

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF WATERWORKS  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Regular Meeting Minutes  
October 3, 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, Ray Lopez, Henry Ventura,  
Anthony Askounis

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

Present Remotely: Joseph Allegretti

MR. OCHOA: Call to order the meeting of  
the East Chicago Board of Waterworks, October 3, 2022.

First item, approval of the minutes  
of September 19, 2022. Do I have a motion?

MR. VENTURA: Make a 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.

Payroll: Warrant 093022, amount of  
\$12,929.08, Utilities payroll, dates of 9-10-22 to  
9-23-22. Do I have a motion?

MR. BAKOTA: Motion to approve.

MR. LOPEZ: Second.

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

2 (All signify aye.)

MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

3 Warrant 093022, amount of  
4 \$46,615.51, payroll, dates of 9-10-22 to 9-23-22. Do I  
have a motion?

5 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

6 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

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

8 (All signify aye.)

MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

9 Accounts Payable: Warrant 092622  
10 WB, amount of \$29,881.97. Did I have a motion?

11 MR. VENTURA: Motion to approve.

12 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

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

(All signify aye.)

14 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

15 Warrant 100322 WB, amount of  
\$174,193.18. 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?

19 (All signify aye.)

MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

20 Warrant 100322 WT, amount of  
21 \$150.00. Do I have a motion?

22 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

23 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

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

(All signify aye.)

25 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

1                                   Filtration Report, Obed Perez.  
That's in the packet.

2                                   Water Report, Winna Guzman.

3                                   MS. SLIGER: No report.

4                                   MR. OCHOA: Distribution Report, Allan  
Lee.

5                                   MR. LEE: I just want to go through most  
6 of this, but I'll note from seven on down, the next  
page. We've done 201 emergency jobs this year. We  
7 fixed -- I've talked about my new employee, Ray. He's  
doing all the locates in-house now. We did end up  
8 spending a hundred or 200 to use an outside service.

9                                   MS. SLIGER: This past month was a 100.

10                                  MR. LEE: And they didn't even find what  
we needed. Ray also did 39 hydrants. He repaired those  
11 in-house, so you can see the savings. I think he's an  
outstanding employee and should be hired immediately  
12 full time.

13                                  MR. OCHOA: What's his full name?

14                                  MR. LEE: I wrote it right there for you.  
I spelled it for you, don't ask me to say it. I just  
15 say Ray. He's part-time. He does have his 90 days in,  
so I'm hoping.

16                                  MR. BAKOTA: He's got prior experience?

17                                  MR. LEE: Well, he has Code Red, so  
18 that's a company that uses the monitors. Remember we  
were paying them to come out to monitor until we bought  
19 our own monitor.

20                                  MR. BAKOTA: What does it take to get him  
full time?

21                                  MR. LEE: I think they are working on it.  
22 I just wanted to make that note. We tested 78 meters.

23                                  MR. BAKOTA: How is that going?

24                                  MR. LEE: Pretty good. It's good. It's  
a process. We'll be done by the end of the year and  
25 we'll do 100 meters. I won't ask you for \$50,000 this

1 year to test those. So I told you the first of the year  
2 when I first came on, I know you tabled it and I  
3 understood that. You had to give me a little time, so I  
4 just want you to know that issue was addressed.

5 MR. OCHOA: That process, who came up  
6 with the process?

7 MR. LEE: Right, we had to get training  
8 first because we had a new bench. We had to get  
9 somebody to come in, gave us some classes, show us how  
10 to do it. You just don't want to do it and the tests  
11 are wrong. So Jeremy is a part-time guy. He's been in  
12 charge of that. We are waiting on him to get a passcode  
13 to go on the computer so we can make a spreadsheet.  
14 That's part of the process, but we are getting there.

15 MR. BAKOTA: So you are checking meters  
16 that are taken out and need to be tested?

17 MR. LEE: All the meters that were taken  
18 out are not taken out just to test. These were all  
19 taken out that needed to be changed. A lot of them came  
20 from Homerlee and Magoun, you know, because those were  
21 all old meters. All those got new pits and new meters.  
22 But we still have the old meters to test.

23 MR. BAKOTA: You test the meter and put  
24 it on the shelf for future use?

25 MR. LEE: Well, any of them that are  
26 Master meters. The others will all be scraped.

27 The only other thing, kids are  
28 breaking the flags off the hydrants. We had another  
29 like 12 or 14 replaced today. Like all on Guthrie was  
30 broke off. So I mean, it is what it is, but I don't  
31 know how to address that. You know, we need them there  
32 for the Fire Department.

33 MR. VENTURA: In the middle of the street  
34 on the 4700-block of Alexander and Chicago, there is  
35 like --

36 MR. LEE: There is a lake there.

37 MR. VENTURA: Was that a hydrant?

38 MR. LEE: No, that's a leak in the middle  
39 of the street, a broken valve. So that's a big process

1 there. It's going to cause us to have everything off to  
2 the canal, all the way to Kennedy, from Chicago Avenue  
3 all the way to 149th, and everybody is going to be off.  
4 But that's a process because valves have to be fixed.  
5 We are down to one 16-inch and I'm hoping to get that  
6 fixed this week. And then next week we'll do a test to  
7 see if we got enough valves.

8 But good news from that, there's two  
9 big complexes there at Alexander. If you see to the  
10 north of that, two big meter pits are in there and they  
11 have been getting free water for 30 years. They have  
12 till the 19th to get both meter pits ready for a meter  
13 to be installed or I'm shutting them off. There is like  
14 18 mailboxes on there.

15 MR. BAKOTA: They never had a meter?

16 MR. LEE: One, an old meter from 30 years  
17 ago maybe. And the other was all just, you know, help  
18 themselves. So good news from the leak, if we wouldn't  
19 have had that leak, we wouldn't have two new customers.

20 Total in September, we are adding  
21 nine more new customers that got caught with no meters.  
22 We are moving right along.

23 MR. LOPEZ: On that break, is that a  
24 sewer break, that water that went in the river?

25 MR. LEE: The big break on Railroad, it's  
a sewer break.

MR. LOPEZ: Now did we put anything into  
the river?

MR. LEE: I think they were, but that's  
up to Sanitary.

MR. LOPEZ: Nobody wants to talk about  
it.

MR. ALLEN: I don't know for sure. I'm  
not going to make any comment. I don't know for sure  
where they put the water. There is a bunch that's  
bypassed and they are sucking that out there and goes  
all the way to the plant; I know that much.

MR. BAKOTA: All the drains are on  
Indianapolis Boulevard there.

1 MR. LEE: That was all flooded.

2 MR. BAKOTA: They are all directed to the  
3 canal. The government ordered that because of our  
4 combined sewer system.

5 MR. LEE: I'm going over there tomorrow  
6 because it has a wire around it, we can see if we can  
7 trace it because they have got to dig up both ends. So  
8 it's a pretty good size job, but we were over there. It  
9 wasn't us, that's all that matters. It's not us.

10 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you.

11 MR. OCHOA: Next, Legal Counsel, Joseph  
12 Allegretti.

13 MR. ALLEGRETTI: Railroad was a forced  
14 main break. That's our main break from the Alder Street  
15 pump station. It's a company that has a remedy still  
16 being undertaken. It will take a few more days to get  
17 the bypass put in, the stop in. We do the bypass and  
18 push the water back in the plant because it cannot get  
19 to the plant now because of the break and it's been  
20 discharged into the Grand Cal. And we have been in  
21 constant communication with IDEM and are working  
22 diligently. Hasse is the contractor on-site, and as I  
23 say, it's a work in progress.

24 You know, unfortunately with forced  
25 main, you don't have manholes. They are forced mains.  
26 And you don't -- there is no way to test them or to  
27 inspect them. You find out they are in trouble when  
28 they break, and that's what happened and caused the  
29 sinkhole and caused the cave-in in the road. It's a  
30 disaster, but being dealt with. I know that's nothing  
31 to do with the utility, but I thought I would answer  
32 your question.

33 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you, Joe.

34 MR. OCHOA: Financial Report, Bill  
35 Biller.

36 MR. BILLER: There is a cash report in  
37 your packet. Rebecca and myself are here, if you have  
38 any questions, we'll be happy to address them. We are  
39 doing good, holding our own.

40 MR. OCHOA: Request for purchase order

1 dated September 19, 2022, emergency B-box repaired at  
2 3830 Carey Street. This was declared an emergency.  
3 Cost is \$2,977.00. Do I have a motion?

4 MR. BAKOTA: 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 Request for purchase order dated  
11 September 19, 2022, 3835 Carey Street, emergency B-box  
12 repair, and it was declared an emergency at this  
13 meeting. Cost is \$1,896.00. Do I have a motion?

14 MR. VENTURA: Make a motion to approve.

15 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

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

19 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

20 We have proposals. First, Gasvoda &  
21 Associates, emergency doppler flow meter installation.

22 MS. SLIGER: It's just the proposal.

23 MR. LOPEZ: Cost is \$6,852.00?

24 MS. SLIGER: I believe that's what it  
25 was.

MR. OCHOA: Do I have a motion for this  
proposal?

MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve.

MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

MR. BAKOTA: This is from Obed Perez?

MS. SLIGER: That's Filtration, Obed  
would have turned that in.

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

1 (All signify aye.)

MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

2 Next, Mechanical Concepts, replace  
3 heating valves and upgrading heating controls, Water  
Department, for cost of \$22,365.00.

4 MR. VENTURA: Make a motion to approve.

5 MR. ASKOUNIS: Second.

6 MR. BAKOTA: Is this at the Water  
Department?

7  
8 MS. SLIGER: That one, Mechanical  
Concepts, is for the Water Administration Building.  
9 There is pipes that are down there -- it's for the HVAC  
system. What is happening, they are is leaking. They  
10 were rusted out and leaking, just leaking water  
everywhere. So they are planning on replacing all of  
11 the pipes that are in there, because there is two  
sections of it now that are leaking. They tried to shut  
12 off the pipes, tried to shut them off to the unit that  
it was going to, and it just started leaking even worse.

13 MR. BAKOTA: Is it the air conditioning?

14 MS. SLIGER: The HVAC system, the heat  
and air. It's all water cooled.

15  
16 MR. BAKOTA: They always have trouble  
over there.

17 MR. LEE: If those blow it's going to  
flood the whole building. We have got to get someone to  
18 fix that right away.

19 MR. OCHOA: Where is the leaking --

20 MS. SLIGER: In the furnace room now.  
21 There is a drain in the floor, but we are mopping in  
there 3, 4 times a day because there is so much water  
that's leaking now.

22  
23 MR. BAKOTA: That's been a problem there  
for years.

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

25 (All signify aye.)



1 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

2 Past Due invoice: Ferguson  
3 Industrial. Invoice was sent to wrong department and  
4 then e-mailed to me on 9-22-2022. Invoice number  
5 6666304, invoice date 7-21-22, invoice amount \$3,374.00.  
6 Do I have a motion?

7 MR. ASKOUNIS: Motion to accept.

8 MR. VENTURA: Second.

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

12 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries.

13 Unfinished Business: None.

14 Public Comment: None.

15 Next meeting date is Monday,  
16 October 17, 2022, at 5:00 p.m., here in The Council  
17 Chambers. Do I have a motion for adjournment?

18 MR. ASKOUNIS: Motion to adjourn.

19 MR. VENTURA: Second.

20 MR. OCHOA: All in favor?


21 (All signify aye.)

22 MR. OCHOA: Motion carries. Meeting  
23 adjourned. Thank you.

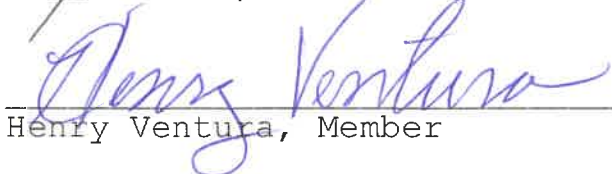
24 \*\*\*\*\* Meeting adjourned \*\*\*\*\*  
25

Approval of the Meeting Minutes of  
October 3, 2022

Approved and signed October 17, 2022

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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 6th day of October, 2022.

*Peggy S. LaLonde*



Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR