

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
Tuesday, June 23, 2020

BOARD MEMBERS:	STAFF:
Anthony Serna, President	Ateria Allen
Rick Rodriguez, Vice President	Dawn Dawkins, Legal
Valda Lewis, Secretary	Vanessa Hernandez-Orange
Gilberto Cantu	
Eugene Austin	

Reported by: Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR
Fissinger & Associates

Call to Order: 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Present: Anthony Serna, Rick Rodriguez
Telephonic: Valda Lewis, Gilberto Cantu

Staff Present: (Telephonic) Dawn Dawkins, Legal Counsel
Ateria Allen, Recording Secretary
Vanessa Hernandez-Orange, Director

CHIEF SERNA: We have a quorum,
so we'll move on to Administrative matters.
First we have approval of the
June 9, 2020, meeting minutes. I'll entertain a motion
to approve the June 9, 2020, meeting minutes.

Motion to approve minutes of June 9, 2020, as written,
made by Rick Rodriguez. Second by Valda Lewis.

CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

CHIEF SERNA: Motion carries.

Next, we have approval of payroll
dated June 12, 2020. Entertain a motion approve
payroll.

Motion to approve payroll of June 12, 2020, made by Rick
Rodriguez. Second by Valda Lewis.

CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

CHIEF SERNA: Motion carries.

1 Next, we have approval of Warrant
2 report 062320 PB, in the amount of \$68,648.86.

3 Entertain a motion to approve.

4 Motion to approve Warrant report 062320 PB, amount of
5 \$68,648.86 made by Valda Lewis. Second by Rick
6 Rodriguez.

7 CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
8 saying aye?

9 (All signify aye.)

10 CHIEF SERNA: Motion carries.

11 We'll move on to Old Business. Do
12 we have any old business, Madame secretary?

13 MS. ALLEN: No, we do not.

14 CHIEF SERNA: Move on to New Business.
15 Vanessa Hernandez-Orange, our Director of Parks and
16 Recreation.

17 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: Good evening. So
18 couple items there for new business. We are reopening
19 -- first and foremost, our price list -- I'm sorry --
20 let's go with that first. The price list that's in your
21 package, adding new items to the price list, adding this
22 to the other items you have previously approved. We
23 have about -- second page -- five items that need to be
24 approved for pricing.

25 CHIEF SERNA: Wow, so this is -- you are
selling a red or pink hibiscus plant?

 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: That's what has
been requested, I guess, previously; and now we have
been able to provide that.

 CHIEF SERNA: That's a good price. Only
reason I know is because -- I'm older now -- and my wife
and I are doing a little bit of gardening in the
backyard since she won't let me leave the house. Those
are nice plants.

 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: I have to say,
comparing it to a lot of the pricing in the area for
some of these plants that we have seen, our prices are
pretty comparable or underneath what pricing is. So
hopefully people will come and partake in that.

1 CHIEF SERNA: Okay. You are looking for
2 us to approve this price list for the Greenhouse, the
3 new additions; the red or pink hibiscus, red oak tree,
4 silver maple, dogwood and Norwood spruce. All the
5 prices of everything else is the same?

6 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: Correct.

7 CHIEF SERNA: Just those five new items
8 that we are approving. Any questions Board members?

9 MS. LEWIS: Are these for sale to the
10 public or just you are putting them in the Greenhouse?

11 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: No, these are for
12 sale to the public. So I think on here it says the
13 selling price of all the items that we actually sell and
14 how much they will be for all items. So this is for
15 sale, which will begin shortly.

16 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Are these annuals or what
17 you call --

18 CHIEF SERNA: Perennials. I know my
19 little gardening terminology now.

20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I answered my own
21 question.

22 CHIEF SERNA: All right. Any other
23 questions? (None) Entertain a motion to approve the
24 price list, the updated price list for 2020, at the
25 Greenhouse, for plants and flowers at the Greenhouse.
Motion to approve updated price list for 2020 at the
Greenhouse, made by Valda Lewis. Second by Rick
Rodriguez.

CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

CHIEF SERNA: Motion carries.

MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: This next item is
not seeking approval, just information. We are now
going to sponsor a drive-up produce give away. The
dates and times for the drive-up will be every Thursday,
from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m..

The reasoning for this is, we have

1 an Executive Order to open up the parks and recreation
2 facilities. The only issue is, we want to keep
3 everything at the small maximum capacity, so this is
4 why. We'll actually be taking out items to people who
5 come by.

6 Now, we will be charging for any
7 people that are out of East Chicago residents. If they
8 come up and want to purchase items, someone will be
9 there on standby to let them know how much it will be
10 and they will pay. Other than that, it's free for East
11 Chicago residents. To Catholic Charities, depending on
12 how this goes and how much we actually give out to the
13 community, if we need to, we'll still give whatever is
14 left to Catholic Charities.

15 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Vanessa, is this like you
16 can phone ahead of time for the drive-up?

17 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: If you would like
18 to, that's possible. What we are going to do -- how
19 this is going to be, someone will be stationed there the
20 whole entire time. We'll have a sign to let people know
21 they can they come up. If they would like to call in
22 and schedule an appointment solely for them to come,
23 that's fine.

24 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I take it, because this
25 is drive-up, you order, drive up, and get it curb side
26 pick up.

27 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: No, I understand.
28 Again, depending on what the individual wants. We
29 didn't state it to be like that. They could just drive
30 up, if they would like, and give them whatever they ask.
31 Whatever is working best for the individual, depending
32 on how they feel as well. We'll be there for the whole
33 time.

34 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

35 MS. LEWIS: When will this start?

MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: Starts June 26th.

36 MS. LEWIS: You said Wednesday or
37 Thursday?

38 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: Every Thursday,
39 1:00 to 3:30 p.m..

1 CHIEF SERNA: Any further questions,
2 Board members? (None) This was just for information,
3 FYI.

4 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: My next point,
5 another FYI, kind of letting the Board know, the
6 reopening of the facilities for the Parks and
7 Recreation.

8 So, per the Executive Order from our
9 Mayor, we have decided to now do phases of opening for
10 our parks and recreation. I know Mr. Rodriguez and
11 Chief Serna have their packets, it's in there. Miss
12 Lewis, I'll make sure to have that and Ateria can e-mail
13 you the packet that I have sent out, but we have changed
14 a couple of items.

15 So, yes, the parks are open. Anyone
16 is able to walk there, but we have changed times for
17 some things. So, for instance, on our first page, it
18 says, parks reopening, trails, playgrounds, tennis
19 courts, the Greenhouse, and basketball courts. So the
20 Greenhouse is open for the public and we have it from
21 Monday, Wednesday 9 to 3:00 p.m.. Again, maximum
22 capacity is five. I know on that packet it says, by
23 appointment only, but we have talked to Hilda who runs
24 our Greenhouse, and she said she would like to make sure
25 whoever and whenever they want to come, they can do
that. Solely because they are continuously working in
the Greenhouse, so to stop and answer the phone, set up
appointments; she prefers if they'd like to come in, we
can just show them around. If they would like to
purchase flowers at that point in time, they can do that
also.

The playground is one thing that we
are working on getting open. Right now it's basically
everything is play at your own risk. So if you are at
our parks, sitting on our benches, everything is play at
your own risk. We are going to have signage that says
that. We are also not putting port-a-potty out because
the fact they will not get cleaned as often. Public
Works is opening up the bathrooms. We are going to have
signage as to when bathrooms are closed, so people
understand they are not going to be open all night. And
there are also signs about washing your hands. We have
six feet away in regards to whatever area you can be in.
But again, we can't monitor that.

When I proposed this idea, obviously
I know you guys have heard about park rangers often.
This is one of the instances. We need park rangers for
stuff like this.

1 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Are we going to get them
2 or you working on that?

3 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: We are still
4 working on that at the moment. This weekend I saw a
5 couple of good time fun in our parks under our shelter
6 with over a hundred people. You know, it would be nice
7 if you have a park ranger say, hey, we are not socially
8 distancing or have you rented the shelter. Again, right
9 now anyone can go there. At the same time it's for the
10 safety of the community and we don't want anyone to say
11 the City allowed us to do this. So we are trying to
12 protect ourselves, as well as them.

13 Again, as you know, there are no
14 water fountain usage in our parks. We made sure to make
15 that known. We have asked about sanitizing the
16 playground. We are working with Public Works to find a
17 way, if we can, to sanitize our playgrounds. I do know
18 that we were told the chemicals might damage the
19 playground equipment, so someone stated that maybe just
20 soap and water, and then have staff kind of clean them
21 up. But, again, that's all the playgrounds within the
22 City. It's time consuming. We are trying to figure
23 that out. That's the main reason for signage and why it
24 is so important.

25 On the second page, we have the
MacArthur Golf Course, as well as the batting cages and
the mini golf that we have, that will also reopen, and
this is also June 25th. On there it says times we are
going to be open, from Wednesday to Sunday, 8:00 to
5:30. And we're going till 5:30 because we are going to
have daily sanitizing.

What we have done within our golf
course, we have made golf covers. So no one is able to
actually take out the ball from that ball cup. So what
they do, they took a noodle and the ball kind of goes in
-- but not really -- and then, again, we didn't want
anyone double touching or anything like that. We asked
for social distancing within the golf areas. We have
asked for no more than four groups at a time. We are
promoting that people bring in their own equipment. I
know they used to have the areas for water and we are
not doing any of that, just because it's possibly where
the germs might come in contact.

For the batting cages, only one will
be in use per speed. So we can make sure we kind of
have spacing in between everyone. Also, if they are
going to use our equipment, as well as the golf
equipment, we'll sanitize all of it. We put in a

1 procedure, especially for our helmets. That was a big
2 concern for Diana Garcia Burns when I spoke to her. We
3 put in something for sanitizing, so forth and so on.
4 And, again, with that, we are asking to please use their
5 own equipment when they are in attendance.

6 There in the office, they kind of
7 already have the plexi-glass form. We are not having
8 any concessions. After each customer they understand
9 they have to sign out of that area. There is signage
10 displayed throughout the golf course. So same thing
11 like everything else, social distancing, proper
12 handwashing techniques, playing at your own risk, we are
13 not responsible. We have hand sanitizers at the golf
14 office and our golf carts will have the sanitizing wipes
15 for our individuals who are working, just like we have
16 in our cars; so they will go through the same process.
17 They know no water fountains are to be used. They are
18 to wear masks the whole entire time.

19 And what we are going to do, because
20 we don't have any Wifi -- and again, I don't know if you
21 see all my wants -- I do have on there we would like to
22 have the Wifi, solely because my staff has to take
23 money. Money has the most germs. We were hoping they
24 didn't have to go through that, because they have to, we
25 are only going to have one attendant taking money the
whole entire time.

Also, on July 1st, shelters and
Riley Park Hall will be open. So everything will be at
50 percent capacity though per the Executive Order. So
you could rent Riley Park, but it's only at 50 percent
capacity at the moment. We'll have signage throughout
the areas. And again, no port-a-potties will be used.

Signage is very important and we'd
love to have the park rangers for the shelters that are
actually rented, so that we can monitor that a little
bit.

And then finally, our recreation
centers. So, because we have beautiful recreation
centers, we want to find a way to use them. And we are
going to allow them to be open and it's going to be from
Tuesday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Saturday at
9:00 a.m. to 3. And as you can tell, we have sanitizing
times for each recreation center, each center has a
sanitizing time. The reason being, depending how many
people come in throughout the day, depending if they
actually go to use equipment, are they actually cleaning
them off. We want to be responsible for doing that
after them and we'll have certain sanitizing times.

Fitness Center is going to be open

1 again. We'll have every other machine, especially two
2 like machines. We'll ask for people to call in to be
3 able to use them. If you are going to be walking, that
4 there is a maximum amount of 15 individuals we allow to
5 be around, just walking. Again, we would ask that they
6 call in. If that doesn't work and people want to come,
7 again, we'll evaluate it to see how we can change that.

8 Signage will be all over. Cleaning
9 is very important. And the recreation staff is going to
10 be trained in those facilities. They will continue to
11 wear masks. And just like at the golf course, there
12 will be one individual taking money, one individual
13 cleaning, and vice versa. We want to make sure one is
14 dealing with one task and the other dealing with another
15 task; just because we need to separate the duties
16 because we are dealing with money.

17 And on the back side, I have
18 programs -- the final page -- the programs for senior
19 trips. We are saying it's open June 29th. We are in
20 the process of working on different items that we would
21 like to do. Mostly everything is outdoors. Again, our
22 biggest group of individuals who are able to catch COVID
23 are senior citizens. At the same time, they are
24 probably the ones not going out. So we are going to try
25 to find a way to accommodate them. And if it's programs
with -- like Arts in the Park -- where you are able to
social distance. We are going to try to do a trip where
we are able to go on a bus, use every other seat, wear a
mask the whole time.

Again, we have already started
making phone calls and some of these places are not even
fully open. So we are doing our part, planning for it.
Again, if doesn't happen, doesn't happen. But we are
going to make sure we are ready for it.

On your last page, my final thought
for it is -- again, none of this is fun and this is the
fluid plan, and honestly everyone has been working
together to get this done, with the Mayor, Chief Serna
and his group. I'm not sure what they're called. They
handle anything with COVID.

CHIEF SERNA: Well, it's COVID Task
Force. I was tasked with getting the supplies.

MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: We have been
working together, along with Public Works to find out
ways to make sure our community stays safe as we are
opening up. And we are also allowing them to enjoy
outdoors or our recreation areas, because that's also

1 needed. If you look at the studies, the depression
2 comes with COVID because we are not doing as much and we
3 want to find a way to get a couple things done for the
4 community.

5 I think that's it. One important
6 thing, tomorrow we are actually doing training with our
7 staff. A lot of our staff, once we shut down, went to
8 Public Works. They are all coming back tomorrow. We
9 have a training with Diana Garcia Burns and we are going
10 to go through a couple of items they should already know
11 in regards to sanitizing, how to sanitize, how to take
12 off your gloves. We are going to go through procedures
13 on carts. Go through procedures on if someone wants to
14 give high five, that's a no. You know, some of our
15 staff doesn't know that and we want to make sure that we
16 express to them what is really happening and the
17 importance.

18 We are also going to explain to them
19 -- I know we are working on the temperatures -- if they
20 happen to hear that someone -- over conversation -- oh,
21 this person had been in contact with somebody with
22 COVID. What is the next plan? What do they do? So we
23 want our staff to be properly trained as they are going
24 to be the frontline with the community: I think that's
25 it.

26 CHIEF SERNA: Board members, do you have
27 any questions in regard to the reopening plans that our
28 Director has outlined? Reopening the trails, the
29 playgrounds, the tennis courts, the Greenhouse, the
30 basketball courts, the golf course, batting cages, mini
31 golf, everything over at MacArthur Golf and parks, the
32 shelters, Riley Park Hall; all that is opening up. The
33 rec centers are opening up.

34 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: Two things -- I'm
35 sorry -- I forgot to mention that Carnegie Hall, I
36 actually had a conversation with Sarita from there. I
37 explained to them we are able to open. They said they
38 will not open until further notice. They are thinking
39 maybe August. They can do some minimal programming and
40 are going to get back to me with that.

41 Our office -- I forgot to explain
42 about our office. Our office will remain closed, only
43 by appointment. So if someone wants to call in -- say I
44 want to use Riley Park, how are we going to get that
45 done. We are going to put our actual forms online, so
46 they can fill them out just like the other departments
47 within the City. And with payment, they can either call

1 it in at this point in time or mail it in to us. But
2 our office will currently remain closed.

3 CHIEF SERNA: So, any questions on all
4 this reopening plan, Board members? Miss Lewis, any
5 questions?

6 MS. LEWIS: No. I guess I thought Mr.
7 Kendricks program was reopening.

8 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: That's the
9 Carnegie, Miss Lewis. And I did talk to Sarita, like I
10 said. Again, we just want to make sure Mr. Kendricks is
11 okay with coming in. He's actually said that he asked
12 about the program too and they are waiting, just to kind
13 of develop something and how they can do it, where it's
14 less capacity in the area. So they will be giving me
15 probably a proposal what they want to do soon. But
16 Sarita stated she is hoping in August they will start
17 something.

18 MS. LEWIS: Okay.

19 CHIEF SERNA: Mr. Cantu, do you have any
20 questions?

21 MR. CANTU: No.

22 CHIEF SERNA: Mr. Rodriguez, any
23 questions?

24 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Not about this, but I
25 have questions.

26 CHIEF SERNA: I have questions about the
27 opening for Attorney Dawkins.

28 So, me being fire chief and me being
29 older -- like I said earlier -- I am very hesitant to
30 open up and put things back to normal. I'm always
31 leaning towards safety and, you know, bah humbug to the
32 senior trip, bah humbug to opening things up. I'm
33 sorry, but that's the way I feel. I'm probably
34 outnumbered, but the question I have is, with us opening
35 up all of our facilities, the outdoor ones, the
36 playgrounds and everything; is there any way that
37 someone could sue us if they figure out that they caught
38 COVID, after they played at Washington Park?

39 MS. DAWKINS: Well, I haven't had a

1 chance -- first off, I didn't see the Executive Order,
2 so I would like to be able to review it.

3 But secondly, are there going to be
4 signs or how is this going to be? People would have to
5 sign off I would think, sign a waiver. I think just
6 having signs out would not be enough. So I would like
7 to look into that.

8 When is this planned for? When is
9 the opening planned for?

10 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: Well, the parks
11 are actually open as of June 19th, per the Executive
12 Order.

13 CHIEF SERNA: That was Friday, this past
14 Friday, all the parks opened up.

15 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Is that from the City or
16 the State?

17 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: Well, the State
18 has been opened up earlier, so we are behind.

19 MS. DAWKINS: People have been going
20 there any way. I have seen children playing, going
21 around the warning tapes that have been put up closing
22 it off anyway. But this is something that I would like
23 to look into, because I think we need to make sure that
24 we are protected, and I don't know if a sign will be
25 enough.

MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: I'll send that to
you shortly. And again, we weren't sure, per Executive
Order. We had to make sure that we opened up as we
needed and that's why we went with signs to just try to
find a way to protect ourselves. I'll definitely send
that over to you in the morning.

MS. DAWKINS: That will be real good,
then I will get with you, Chief, and let you know what I
think about that.

CHIEF SERNA: Thank you, Miss Dawkins.

MS. DAWKINS: I'll give you a legal
opinion, but I do think that's something that the Board
is needing to vote on. I mean, I think that if we are
going to protect, you know, ourselves from any kind of
individual possible liability, I think that maybe we

1 need to have some kind of resolution.

2 CHIEF SERNA: Well, I would leave that in
3 your court and your expertise. If that's something that
4 we need to do, then please let us know and we'll
5 definitely do it at the next Board meeting.

6 My main concern, Attorney Dawkins,
7 is that during this time, with this Pandemic,
8 unfortunately, there is opportunities for -- we are
9 human beings -- and there is opportunities for human
10 beings to take advantage of situations like this and try
11 to litigate and try to file suit.

12 I am just trying to protect the
13 parks. Like I said, I'm older and super cautious now.
14 I would rather have the parks stay closed. It's
15 impossible, because it's summertime, we need our parks.
16 I get it. I just want us to have some kind of coverage,
17 more than signage. Waivers or signage might not be
18 enough.

19 I just want to hear from the legal
20 field what we can do to protect the City, the Mayor, the
21 superintendent, us as Board members. I am making sure.
22 I want to be sure somebody doesn't try and put some kind
23 of frivolous or successful lawsuit out there, that they
24 caught COVID from the rec center, playing basketball at
25 Unity. We get a call, my son was fine until he played
ball at Unity and you didn't have enough hand sanitizer.
I don't know what it could be.

MS. DAWKINS: I understand what you are
saying. I will be talking to Corporate Counsel anyway
immediately after. If I can't reach her tonight, I'll
be talking to her immediately after the meeting just to
get some direction about what her thoughts are anyway.

CHIEF SERNA: Thank you.

MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: I do just want to
mention, when we discussed previously, this is why for
our rentals and maybe for registration for our
recreation centers, we wanted to add a clause in regard
to COVID, because of that fact, we want to make sure
that -- you know -- that we can kind have that in the
event of any food that comes in, that's why we want to
put that on there.

The parks are a different story.
You know, anyone can come into the park and we never
know. That would be interesting if you could do that.
Definitely let me know how we -- I guess -- combat that.

1 CHIEF SERNA: You know, Attorney Dawkins,
2 what do you think about this? When Heritage Hall
3 Recreation Center first opened, I was one of the first
4 members to sign up and I filled out a form. And then
5 when my year was up, they said you have to fill out
6 another form. I filled out another form, which is
7 probably the same one, and then we closed down for
8 COVID. Do you think it would be smart to have everybody
9 fill out another form as we open up, that would contain
10 those new lines or that new verbiage that would talk
11 about COVID and assuming risks and things like that, or
12 is it just simply an additional waiver, some kind of
13 separate piece of paper that everybody would sign as
14 they come in.

8 MS. DAWKINS: Well, I think everybody
9 definitely needs to sign something when they come in,
10 yes. Everybody, whoever comes in. Now if you want to
11 have them do a new registration, I mean that would be up
12 to the Board if you want them to do a new registration.
13 But anyone that comes into the centers -- or I think
14 even the golf course -- anyone that comes on the golf
15 course and the center and the fitness center; they all
16 need to sign waivers. Before that money is exchanged,
17 the waivers need to be signed. So we need to work on
18 that as soon as possible.

14 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: And you will be my
15 first call in the morning when I get in.

16 CHIEF SERNA: Thank you, Attorney
17 Dawkins. Mr. Rodriguez, you had questions?

18 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Well, yesterday when I
19 was watching NBC Nightly News, when the beauty salons
20 opened up, they had to sign a waiver in order to get
21 their haircut or whatever. So I was going to say the
22 same thing, why can't we do the same, which we already
23 talked about. That was my question. That's it.

24 CHIEF SERNA: That's all I'm concerned
25 with, Vanessa. Like I said, I feel like I'm bah humbug
to close everything down, but I think, one, is because
I'm older. Two, what I see from firefighter's
perspective and everything that we have gone through and
read and learned and everything, to me it's not worth
it.

See, my kids are 27 and 23, I don't
have little ones saying, Daddy, let's go to the park.

1 Also Little League, my kids are beyond the Little League
2 age; so I have to try and understand that a parent or
3 the kids, they want to be out. So I am just trying to
4 find that middle ground where we open up, but I don't
5 want us to get sued and I don't want to open too
6 quickly.

7 And, you know, and I know the Mayor
8 is cautious as well, that's why he didn't jump as soon
9 as the State said you could do something. I just want
10 you to know that's how I feel when it comes to all this.

11 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: I totally
12 understand. And, again, we are here -- this is one of
13 the reasons we are in front of the Board, to get a
14 little bit of feedback. And then, you know, I'll call
15 Attorney Dawkins in the morning and we'll be ready for
16 Phase 1 of us opening.

17 CHIEF SERNA: All right. Any further
18 questions, Board members?

19 MR. RODRIGUEZ: One more. The pool, so
20 the pool is not going to be open this year?

21 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: No. As of right
22 now there is no way for our pools to open. First off,
23 they haven't been ran. I did note there is a couple of
24 issues with the filtration. So I know they are actually
25 going to try and work on that, since they are closed.

Also the staffing. We have not
worked on getting the staff together for the pools. So
the pools will not be open at this point in time for
this Summer.

CHIEF SERNA: That's a good question. I
know how I feel about pools. You know, nothing but spit
in pools. But the Lakefront, what is going to stop
people from going to the Lakefront?

MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: That's technically
not my area.

CHIEF SERNA: Natalie has to deal with
that.

MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: From what I was
told, they will not open either. I think they have more
of an issue. We have a gate around the pool and we also
have no water in there. I can't see anyone going in.

1 They probably have security. I know at one point they
still have security there.

2 So from what I have been told, they
do call and ask about the beaches, and we explain to
3 them it's not possible --

4 CHIEF SERNA: Tell them to call Natalie.

5 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: We tell them it's
not open, but we also refer them to the Marina.

6 CHIEF SERNA: All right. Any other
7 questions, Board members? (None) Okay. No further
questions, do you have anything more, Vanessa?

8 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: That's all. Thank
9 you.

10 CHIEF SERNA: We'll move on to the next
item on the agenda, which is public comments. Any
11 public comments? (None)

Our next meeting is --

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: One more thing -- sorry
13 -- I just want to say, Vanessa, I wasn't here at the
last meeting, I'd like to welcome you to the Park Board
14 and to your position as Director. We are not going to
micromanage you. We don't do that. We would like to
15 know what is going on. Just like giving us information
what is going on, we would appreciate that and welcome
16 aboard.

17 CHIEF SERNA: And, you know, Mr. Austin,
when he came to the Board -- all of us for that
18 matter -- we want to know that we can call you, if we
have a question. Is it all right if maybe a Board
19 member calls you at the office and has questions; is
that all right?

20 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: Absolutely. I can
21 be reached by phone, e-mail, whatever you guys would
like. I am on the School Board for the School City of
22 East Chicago and I understand a Board position. I
understand what it is to be informed or wanting to be
23 informed. That's one of the things I ask our
superintendent to do all the time. So this is -- I want
24 to be able to keep in close contact and inform you guys
what is going on.

25 Again, Board members sometimes see

1 things I don't and you are suppose to help me out to
2 make sure this department is just better.

3 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Us as Board members,
4 people know we are on the Board, we get phone calls too.
5 I used to call Mayra a lot -- not a lot -- but once in
6 awhile and she'd call me right back. But it was always
7 great communication there. So like I said, we would
8 like to know what is going on. And if you need -- and I
9 always thought the position for Director should be
10 somebody that knew sports or done sports because they
11 know what the kids want. When it was open, I thought
12 about you right away. That's a great position for you,
13 so welcome onboard.

14 MS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: I greatly
15 appreciate that. And Mayra did a great job when she was
16 here and I'm still finishing her projects in the parks
17 with sculptures and how it looks. And I think one of my
18 main goals is to continue other legacies by adding more
19 programs.

20 My connection with the schools is
21 very important. And like you said, sports is my
22 background, but I understand because I went to school
23 for parks and recreation. Recreation consists of many
24 things. Now it's video games. Now it's computers. So,
25 you know, that's all aspects that our children here in
the City also need to do. And our senior citizens and
adults, they should be able to take part in that stuff
too. It's now my job and goal to make sure we are
disseminating all that type of work.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

CHIEF SERNA: Our next meeting date is
Tuesday, July 14th, right here at the City Hall Council
Chambers. Will we have Zoom as well?

MS. ALLEN: The same set up. We'll be
able to Zoom.

CHIEF SERNA: Those of us who can, will
come to the meeting, and other Board members can call
in. And that's at 5:00 o'clock, on July 14, 2020.

I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Rick Rodriguez.
Second by Valda Lewis.

1 CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
2 saying aye?

(All signify aye.)


3 CHIEF SERNA: Motion carries.

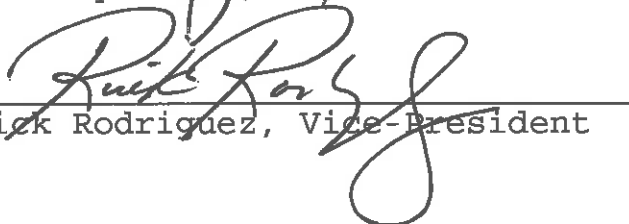
4 ***** Meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.*****

5 Approval of the Meeting Minutes of Tuesday

6 June 23, 2020

7 Approved and signed July 14th, 2020

8 
9 Anthony Serna, President

10 
11 Rick Rodriguez, Vice-President

12 _____
13 Valda Lewis, Secretary

14 _____
15 Gilberto Cantu, Member

16 _____
17 Eugene Austin, Member

18 
19 Ateria Allen, Recording Secretary

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22
23
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25

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 26th day of June, 2020.

Peggy S. LaLonde



Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR