

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF WATERWORKS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Regular Meeting Minutes
July 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, Henry Ventura, Ray Lopez

STAFF Present in Chambers: Ateria Allen,
Rebecca Sliger, William Biller,
Allan Lee

STAFF Present via Zoom: Joseph Allegretti

MR. BAKOTA: I would call to order the
meeting of the Water Board for July 17, 2023. We'll
move on to approval of minutes of July 3rd, as written.

MR. VENTURA: Make a motion to approve.

MR. LOPEZ: Second.

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

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

Next is approval of Warrants.

Payroll: Warrant 070723, amount of \$12,886.37,
Utilities Payroll, dates of 6/17/23 to 6/30/23.

MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

MR. OCHOA: Second.

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

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.
Warrant 070723, amount of
\$47,194.50, Payroll, dates of 6/17/23 to 6/30/23.

MR. VENTURA: Motion to approve.

MR. OCHOA: Second.

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

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.
Accounts Payable: Warrant 071723
WT, amount of \$583.19.

MR. OCHOA: Motion to approve.

MR. LOPEZ: Second.

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

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.
Warrant 071723 WB, amount of
\$93,007.26.

MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

MR. LOPEZ: Second.

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

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.
Warrant 071723 WC, amount of
\$450.00.

MR. VENTURA: Motion to approve.

MR. OCHOA: Second.

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

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.
Warrant 071723 CD, amount of
\$662.05.

MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

MR. LOPEZ: Second.

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

2 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.
3 Warrant 073123 WB, amount of
4 \$144,029.69.

4 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

5 MR. VENTURA: Second.

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

7 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.
8 Filtration Report: Obed Perez (No
report).

9 Water Report: Winna Guzman

10 MS. GUZMAN: None at this time.

11 MR. BAKOTA: Distribution Report: Allan
Lee.

12 MR. LEE: Well, there are still some
13 things we need to do this year, maybe this Fall.
14 Hopefully the first of next year, those first four
things on the list that you have. We have a master list
now.

15 The blacktop, the valves that are
covered up in the blacktop, at one time the Mayor said
16 we could work some Saturdays. We'll see about that.
But I think priority is going to be some of these meter
pits.

17 All the hydrants, CCP has got the
award for five hydrants, but the other two have been
18 done. All five hydrants have been changed out, only
thing left is a little restoration. We have two more
19 hydrants that we found at the Marina that we need to
change those out. They are from probably the original
20 when the City was built.

21 Still have 81 no pays down the road
to fix. One thing is we are reading all the meters that
are working. Still have some meters that are broke that
22 are still in that thing where it has been read. Maybe
we can get some of that done on Saturday, we'll see.

23 Let's go to 10. That's the best one
for you, John. Last year we tested 100 meters and we've
24 done some more. The last time I counted we had 140 we
tested. So I think we tested actually a few more. All
25 locates are being done in-house. We are on 811 now. We

1 are doing our own, we have not contracted that out.

2 And number 12, we only have nine
3 hydrants that are defective in the City out of all the
4 hydrants we have. That's pretty good. I'm pretty happy
5 about that.

6 Still have like 90-meter pits that
7 need master meters because we are reading those. I'm
8 hoping to get some heavy equipment. We are working on
9 that.

10 I still have some openings. Looking
11 for some good help. If you know of anybody, send them
12 my way.

13 I still need a Bobcat trailer and a
14 pounder. I did get the Bobcat, so that's one good
15 thing.

16 We are working on the yard. We are
17 going to be working at the old filtration plant so we
18 can store our stone and stuff. As we dig a hole we put
19 back, some back stuff so we don't get those speed bumps
20 like the contractors.

21 Some of the other things we are
22 working on, the bathrooms at the Marina and laundry
23 rooms. They are not metered so we are working on that
24 to get those metered. I'd like to see, maybe even with
25 the fire department, maybe they could chip in. There
was a big program over at American Water. You know,
takes a long time. Sometimes hydrants last 20 years.
So we're just getting the nozzles put on all of them,
that's a quick connect for the fire department. Even
though we have the older hydrants, you can still put the
nozzle on there. Looking down the future, maybe get the
whole City with the nozzles, that would be good and
maybe work with the fire department.

Still need two pickups and a dump.
And we are working on the Sanitation Department, six out
of their seven buildings aren't metered.

Good news here, number 23, in May we
found 32 meter pits that were leaking, 15 were repaired
in-house. And in June we had 32 meter pits and we did a
little better, we did 18 in-house. So every time we do
one of those it's about \$5,000 savings, anywhere from 3
to 6, somewhere in there. Those were done by us. And
we still have 69 customers that have meters that are
broke. We are working on them. I think we got almost
like 130 down to 69 and we still have 60 houses over
there that they forgot to put meters in. And Winna is
telling me another month or so we might be able to take
care of those. So that's it.

25

1 MR. OCHOA: The cost of the contractors,
2 are we saving any money with them or not?

3 MR. LEE: The cost of the contractors,
4 it's 3 to 6,000. If we do it in-house, maybe with
5 benefits, with everything, fuel and everything, maybe
6 1500, maybe a thousand, if that, maybe even less. I
7 mean I didn't do the figures but I can put the figures
8 together for next meeting, what it costs us, what it
9 costs them. You see we are getting there.

10 I'd like to say we had 32 meter pit
11 leaks and we at 32 fixed. We are not quite there yet
12 because we are doing the restoration and we are doing
13 the ones in the parkway. We are not ready for the
14 blacktop and we are not ready for the ones in the
15 concrete because we don't have the material yet, but we
16 are working that way.

17 MR. BAKOTA: Thank you. Legal, Joe
18 Allegretti.

19 MR. ALLEGRETTI: The final hearing before
20 the IURC, the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission, is
21 scheduled one week from today. Winna and I expect that
22 the IURC will approve the settlement agreement and that
23 will conclude our rate case upon entry of the order and
24 approving our rates.

25 Our rate increase is in three phases
as we discussed in the past. And it will produce, as
soon as the software can be appropriately modified,
we'll produce, beginning of the first of the year, an
additional two and a half million dollars of revenue,
which of course is much needed. And then total of
42 percent increase is phased in over three years. So
finally our rate case will come to a conclusion, when
you think about preparing for our next rate case.

With that being said, that's good
news. Our rate counsel will be representing us at this
hearing. There is no need for any directors to
participate. Winna and I attended the last one. We may
or may not do that depending on what our rate counsel
advises. That's all. Winna, do you have anything more
to add to that?

MS. GUZMAN: No, that's it.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: That's where we are.

MR. LOPEZ: Thank you.

1 MR. BAKOTA: Thank you, Joe.
2 Next is financial report, William
3 Biller and/or Rebecca Sliger.

4 MR. BILLER: No report.

5 MS. SLIGER: No report at this time.

6 MR. BAKOTA: New Business. We have
7 Resolution WD 23-14, additional appropriation resolution
8 for the WC Water Utility Bond and Interest Fund 6102.
9 Do I have a motion?

10 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to accept.

11 MR. VENTURA: Second the motion.

12 MR. BAKOTA: Any comments or questions?
13 I have a question. Can I get some
14 explanation on this?

15 MS. SLIGER: This is the interest that's
16 owed on the bond for 2023 that we have prior to the bond
17 issue that we are asking to get. So all you are doing
18 is appropriating the money to make the monthly interest
19 payments.

20 MR. BAKOTA: So that's \$769.16?

21 MS. SLIGER: Correct.

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

25 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.
Next, Resolution WD 23-15, a
Resolution of the Board of Directors authorizing the
write-off of certain delinquent water charges and
penalties. The price on water write-off is \$4,708.53,
total with taxes and sanitary is \$12,202.92. Do I have
a motion?

MR. VENTURA: Make a motion to accept.

MR. OCHOA: Second.

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

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

1 Resolution WD 23-18, a Resolution of
2 the Board of Directors of the East Chicago Department of
3 Waterworks authorizing the disposal of surplus property.
4 It's in your packet, the equipment that's going be
5 disposed of.

