

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF WATERWORKS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 15, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS:

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

STAFF Present in Chambers: Joseph
Allegretti, Winna Guzman, Allan Lee,
Ateria Allen

MR. OCHOA: Call to order the meeting of
the East Chicago Board of Waterworks, August 15, 2022.

First item, approval of the minutes
of July 1, 2022. Do I have a motion?

MR. BAKOTA: Motion to approve.

MR. LOPEZ: Second.

MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
the motion? (None) All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

Approval of the minutes of
August 1st, 2022. Do I have a motion?

MR. BAKOTA: Motion to approve.

MR. LOPEZ: Second.

MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on

1 the motion? (None) All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

2 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

3 Payroll: Warrant 0801222, in the
amount of \$11,828.01, Utilities Payroll, for dates of
4 7-16-22 to 7-29-22. Do I have a motion?

5 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

6 MR. VENTURA: Second.

7 MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
the motion? (None) All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

8 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

9 Warrant 080322, amount of
\$46,615.27, payroll dates of 7-16-22 to 7-29-22. Do I
have a motion?

10 MR. VENTURA: Motion to approve.

11 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

12 MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
13 the motion? (None) All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

14 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

15 Accounts payable, Warrant 0803122
WB, amount of \$307,167.98. Do I have a motion?

16 MR. ASKOUNIS: Motion to accept.

17 MR. VENTURA: Second.

18 MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
the motion? (None) All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

19 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

20 Warrant 0815122 WB, amount of
\$127,008.75. Do I have a motion?

21 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

22 MR. BAKOTA: Second.

23 MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
24 the motion? (None) All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

25 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

1 Warrant 0815122 WT, amount of
2 \$150.00.

3 MR. VENTURA: Motion to approve.

4 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

5 MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
6 the motion? (None) All in favor?
(All signify aye.)

7 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.
8 Warrant 081522 CD, amount of
9 \$753.43. Do I have a motion?

10 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

11 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

12 MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
13 the motion? (None) All in favor?
14 (All signify aye.)

15 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.
16 Filtration Report: Obed Perez. No
17 report.

18 Water Report, Winna Guzman.

19 MS. GUZMAN: No report at this time.

20 MR. OCHOA: Distribution Report, Allan
21 Lee.

22 MR. LEE: Well, we have 125 shutoffs.
23 When I started we had 118, we are moving in the right
24 direction, we get more shutoffs. Then we have 60 need
25 to be dug out, 65 we are going to do in-house. Last
week we did 16 in-house. You can see the savings there,
3,000 times 16.

Hessville did the 25 boxes and they
are complete. We have 70 valve boxes, 29 to be
replaced, 49 we are going to try and do in-house. Every
one we do, it's a \$5,000 savings.

There are 30 hydrants left. We bid
out five, that would leave 25, but today I found one
that's split right down the middle that got missed. So
that puts another one in our system. So we'll be adding
one more to be replaced. We got about 40 hydrants that
we can repair inside with parts. Calumet City did the
five already -- actually they did four. There was one
that they were going to do, but told them not to do it

1 because it's already in that replacement in the Magoun
2 area hydrants out of service, but we're laying new main
there so why replace something that's going to get taken
out anyway.

3 We are working on a master list on
4 the inventory. We are all done flagging and tagging,
but there is a lot of ones that got missed and few tags
5 that didn't. So next two weeks we are doing a sweep of
the City to see which ones we may have missed. There is
6 a few that needed to be painted that got missed. There
is a couple tags that didn't get put on. So we are
7 cleaning that up. Pretty much everywhere you look, you
see a flag on a hydrant. We are having a little problem
8 with some of them getting broke off. I just got in a
new batch that are a little bit different, so they are
going to have to work harder to break them off.

9 We got 170 emergency jobs, that was
10 from the last week. CCP is almost done with the
restoration, I guess, from the ones from this winter.
11 We got all the valves replaced on 143rd. We are still
working on the Indianapolis part.

12 ME Simpson are doing the valves and
everything has been quiet. I told them exactly what I
13 want and how to do it. So we are working good with that
and we aren't having any problems, not having any
breaks.

14 All the locates for the past week
have been done in-house. I think we pay them like
15 51,000 and we don't need them anymore. Maybe for a big
job or something, but we are doing everything in-house.

16 We still need some equipment and
tools. I talked to somebody today and they said they
17 are going to take care of that for me. So that's where
I am at.

18
19 MR. BAKOTA: I have a question. On
number 8, tap for Filtration plant is on hold. What is
20 that tap?

21 MR. LEE: They want to do it, to make a
tap on that, and on that kind of pipe you can't make a
22 tap. So I told them you can't make a direct tap, you
have to get a saddle. So they have to order it. So
23 when the saddle comes, then we can make the tap and do
the testing. Until we get that saddle -- and believe
24 me, getting fittings and parts is unbelievable. If I
wanted ductile pipe, you've got to wait 66 weeks before
25 you can get a piece of ductile pipe. That's how
supplies are out there.

1 MR. OCHOA: What are you saddling it on?

2 MR. LEE: On the main. But steel pipe,
3 you have a saddle and then you drill.

4 MR. BAKOTA: That's a hot tap then?

5 MR. LEE: Yes.

6 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you.

7 MR. OCHOA: Legal Counsel, Joseph
8 Allegretti.

9 MR. ALLEGRETTI: Good afternoon. Winna
10 and I have been working a lot with our financial
11 consultants in preparation for some financing with the
12 State Revolving Loan Fund for continuation with our Lead
13 Line Replacement Program, and also working doing the
14 cost of service study in preparation for our rate case,
15 which we will soon be filing with the Indiana Utility
16 Regulatory Commission.

17 No surprise, we need additional
18 revenue. Our rate structure is not sufficient to
19 generate money for operation maintenance. Estimated
20 completion of the rate study to go through the IURC is
21 late Spring next year. So it's going to be a long,
22 expensive, time consuming, rigorous, process, but the
23 longest journey begins with the first step. Here we go.
24 That's all I have.

25 MR. OCHOA: How much of a rate increase
are we applying for?

MR. ALLEGRETTI: That's hard to say now,
but we need -- that's going to depend on the cost of
service study and complete analysis of our budgetary
needs. But it also needs to be sufficient to pay debt
service for anticipated revenue bonds, which we had to
issue for our Public Works project, such as
infrastructure replacement, the elevated tank
demolition, and reconstruction on Chicago Avenue,
completion of the loop that Brother Lee has talked
about, and other projects. It will be significant.

MR. OCHOA: So, I guess, the average
citizen will complain.

MR. ALLEGRETTI: Our rate structure is

1 among the cheapest in the State of Indiana, and that is
2 combined with sewer user charges and water utility rates
3 compared to others. For example, Crown Point, where
4 some people I know live, water costs about \$11.00 a
5 thousand gallon, where here it costs a \$1.80. It's
6 horrendously expensive. We are not only competitive, we
7 virtually give it away, and our bottom line shows it.
8 We don't generate sufficient rates. So there is plenty
9 of room between where we are now and where the
10 competition is, where other communities charge for
11 potable water. And it's a sad fact of life, we have to
12 charge more money.

13 MR. OCHOA: Thank you. Financial report,
14 William Biller. You have the handout in your packet.
15 If you have any questions -- None.

16 New business. Resolution WD22-16.
17 A Resolution of the Board of Directors authorizing the
18 write off of certain delinquent water charges and
19 penalties. Anybody want to elaborate on that or take it
20 at face value?

21 MS. GUZMAN: Good evening, Board members.
22 This is a list of the water charges and penalties from
23 2019 to 2022, for total of \$10,512.65. And I have
24 attached -- this is for the second quarter of the year
25 -- I have attached the listing for your review and
request that the Board approve that so we can write
these off on our system as uncollectible.

MR. OCHOA: Do you feel any of these
shouldn't be on the list?

MS. GUZMAN: They should be on the list,
yes, they are uncollectible.

MR. OCHOA: Thank you. Do I have a
motion?

MR. ASKOUNIS: Motion to accept.

MR. VENTURA: Second.

MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
the motion? (None) All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

Resolution WD22-17. A Resolution of
the Board of Trustees of the East Chicago Water

1 Department authorizing the transfer of appropriations
2 into different budget categories.

3 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

4 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

5 MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
6 the motion? (None) All in favor?
(All signify aye.)

7 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.
8 Resolution WD 22-18. A Resolution
9 of the Board of Directors determining certain property
10 and equipment of the department to be surplus and
11 providing for its disposal.

12 MR. VENTURA: Motion to approve.

13 MR. BAKOTA: Second.

14 MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
15 the motion? (None) All in favor?
16 (All signify aye.)

17 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.
18 Request for proposal and e-mail
19 approved only. 9400 Calumet Plumbing, 1202 East Chicago
20 Avenue, amount of \$6,500.00. Do I have a motion.

21 MR. ASKOUNIS: Motion to accept.

22 MR. BAKOTA: This is labeled emergency?

23 MS. GUZMAN: Yes.

24 MR. VENTURA: Second.

25 MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
the motion? (None) All in favor?
(All signify aye.)

MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.
Proposals: Recommendation - 2022
request for proposals fire hydrant and hydrant valve
replacement project #2. Do I have a motion to approve?

MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

MS. GUZMAN: I would just like to add

1 we'd like to award the proposal to the lowest posted bid
2 received by Calumet City Plumbing for \$49,050.00, and
3 request the Board to execute the Notice of Award and
4 Notice to Proceed in the contract.

5 MR. LOPEZ: I will withdraw my previous
6 motion.

7 MR. OCHOA: Do I have a motion on the
8 Calumet City Plumbing proposal to include the Notice of
9 Award and Notice to Proceed?

10 MR. BAKOTA: Motion to approve.

11 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

12 MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
13 the motion? (None) All in favor?
14 (All signify aye.)

15 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

16 Past Due Invoices: F.E. Moran Inc.,
17 Filtration, invoice 001-302201563, invoice date 5-16-22,
18 amount of \$190.00. Do I have a motion? Invoice was
19 sent to me on 8-3-22 asking about payment.

20 MR. BAKOTA: Motion to approve.

21 MR. VENTURA: Second.

22 MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
23 the motion? (None) All in favor?
24 (All signify aye.)

25 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

Anderson Process, invoice was sent
to me on 8-9-22 through Obed Perez. Invoice number
5476116, the date is 6-1-22, invoice amount of
\$2,223.73. Do I have a motion?

MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
the motion? (None) All in favor?
(All signify aye.)

MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

Calumet City Plumbing, invoices were
received for emergency work completed well after the
fact, as final restoration had yet to be completed until

1 recently. I guess we are going to have to accept that.
2 Invoice number 52609, date of 5-20-22, the amount of
3 \$41,205.00. Do I have a motion?

4 MR. VENTURA: Motion to approve.

5 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

6 MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
7 the motion? (None) All in favor?

8 (All signify aye.)

9 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

10 Change Order: Calumet City
11 Plumbing, change order #1, amount of 405 to cover
12 charges not contained in the original estimated value of
13 proposal. Do I have a motion?

14 MR. BAKOTA: Motion to approve.

15 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

16 MS. GUZMAN: Can I just add the project
17 location, 151st and Indianapolis, total PO was 3,800,
18 increase of \$405.00, which is the change order request,
19 and brings the total is \$4,205.00.

20 MR. OCHOA: We'll do a new motion.

21 MR. BAKOTA: I'll withdraw my previous
22 motion to approve.

23 MR. OCHOA: The new motion would include
24 the explanation.

25 MR. ASKOUNIS: I make the motion.

MR. LOPEZ: Second.

MR. OCHOA: Any comments or questions on
the motion? (None) All in favor?

(All signify aye.)

MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

Any Unfinished Business? (None)

Public Comment? (None)

Our next regular meeting, Thursday
September 1, 2022, at 5:00 p.m., here At the chambers.
Do I have a motion for adjournment?

MR. VENTURA: Make a motion to adjourn.

1 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.


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

3 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

4 ***** Meeting adjourned *****

5
6
7 Approval of the Meeting Minutes of
August 15, 2022

8 Approved and signed September 1, 2022

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10 
Joseph Ochoa, President

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John Bakota, Vice-President

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Henry Ventura, Member

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Anthony Askounis, Member

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Ray Lopez, Member

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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 18th day of August, 2022.

Peggy S. LaLonde



Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR