signify aye.)

19 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

20 Next is proposals. Without  
21 objection, I will read them entirely and then ask for a  
22 motion and questions if you like. I will number these  
23 one through 13 so if there is any questions, you can  
24 refer to that number and it will avoid confusion.

25 1. Calumet City Plumbing, concrete  
restoration at 3911 Alder Street, \$2,200.00.

2. Calumet City Plumbing, Bbox  
repair at 4908 Indianapolis Boulevard, \$4,970.00.

3. Calumet City Plumbing, water leak  
repair at 50341 Indianapolis Boulevard, \$14,900.00.

4. Calumet City Plumbing, meter pit  
repair at 3901 Alder Street, \$8,600.00.

5. Calumet City Plumbing, remove  
and relocate a fire hydrant at 140th Street and Catalpa  
Street, \$18,500.00.

6. Calumet City Plumbing, meter pit  
repair at 4760 McCook Avenue, \$5,375.00.

7. Calumet City Plumbing, concrete  
restoration at 5662 Indianapolis Boulevard, \$2,200.00.

8. Calumet City Plumbing, meter pit  
repair at 4935 White Oak Avenue, amount of \$5,375.00.

9. Calumet City Plumbing,  
disconnect and water leak repair at 406 Lilac Avenue,  
\$17,900.00.

10. Calumet City Plumbing, water

1 leak repair at 3823 Pulaski Street, \$8,611.00.

2 11. Calumet City Plumbing, meter  
pit repair at 4850 Baring Avenue, \$7,712.00.

3 12. Master Meter, annual Allegro  
Maintenance Base Station and Harmony fixed annual  
support, \$15,414.78.

4 13. Atlas Copco, repair to  
compressor, \$1,782.94.

5 That completes the proposals.

6 MR. VENTURA: Make a motion to approve  
all 13 proposals,

7 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

8 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?  
(All signify aye.)

9 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

10 Next past due invoices. Filmtec,  
date of invoice January 2, 2023, amount of \$19,020.00.  
11 Reason for delinquency, was sent to us on March 5, 2023  
and the PO we had for them was closed out.

12 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

13 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

14 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?  
(All signify aye.)

15 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

16 Next is Alexander Chemicals,  
Filtration. Invoice date of 2-2-23, in the amount of  
17 \$12,055.85. Reason for delinquency, received the  
statement that has this past due amount on it and had to  
18 have them e-mail me the invoice.

19 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

20 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

21 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?  
(All signify aye.)

22 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

23 Next is change orders. Calumet City  
Plumbing change order #1 for 601 West Chicago Avenue.  
There is an increase of \$185.00. Total now is  
24 \$6,385.00.

25 MR. VENTURA: Motion to approve.



1 MR. OCHOA: Second.

2 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?  
(All signify aye.)

3 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

4 Next is adjustments. Kem Iron Great  
Lakes, 18699, 3761 Canal Street. The adjustment is  
\$13.81.

5 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

6 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

7 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?  
(All signify aye.)

8 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

9 Next, Kem Iron Great Lake, 010319.  
3761 Canal Street. Adjustment is \$1.22.

10 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

11 MR. VENTURA: Second.

12 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?  
(All signify aye.)

13 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

14 Next is Kocsis Brothers Machine  
Company, 4321 Railroad Avenue. Adjustments of \$10.50.

15 MR. VENTURA: Make a motion to approve.

16 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

17 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?  
(All signify aye.)

18 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

19 Next is just an FYI, Fire Department  
equipment report for the month of March 2023 submitted.

20 Any Unfinished Business? (None)

21 Public Comment? (None)

22 Next meeting is May 1st, here in  
Council Chambers at 5:00 o'clock.

23 Do I have a motion for adjournment?

24 MR. OCHOA: Motion to adjourn.

25 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?

(All signify aye.)  
MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.  
Meeting adjourned.

\*\*\*\* Meeting adjourned \*\*\*\*

\* \* \* \* \*

Approval of the Meeting Minutes of  
April 17, 2023

Approved and signed May 1, 2023

*John Bakota*

John Bakota, President

*Henry Ventura*

Henry Ventura, Vice-President

*Joseph Ochoa*

Joseph Ochoa, Member

*Anthony Askounis*

Anthony Askounis, Member

*Ray Lopez*

Ray Lopez, Member

*Aterio Allen*

Alysia Dunbar, Secretary.

*Aterio Allen*

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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 20th day of April, 2023.

*Peggy S. LaLonde*



Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR