CITY OF EAST CHICAGO BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD MEMBERS
Val Gomez, President
Winna Guzman, Vice-President
Frank Rivera, Member

Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 28, 2026, at 4:30 p.m.

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

Staff Present: Olga Cosme, Recording Secretary
Shana D. Levinson, Legal Counsel

Call to Order: 4:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Present: Val Gomez
Winna Guzman
Frank Rivera

MR. GOMEZ: Good afternoon everyone. I'd like to call to order the regular meeting of the Board of Public Works for May 28th, 2026. We do have a quorum.

I'd like to make a motion to approve the minutes from the May 14th, 2026 meeting, as written.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

MR. GOMEZ: All in favor say aye?
(All signify aye.)
MR. GOMEZ: Motion carries.
We have no correspondence, we'll move on to New Business.

First item on the agenda is JM Industrial Services, Change Order #1 from 2022, Phase II Demolition. I spoke to James and on his form, he was using the original cost of all of the demos for that period, that came to 89,000. The actual bid for that -- one bid was 16,500. The change order was for 7,000, which is way over 20 percent. It was 55 percent.

I told James he has to do the same

with this one as the other three behind this one. He had to make it a proposal.

I did bring up something, that we approved the open bids in the year 2022. It's not the contractor's fault, but it's because, I guess, they give them six months to try to repair and before you know it, it's three years later. But because the City continues to give them time trying to get them to repair the property, it's three years later. That's why they have to ask for an additional amount because the costs went up in the interim.

So, I told James he might have to transfer -- that if they continue to do this, at least let the Board know that and we are not -- especially after two years -- they have to rebid it or something.

So in any case, instead of a change order, it's a proposal. It's a proposal. So he's requesting approval for the proposal from JM Industrial for the cost of living increase for demolition 3910 Deal Street. The total cost is $7,000.00.

Any questions or comments on this one? (None)

There being no further questions or comments, I'd like to make a motion approving the proposal from JM Industrial for the increase in their bid for 3910 Deal.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

MR. GOMEZ: All in favor say aye?

(All signify aye.)

MR. GOMEZ: Motion carries.

Now we have three similar requests from Richardson Disposal. First one is requesting approval for proposal from Richardson Disposal, cost of living increase for the demo at 3435 Fir Street. The amount is $2,375.00.

Any questions on this one? (None)

The second one is identical, also for Richardson Disposal, requesting approval of the proposal from Richardson Disposal for cost of living increase for demo at 3421 Grand Boulevard. The amount is $4,500.00.

Any questions? (None)

And the third one is also for Richardson Disposal requesting approval for cost of living increase at 4738 Melville, garage only. This one is for $975.00.

Any questions or comments on this

one? (None)

There being no further questions or comments, I'd like to make a motion approving the aforementioned three proposals from Richardson Disposal for increased due to cost of living and the disposal cost.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

MR. GOMEZ: All in favor say aye?

(All signify aye.)

MR. GOMEZ: Motion carries.

Next we have an addendum to Resolution 2015-80, City wide purchasing policy. This comes from the Controller's office.

"Effective immediately, the following addition have been made to the East Chicago Board of Public Works City Wide Purchasing Policy.

All Political subdivisions are required to upload contracts $50,000.00 or over not later than 60 days after the date the contract is executed. If the political subdivision originally expected a contract not-to-exceed $50,000.00, but at a later date determines that the contract will exceed that amount, it is required to upload the contract within 60 days following the determination.

Departments are responsible for ensuring that all documentation is completed accurately and submitted within required timelines for the City Controller and the Accounts Payable Manager. Required form and instructions can be found in Public Folders located in Microsoft Outlook.

This process ensures compliance with SBO requirements and maintains consistency in contract documentation and reporting.

Board Secretaries: All financial Consultants/Advisors contracts regardless of contract amount, must be uploaded into the City's website by each board secretary."

This is something that takes quite a bit of space and we just added it to our purchasing policy. Each of the boards will be sent our action. Any questions or comments on this one? (None)

There being no further questions or comments, I'd like to make a motion approving the addendum to the City's Purchasing Policy.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

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

Next we come to, this is from Faegre Drinker, East Chicago Housing Policy. This was for

"Client and Scope of Representation. The client represents the City in connection with advice regarding the Housing Policy and such other matters as we may mutually agree. AS we previously discussed with you, none of your other agencies, affiliated entities, subsidiaries, related political subdivisions, appointing authorities, nor any individual director, officer, manager or employee will be our client, except as we have or may agree in other separate engagements. If we represent the City in other matters, this letter will apply unless we otherwise agree in writing.

Fees: Our fees will be based principally on the experience of the people providing services to you, and the actual hours worked, unless otherwise agreed. Our current hourly rates for those expected to work on these matters range $570.00 to $1,045.00 per hour."

I did speak to the Law Department and they said their not-to-exceed is usually $100,000.00, but they don't expect to get anywhere near that amount.

I did talk with Attorney Allegretti to ask if he would get information on what this policy is. It concerns a loan that the city made in 2018. The PO was opened for the Senior Housing Retirement Community on Guthrie. The whole process started in 2018. The resolution said that the City is going to put in housing for something. What happened after that, that resolution caused a PO to be opened for that amount. But then there was another resolution a month later that didn't mention that. It was almost word for ward. Nothing was done till 2022.

In 2022 the Council, based on an ordinance and based on some of the paperwork that was loaded and some paperwork didn't get loaded. There is even a law firm that was engaged had in 2022 from Indianapolis and they were dealing with the loan. There is mentioned a loan several times. So there was some question about it's old, why haven't we paid it. They are trying to figure out the corresponding paperwork.

They happened to have a folder about this thick from 2018.

So, we gave Attorney Allegretti the paperwork we have and Joe is looking into it, hopefully with this law firm, and try to figure it out to determine if there's a loan or what happened. If it's a loan, as we look back 3 years, 4 years back, what the intent was. There's allot of paperwork that finalized everything. Eventually there was some mention the loan was three point million and other parts say it's six million.

So it caused a little bit of concern trying to get this figured out. So that's what this. When we mentioned the Housing Policy, at first I didn't know what it meant, Housing Policy. So we started looking to explain and see how far back this is going. I know it's confusing.

Any questions or comments? (None)

There being no further questions or comments, I'd like to make a motion to accept Faegre Drinker's proposal to the Law Department.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

MR. GOMEZ: All in favor say aye?

(All signify aye.)

MR. GOMEZ: Motion carries.

Next we come to outstanding invoices. We have the first one with Faegre Drinker. This is from the Law Department. Late invoice dated 2/06/26, amount of $962.50. Explanation: Invoices are e-mailed; this invoice was overlooked when submitted during this timeframe.

Any questions or comments on this one? (None)

The second one is from Multi Media Department. It's from Sounds & Graphics is the vendor. There are two late invoices dated 3/27/26 and one 1/27/26. The amounts are $6,995.00 and $22,140.69; for total of $29,135.69. Reason: Invoices weren't paid due to competing priorities. We'll get back to this later in the meeting. There is something related to this.

Any questions or comments on the two aforementioned late invoices? (None)

There being no further questions or comments, I'd like to make a motion approving payment for the two outstanding invoices.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

MR. GOMEZ: All in favor say aye?
(All signify aye.)
MR. GOMEZ: Motion carries.
Now we come to Resolution 2026-08.
"A Resolution of the East Chicago Board of Public Works appointing members of the Technical Review Committee for the design-build contract for the Washington Park Splash Pad Project.
Whereas, the Board of Public Works solicited proposals for a design-build splash pad project at Washington Park; and
Whereas, I.C. 5-30-4-1 requires the Board of appoint a Technical Review Committee consisting of members possessing specified qualifications prior to entering into a design-build contract under I.C. 5-30.
Now, therefore be it resolved that the following persons are appointed to the Washington Park Splash Pad Project Technical Review Committe retroactive to May 14, 2026;
Marino Solorio, Terry Velligan, Dennis Korchek.
Certified and adopted by the Board of Public Works of the City of East Chicago, Lake County, Indiana on the 28th day of May 2026."
Any questions or comments on this Resolution 2026-08? (None)
There being no further questions or comments, I'd like to make a motion approving Resolution 2026-08.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

MR. GOMEZ: All in favor say aye?
(All signify aye.)
MR. GOMEZ: Motion carries.
Next we have Raffin Construction Company, Washington Park Splash Pad. You may recall we opened the bids at the previous meeting and Raffin was the lowest, most responsive bidder and now we have the Notice of Award to Raffin Construction 744 East 115th Street, Chicago, Illinois, James F. Raffin.
"Project Description: The work shall consist of, not not limited to, site grading, concrete pad construction, and splash pad constructions with slides and plumbing and all other work necessary to provide for a complete project and as included in the Construction

Schedule and Specifications for the Washington Park Splash Pad.

The Owner has considered the Proposal submitted by you for your above-described work in response to the Town's request and instructions to Bidders.

It is the intent of the Owner to accept your Proposal and enter into a contract for the items listed in the Proposal in the amount of $3,866,278.00.

You are required by the Instructions to Bidders to execute the Contract Agreement and furnish the required Performance, Maintenance, and Payment Bond within 7 calendar days from the date of this Notice to you.

If you fail to execute said Contract Agreement and to furnish said Bonds within 15 calendar days from the date of this Notice, said Owner will be entitled to consider all your rights arising out of the Owner's acceptance of your Proposal as abandoned. The Owner will be entitled to such other rights as may be granted by law.

You are required to return an acknowledged copy of this Notice of Award to the Owner. Dated this 28th day of May, 2026."

Any questions on this Notice of Award? (None)

There being no further questions or comments, I would make a motion approving the Notice of Award.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

MR. GOMEZ: All in favor say aye?

(All signify aye.)

MR. GOMEZ: Motion carries.

Next we come to the Contract. We have an Agreement Between Owner and Design-Builder on the Basis of a Stipulated Price. This Agreement is between the City of East Chicago Board of Public Works and Raffin Construction Company as the Design-Builder.

"Project Information: Project is Washington Park Splash Pad, 25-0010. The Design-Build Contract: Washington Park Splash Pad Design-Build Contract.

Owners Consultant: First Group Engineering.

Engineer: Design-Builder has

retained SEH, Inc. Engineering for the performance of professional engineering service under this contract. The Owner's authorized representative is Scott Pruitt of First Group Engineering, 6949 Kennedy Avenue, Hammond. The Design-Builder is James Raffin, 744 East 115th Street, Chicago, Illinois.

Design-Builder shall complete all work as specified or indicated in the Contract. The Work is generally described as the design and construction of the following: The work shall consist of, but not limited to, site grading concrete pad construction, and splash pad construction with slides and plumbing and all other work necessary to provide for a complete project and as included in the Construction Schedule and Specifications for the Washington Park Slash Pad.

The Design-Builder will substantially complete the Work on or before May 28th, 2027.

Design-Builder will have the work completed and ready for final payment in accordance with Paragraph 14.06 of the General Conditions on or before July 3rd, 2027."

And as I mentioned before, the price is $3,866,278.00. Any questions on the Contract? (None)

There being no further questions or comments, I'd like to make a motion approving the Contract for the aforementioned splash pad.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

MR. GOMEZ: All in favor say aye?

(All signify aye.)

MR. GOMEZ: Motion carries.

Next we come to Right-of-Way permit applications. We have Board of Public Works permit application number 26-05438 through 26-05444.

Any questions or comments on these permit applications? (None)

There being no further questions or comments, I'd like to make a motion to approve the aforementioned Board of Works permit applications.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

MR. GOMEZ: All in favor say aye?

(All signify aye.)

MR. GOMEZ: Motion carries.

Now we move to Other Business. The first one is Working Well. This is 2026 rates with Franciscan for drug testing on-site. 11 Panel non-DOT drug test for $45.00; non DOT BAT test $35.00 for participant; and on-site fee of $75.00 per hour for event.

The reason this came to us late was that usually we have Occupational Health do the blood testing. This year the City decided to try to quicken the testing. Unfortunately they did not have a contract with Franciscan and they thought they did. But the contract was for blood work that we usually do in March and they thought they could use that one. We can't use that, we need a separate contract for this. They were actually going to be doing testing today and when I found that out, I had to stop it because they didn't have a contract.

I had a conversation with the HR director and with our Chief of Staff, we were in agreement that we couldn't wait till the next meeting because they had schedules already laid out. Our next meeting will be June 11th and that's too far out. As long as they didn't do anything after we did it, we would proceed with the approval of the contract.

I did talk to her about a not-to-exceed, which they are going to try and get a figure to us. She didn't know if she'd get in time for the meeting. She needs to talk to Franciscan first. I'll talk to her and we'll add the not-to-exceed. Okay?

MS. GUZMAN: Okay, that's fine.

MR. GOMEZ: Any questions or comments on this? (None)

There being no further questions or comments, I'd like to make a motion approving Franciscan's proposal for drug testing for City of East Chicago, subject to their providing the not-to-exceed.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

MR. GOMEZ: All in favor say aye?

(All signify aye.)

MR. GOMEZ: Motion carries.

Next we come to Certification Regarding Suspension and Debarment. Previously we passed the policy for Suspension and Debarment, which is

required by the Federal government and the State as of August 22, 2024. Thanks to Winna, we now have the form we were lacking. Even though we passed it, some of the Board secretaries are failing to add that in these contracts and it is required.

So, just to be fully active, we are getting this form, certification form for the requirement and this requires contractors, principals, subcontractors, and I think Winna covered everything on the form, and I think you already took it to Attorney Allegretti.

MS. GUZMAN: Yes.

MR. GOMEZ: And he approved it.

MS. GUZMAN: Shana, if you see anything on there, let us know.

MR. GOMEZ: It says the policy passed by us. He did send the policy to our Board, but when we started checking, a lot of the contracts remained the same. That's why we are going to do this and we are going to try to speak with the board secretaries on it.

Any questions or comments on the form for the Certification regarding Suspension and Debarment?

MR. RIVERA: I have a question. Are you doing this as a component of the contract?

MR. GOMEZ: That's where they go.

MR. RIVERA: I want to make sure, it's not written in here.

MR. GOMEZ: It's on the policy.

MS. GUZMAN: It does state that. I think they are numbered, but I'm not sure what they call it.

MR. RIVERA: Usually it's an IV number and whether they provided that.

MR. GOMEZ: Well, as a matter of fact, when we make the motion approving the form, we'll also direct everybody to look at the policy because we did send policies to every board.

Any other questions? (None)

There being no other questions or comments, I'd like to make a motion approving the new form for suspension and debarment policy, with the condition I'll call the board secretaries. I'll send them an e-mail, and maybe the directors too. A lot of times the directors notice these things too.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

MR. GOMEZ: All in favor say aye?

(All signify aye.)

MR. GOMEZ: Motion carries.

Next we come to Sounds & Graphics for our EC newsletter that comes out once a month. I think there is 12. This is the same company that we have been using for several years and they have submitted a sole proprietor form. It has a price of -- this is for 12 issues -- the price is $4,100.00 per issue, mailing for 10,119 cost of $300.00; postage is $2,530.00, postage fee for mailing $65.00. So the total is $83,940.00.

What happened, how it's related to the late invoices, we had already put out five issues and there was no contract, so that's why we did that. We backtracked that. It was actually discovered today when they are requiring the funding for this. So Multi Media, we called them about the funding and actually we checked to see if they had the latest contract. Hey didn't have it. That's why they are doing this now.

Any questions or comments?

MS. GUZMAN: Just note, as I recall postage is going to go up, I believe it's 80 cents starting in July.

MR. GOMEZ: They are going to get this in the Controller's office and we already figured out the funding, so we'll figure that out because the company invoice we found, it's four invoices, so that's why. We'll add all that to it.

Any other questions or comments?

(None)

There being no further questions or comments, I'd like to make a motion approving the proposal for Sounds & graphics for our newsletter.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

MR. GOMEZ: All in favor say aye?

(All signify aye.)

MR. GOMEZ: Motion carries.

I believe that concludes our other business and our New Business.

Our next regular scheduled meeting will be Thursday, June 11th, at 4:30 p.m..

That concludes all items on the agenda, I'd make a motion for adjournment.

MR. RIVERA: Second.

MR. GOMEZ: All in favor say aye?

(All signify aye.)

MR. GOMEZ: Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned.

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Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of
May 28, 2026
Approved and Signed May 28, 2026.

_____
Val Gomez, President

_____
Winna Guzman, Vice President

_____
Frank Rivera, member

_____
Olga Cosme, 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 Munster, Indiana, this 29th day of May, 2026.

Peggy S. LaLonde

Peggy S. LaLonde

Peggy S LaLonde
Notary Public Seal State of Indiana
Porter County
Commission Number NP0710219
My Commission Expires 2/6/2034