6 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

7 MR. VENTURA: Second.

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

10 (All signify aye.)

11 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

12 Next is proposals. As in the past
13 I'll number them as a matter of reference.

14 1. Hessville Plumbing, leak repair
15 at 3938 Deal Street, amount of \$4,527.50.

16 2. Hessville Plumbing, Bbox repair
17 at 3912 Deal Street, \$3,560.00.

18 3. Calumet City Plumbing, meter pit
19 repair at 5034 Northcote Avenue, \$5,500.00.

20 4. Calumet City Plumbing, meter pit
21 repair at 3807 Ivy Street, \$5,500.00.

22 5. Calumet City Plumbing, meter pit
23 repair at 3811 Ivy, \$5,500.00.

24 6. Calumet City Plumbing, meter pit
25 repair at 4121 Magoun Avenue, \$5,700.00.

1 7. Calumet City Plumbing, meter pit
2 repair at 3863 Indianapolis Boulevard, \$3,700.00.

3 8. Calumet City Plumbing, meter pit
4 repair at 522 West 151st Street, \$5,500.00.

5 9. Mechanical Concepts, replacement
6 of compressor in Administration area, \$9,045.00.

7 That concludes the proposals.

8 MR. VENTURA: Make a motion to accept all
9 nine proposals as read.

10 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

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

13 (All signify aye.)

14 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

15 Next is change orders. Atlas Copco,
16 change order #1, for compressor repair at old plant.
17 The original amount was \$1782.94. There was an increase
18 of \$15.04. The total new amount is \$1797.98.

1 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to approve.

2 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

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

4 (All signify aye.)

5 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

6 Next is Calumet City Plumbing,
change order #2 for 2023 fire hydrant and hydrant valve
replacement. All this is a change in date of
completion to July 21, 2023.

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8 MR. VENTURA: Make a motion to approve
change of date.

9 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

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

11 (All signify aye.)

12 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

13 Next is Hasse Construction, approval
to accept stone donation. I understand they want us to
approve this, but we don't have the paperwork, so could
we table it?

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15 MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to table Hasse
Construction's stone donation.

16 MR. VENTURA: Second.

17 MR. BAKOTA: All in favor?

18 (All signify aye.)

19 MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

20 MR. ALLEGRETTI: We can ratify that after
the fact if there's a timing thing. That's not a
problem. We have authority to do that.

21 MR. BAKOTA: This is Calumet City
Plumbing, water disconnect on Michigan Avenue and Grand
22 Boulevard, \$17,900.00. This was tabled at our last
meeting, so now I need a motion to put it back on the
23 agenda so we can discuss it, and possibly pass the
issue.

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25 MR. LOPEZ: I make a motion to open this
up for discussion.

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MR. VENTURA: Second.

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

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

Okay. Now for the Board's approval, this is Calumet City Plumbing, water disconnect on Michigan Avenue and Grand Boulevard. A member had asked this be tabled for further explanation of the price of \$17,900.00.

MR. LEE: We had a main break, 16-inch main, on Chicago Avenue. It took over a day working valves to shut it down. Luckily we'd done it once before. The road buckled and we ended up digging up what we thought was 16-inch, but ended up to be three-quarter lead that blew off the main. And we were digging there, this was one going across the street, so we also ended up retiring both services. Luckily we didn't have to cut the main out because it would have been more, that's why. It was a big job. We ended up not having to cut the main, so that made me happy.

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

(All signify aye.)

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

Any Public Comment: None
Next meeting will be Monday, August 7, 2023, at 5:00 p.m., here in the Council Chambers.

Do I have a motion for adjournment?

MR. OCHOA: Make a motion to adjourn.

MR. VENTURA: Second.

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

MR. BAKOTA: Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned. Thank you.

**** Meeting adjourned ****


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Approval of the Meeting Minutes of
July 17, 2023

Approved and signed August 7, 2023




John Bakota, President



Henry Ventura, Vice-President



Joseph Ochoa, Member



Anthony Askounis, Member



Ray Lopez, Member



Ateria Allen, Secretary.

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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 July, 2023.

Peggy S. LaLonde



Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR