CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
May 14, 2024

BOARD MEMBERS:
Grayling Gordon, President
Joseph Fernandez
Eugene Austin, Secretary
Anthony Hopkins
Jaylan Robinson

STAFF:
Genesis Gary
Marino Solorio
Jewell Harris

Reported by: Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR
Fissinger & Associates

Call to Order: 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Roll Call: Present in Chambers: Grayling Gordon, Anthony Hopkins, Eugene Austin, Joseph Fernandez

Staff Present: Genesis Gary
Jewell Harris, Attorney

MR. GORDON: I would call to order the Board of Parks and Recreation meeting for Tuesday, May 14th, 2024.

We'll move on to Administrative matters. First on the agenda is approval of the minutes of the April 23rd, 2024 meeting as written. Can I get a motion?

MR. AUSTIN: Make a motion.

MR. FERNANDEZ: Second.

MR. GORDON: All in favor signify by saying aye. (All signify aye.)

MR. GORDON: Motion carries.

Next, approval and signing of payroll dated April 26, 2024. Can I get a motion?

MR. AUSTIN: Motion.

MR. FERNANDEZ: Second.

MR. GORDON: All in favor signify by saying aye. (All signify aye.)
MR. GORDON: Motion carries.
Approval and signing of payroll dated May 10, 2024. Can I get a motion?
MR. AUSTIN: Motion.
MR. FERNANDEZ: Second
MR. GORDON: All in favor signify by saying aye. (All signify aye.)
MR. GORDON: Motion carries.
Approval and signing of Warrant 051424 PB, in the amount of $43,998.80. That's the water bill. Can I get a motion?

MR. FERNANDEZ: I will make a motion.

MR. GORDON: I'll second the motion. All in favor signify by saying aye. (All signify aye.)
MR. GORDON: Motion carries.
Approval and signing of Warrant 050824 PB, in the amount of $86.51.

MR. AUSTIN: I make a motion.

MR. FERNANDEZ: Second.

MR. GORDON: All in favor signify by saying aye. (All signify aye.)
MR. GORDON: Motion carries.
Old Business: None
New Business: We have our recording secretary/manager, Miss Genesis Gary.
MS. GARY: All right. Good evening, Board members. First we have two past due invoices. One is due to the East Chicago Water Department in the amount of $17,918.70. Those are the bills for the Water Department from December, January, and February.
The reason the Water Department bills are getting behind is because one, December should have been done in 2023. So a lot of bills -- I just paid the ones for April and March. We haven't got May yet. We are trying to make sure all things are current. What we are finding is bills are still being carried from the previous year to the next year which is causing us to be set back already.

MR. GORDON: I've got a question.

MS. GARY: Sure.

MR. GORDON: So this water bill for $17,918 is for like 2 or 3 months?

MS. GARY: That's just three months together.

MR. GORDON: What are you all doing, leaving the faucet running?

MS. GARY: That's every park facility in the City of East Chicago, the pool and the parks. There are things still running in the parks in the Winter, Block Stadium, MLK, all of those places.

MR. FERNANDEZ: Are there any bids on the pool?

MS. GARY: I think they touched base and decided a splash pad in the year of 2025. They have not begun to break ground on that yet.

MR. AUSTIN: I have a question for the attorney. May I ask, what do you think we can do to stop this or have some solution that we can put together?

MR. HARRIS: You mean for the water bill?

MR. AUSTIN: Yes.

MR. HARRIS: I guess without seeing the details of the billing, if this is something normal or out of the ordinary. From your history does it happen like this at this time of year and for what reason.

MS. GARY: Actually last year the bill had started being -- well, we didn't have any funds in our account as of June of last year, right before the previous director left. At that time I was by myself in the office and trying to battle with how to get the funds in those accounts.

MR. HARRIS: So what months does this cover?

MS. GARY: The first six months of the year is what the City budgets out. We need to almost double our water account.

MR. HARRIS: I think this is a budgetary issue. We want to make sure that is prepared by the City and includes accurate numbers for water from our perspective. I think we can learn from this going forward. Obviously the players have changed, but I think that's exactly what she is describing. She is going to make sure going forward that the budget is accurate and maybe we can get more consistent payment and you won't see large lump sums.

MS. GARY: Large sums coming out at one time.

MR. GORDON: Who makes that suggestion? Who alerts the City to that?

MR. HARRIS: So I think right now you all as a Board by asking her to work on these numbers and what that budget should be. And then come budget time, as a department, the Park Department gets that over to the Mayor's office so that they know. They hear from each department and know what should be included in the budget and those numbers are accurate.

MR. GORDON: Okay, sounds good.

MR. AUSTIN: We have been having this --

MR. GORDON: We made the suggestion. Can I get a motion for the past due invoice of $17,918.70 to be paid?

MR. AUSTIN: Motion.

MR. FERNANDEZ: Second.

MR. GORDON: All in favor signify by saying aye. (All signify aye.)

MR. GORDON: Motion carries.

MS. GARY: Next we have a past due invoice in the amount of $100.00 for ServiScape. This is a bill from December. It kind of got passed around through different departments. It's in reference to some of the Christmas events and they finally said,

Parks, you have got to cover it. This was an event where I had to move items from one place to another. I know a hundred dollars is a lot of money, Mr. Austin, but we are seeking approval.

MR. GORDON: Can I get a motion to pay this past due invoice to ServiScape for $100.00?

MR. AUSTIN: I make a motion.

MR. FERNANDEZ: Second.

MR. GORDON: For the record, Board member Hopkins, Anthony Hopkins, is now present.

MS. GARY: Next on New Business, we have a service agreement with Crown Rental. It's for the rental of a tent that we'll be using for the Flower Show that is May 23rd at the Greenhouse. The tent, since it's over $5,000, we have to seek Board approval for things that we have to pay over $5,000.

MR. GORDON: The amount is $6,036.00. You couldn't talk them down?

MS. GARY: No, we tried. Trust me, we tried.

MR. GORDON: All right. Can I get a motion for Service Agreement with Crown Rental for the amount of $6,036.94?

MR. HOPKINS: Motion.

MR. GORDON: I'll second the motion. All in favor signify by saying aye. (All signify aye.)

MR. GORDON: Motion carries.

MS. GARY: Next on the agenda we have Federal Protection Service Agreement. As you guys know for previous years, we bring a Service Agreement from Federal Protection before you guys. This is for Park Rangers for the parks. As we come into our Spring and Summer months we want to ensure our parks are safe and we don't have residents or nonresidents destroying the parks. So we are seeking approval for the Service Agreement so that we are able to use Federal Protection in the Summer.

MR. AUSTIN: I would like to ask, I think that we should check and have some kind of roll call on that water bill issue. It's kind of for us to have a problem with water and find out how many places --

MR. GORDON: Not to cut you off. We can do that when we get to the comments. We have got something already going. We are dealing with Federal Protection and we need to get this motion passed with the Service Agreement. Can I get a motion?

MR. HOPKINS: Motion.

MR. GORDON: I'll second the motion.

MR. HARRIS: One comment, I see there is a provision in the agreement for insurance and that's fine. I just want to make sure when you send this back to them and signed off on that you require them to add City of East Chicago Parks and Recreation as additional insured on the insurance policy and send you that certificate of insurance to keep in the file.

MR. GORDON: All in favor signify by saying aye. (All signify aye.)

MR. GORDON: Motion carries.

Now, Mr. Austin, you had a few questions on the water, go right ahead.

MS. GARY: Mr. Austin, if you'd like I can show you the water bills, the stacks of them if you want to know exactly what building is using water and not.

MR. AUSTIN: Well, you know, at least -- we don't have to do it by month, let's do every couple of months.

MR. GORDON: We want to know what we are spending the money on for the water bills and that's what you are going to be working on.

MS. GARY: Right.

MR. GORDON: We'll be updated because they will tell you what your water bill is, right?

MS. GARY: They give us a whole bill packet, just like your bill at home. We get them once

a month. Like I said, we just haven't paid March and April. We are current. We have got to get the old ones in.

MR. GORDON: So that you can stop by the office and see Miss Gary.

MR. AUSTIN: Let's see where our attorney is.

MR. GORDON: The attorney told us already. So keep us updated.

Public Comments: None

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, May 28, 2024, right here at City Hall Council Chambers, at the appointed time of 5:00 p.m.

Is there a motion for the good of the order to adjourn?

MR. AUSTIN: Motion.

MR. HOPKINS: Second.

MR. GORDON: All in favor signify by saying aye. (All signify aye.)

MR. GORDON: Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned.

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Approval of the Meeting Minutes of Tuesday
May 14th, 2024

Approved and signed _____

Grayling Gordon, President

Eugene Austin, Secretary

Anthony Hopkins, Member

Joseph Fernandez, Member

Jaylan Robinson, Member

Genesis Gary, Recording Secretary

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 Valparaiso, Indiana, this 23rd day of May, 2024.



Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR