CITY OF EAST CHICAGO BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD MEMBERS

Milton Reed, President
Linda Thompson, Member
Frank Smith, Member

Public Hearing Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 27, 2026, at 5:00 p.m

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

Call to Order: 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Present: Milton Reed
Frank Smith
Linda Thompson

Staff Present: James Portalatin, Building Commissioner
Kevin Smith, Attorney Building Dept.
Shana Levinson, Board Attorney

MR. REED: Call to order the regular meeting of the Board of Public Safety for July 27th, 2026.

May we have a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of June 22nd, 2026 as written?

MR. SMITH: I move that we accept the minutes.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second that motion.

MR. REED: Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. REED: Motion carries.

Moving on to New Business. Oath of Office, Angel Segura. Is Angel Segura present? (Not present) We'll table this to a future time.

Is there a motion to accept the Absentee Report for June 2026 and Equipment Report for June 2026 from the Fire Department?

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MR. REED: Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. REED: Motion carries.

Next we have Resolution 2026-15. 4131 Elm Street and Release of Lien. Mr. Smith, did you want to speak on these?

MR. KEVIN SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President and Board. I wanted to add that the Release of Lien on these properties is all very similar. They are for release due to compliance. This is kind of an ongoing project. You will see it before you over the next several months where we are going to have 25 at a time, or however many the Department feels appropriate. They have been working perilously through this for the last several days. Olga has been doing the work to get this before you.

The Resolutions 15 through 20 are all in that same vein, payment of liens and release of the lien on the property.

MR. REED: Are we able to adopt these all at once?

MR. SMITH: It's up to the Board.

MS. LEVINSON: It's fine to do these all at once.

MR. KEVIN SMITH: And then I'll be able to talk about the Unsafe Building Law.

MR. REED: I'll read them all in the record. Is there a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-15, 4131 Elm Street and Release of Lien; Resolution 2026-16, 25 different locations and Release of Lien; Resolution 2026-17, 3809 Catalpa and Release of Lien; Resolution 2026-18, 3831 Euclid and Release of Lien; Resolution 2026-19, 3831 Euclid and Release of Lien for a different person; Resolution 2026-20, 4833 McCook Avenue and

Release of Lien.

Is there a motion to adopt these resolutions per the Building Department's recommendation?

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MR. REED: Any questions on the motion? (None)

Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. REED: Motion carries.

MR. KEVIN SMITH: The next group is Unsafe Building Law Demolition Liens.

To set the record on these, these are properties that have been before this Board in which demolition orders have been affirmed. They have before the Board of Public Works where the demolition order has been bid out and that work has now been performed.

I present the Board with the documentation, invoices, and other proof of payment by the City for the demolition activity.

So all this is, Statute now allows us to have a hearing before this Board to request a lien be placed on the property under the Unsafe Building Act for the cost of knocking it down and cost of the work.

Pursuant to the documentation and evidence presented to the Board, I would ask that the demolition liens be affirmed and approved for these addresses listed.

MR. REED: Is there a motion to accept the recommendation and approve these Unsafe Building Law Demolition Liens as presented?

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MS. LEVINSON: I would suggest going through these individually since you are putting a lien on the property.

MR. REED: Okay. Is there a motion to approve 3910 Deal Street Unsafe Building Law Demolition

Lien?

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MR. REED: Any questions on the motion? (None)
Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?
(All signify aye.)
MR. REED: Motion carries.
Is there a motion to approve 3435 Fir Street, rear, demolition lien?

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MR. REED: Any questions on the motion? (None)
Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?
(All signify aye.)
MR. REED: Motion carries.
Is there a motion to approve 3421 Grand Boulevard demolition lien?

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MR. REED: Any questions on the motion? (None)
Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?
(All signify aye.)
MR. REED: Motion carries.
Is there a motion to approve 4738 Melville Avenue demolition lien?

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MR. REED: Any questions on the motion? (None)
Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. REED: Motion carries.

Is there a motion to adopt 3810 Parrish Avenue demolition lien?

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MR. REED: Any questions on the motion? (None)

Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. REED: Motion carries.

Is there a motion to approve 4513 Tod Avenue, demolition lien?

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MR. REED: Any questions on the motion? (None)

Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. REED: Motion carries.

Is there a motion to approve 4847 White Oak Avenue, garage, demolition lien?

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MR. REED: Any questions on the motion? (None)

Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. REED: Motion carries.

MR. KEVIN SMITH: This next one is Release of Demolition Lien. On this one, James and I have been dealing with the tax sale purchaser and the acting owner on this property. He would like to rehab the property. We have an old lien for the rear. This is a release of the rear demolition lien of a long time ago, 2015. I notice there is a typo and I want to make

sure we correct that before it gets recorded.

There is another demolition lien that this Board affirmed more recently for the front structure, that's the one that we are going to keep on, probably getting a Rehab Agreement. This is just release of the rear demolition.

MR. REED: So the rear was demolished and that's been satisfied through tax sale?

MR. KEVIN SMITH: It's been satisfied in the sense that he's a new owner. We can't really hold the new owner responsible for the lien, but the tax sale takes care of most of that.

MR. REED: Okay. Is there a motion to release demolition lien for 4833 McCook Avenue, rear structure?

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MR. REED: Any questions on the motion?
(None)

Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. REED: Motion carries. I would note for the record, that there is still a lien on the front property.

MR. KEVIN SMITH: The next items are the Order to Rescind and Release Order to Demolish. I can let you know that Mr. Portalatin has requested, mostly due to compliance and rehab for the 5008 Alexander and 1125 Beacon Street they are successfully going through the rehab process and the property should be back to looking like the former property in the City of East Chicago. We would ask the same per the Building Department's recommendation on those addresses on the back page also.

I don't know if James wants to address any of these individually. They have gone to rehab and are in good shape.

MR. PORTALATIN: James Portalatin. They either have been rehabbed or they have participated in the demolition program, where we demolish that portion

and we release the lien that is there, like the deed for 4236 Indianapolis Boulevard, which was part of the lien for the garage.

MR. REED: It's nice to get some things done. So, this is the goal of the program, not to do demolition, but do rehabilitation.

Is there a motion to approve the Order to Rescind and Release Order to Demolish on the properties listed, per the recommendation of the Building Department?

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MR. REED: Any questions on the motion? (None)

Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. REED: Motion carries.

4937 Melville is a rehab. It's up for status.

MR. PORTALATIN: The property at 4937 Melville has been through Rehab Agreement and there has been work done to the property. The owner has entered into a contract to able to do the rehab on the property and I would like to extend this again and give them a final opportunity to get the rehab done on this property. There is some sentimental value to this property and with the Rehab Agreement with the City, they are confident the work will be completed satisfactorily.

The owners are present here as well if you would like to speak to her, but that's what I would present to the Board.

MR. REED: Would the owner -- I would invite you to speak. It's optional. If you would like to, that's fine. If you don't, that's fine too. If you could state your name.

MR. COOLEY: Emanuel Cooley, everything he said is accurate. We just appreciate more time. I'm representing my mom. She's got a lot of health issues. She's in her seventies and she is in a lot of pain, but putting her best foot forward. We appreciate this.

MR. REED: All right. This is normally where I encourage you to keep that line of communication open with James in every step of the way, so he can update us and we'll get through this.

With that, I don't know what the vote will turn out to be. We'll likely follow the recommendation, but communication is key, you know. We appreciate you coming down. You all had a good conversation about where you are and what needs to be done?

MR. COOLEY: Yes.

MR. REED: I appreciate you coming forward to speak today.

So is there a motion to accept the Rehab Agreement for 4937 Melville as presented by the Building Department?

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MR. REED: Any questions on the motion? (None)

Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. REED: Motion carries.

Now is there any other audience participation? Anybody that would like to speak on any topic in the audience, if you could state your name and address.

MR. REYNA: Octaviano Reyna, 4326 Indianapolis Boulevard. I don't know if this is the time to speak or not. This is in regards to my property at 4236 Indianapolis Boulevard, where I have been notified that my garage needed to be demolished because it was deemed unsafe. It was demolished over a year ago. He mentioned communication. I communicated with the Building Department, with Mr. Portalatin.

I just would bring up one thing, that on the demolition, 50/50, the paperwork. I did not know, when I said I would do this, I did not know that a lien would be put on the property.

The reason I bring that up, right after I became aware of all this, I got four quotes to build a garage. I had a three-car garage and got four

quotes from contractors to build. When I went to Centier for the loan, the only reason I was denied because there was a lien on the property. Had I known that was to be the case in the beginning, I would not have done 50/50.

I have every document, every e-mail, every conversation with the Building Department. Everybody has been great, but the lack of information on this paperwork says nothing about a lien. Had I known that, I would not have gone this route and I would have had the new garage. But now because of the price of everything, the tariff, I can't build the garage. Now I have a vacant backyard that I can do nothing with.

My intent is not to speak bad about anybody, just maybe something should be put on this form to help the residents, telling them, you are going to get a lien. When you try to get a loan, you are going to have a lien on your house. That's the only reason to be here. I wanted to be sure of what to do, the time frame. I have been trying for months to find out where this lien is at.

How will I know when it will be released? When can I go to the bank to get, to Centier, to get a loan to do what I have to do? Can anybody answer that for me? I don't know.

MR. REED: And we don't have that direct answer, but through the Building Department and the Attorney, you should be able to get a pretty clear idea with the building records. I appreciate you coming out here. I'd say you still have to contact the Building Department for the specifications of the action that was taken, you know. Tonight starts day one for the lien release. The physical process, you know, for the department is another question.

MR. REYNA: So I cannot get -- who do I contact to find out the next process?

MR. REED: The Building Department.

MR. REYNA: I appreciate you all. Thank you.

MR. REED: Okay. There is no more audience for participation.

The next meeting will be Monday, August 10, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

I'll take a motion to adjourn.

MR. SMITH: I'll make that motion to adjourn.

MS. THOMPSON: I'll second the motion.

MR. REED: Motion has been properly made and second. We'll take a vote. All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. REED: Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned.

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Approval of the Public Safety Minutes
of July 27th, 2026
Approved and Signed, Monday, July 22th, 2026.

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Milton Reed, President

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Linda Thompson, Member

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Frank Smith, Member

_____
Olga Cosme, 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 28th day of July, 2026.

Peggy S. LaLonde

Peggy S LaLonde
Notary Public Seal State of Indiana
Porter County
Commission Number NP0710216
My Commission Expires 2/6/2034