

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY

BOARD MEMBERS

Milton Reed, President
Richard Trembczynski, Vice President
Thomas Davis, Member

Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 26, 2020 @ 5:30 p.m.
Reported for Fissinger & Associates
By: Lisa Pena

CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL:

Present: Milton Reed, Richard Trembczynski, Thomas Davis.

MINUTES: Regular Meeting February 12, 2020

Motion to approve February 12, 2020 Meeting Minutes made by
Thomas Davis. Second by Richard Trembczynski.

Questions/Comments: None.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.

Opposed: None Motion Carries.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

MR. REED: Our New Business would be Oath of Office for
Mr. Ronald Edmonds. Will you please stand? This is a
continuation of our truancy officers that we did last month.

(Ronald Edmonds was placed under Oath of Office)

MR. REED: Thank you.

MR. EDMONDS: Thank you.

MR. REED: Congratulations.

1 Motion to approve Ronald Edmonds as a Truancy Officer made by
2 Thomas Davis. Second by Richard Trembczynski.

3 Questions/Comments: None.

4 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
5 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

6 MR. REED: And now we will have the Fire Department.
7 Chief Serna.

8 CHIEF SERNA: Good evening, Board Members. Anthony
9 Serna, Fire Chief. We've gone through the process. And I
10 appreciate all of your help and assistance with going through
11 the process of hiring. And so we are ready to hire eight.

12 I will read the letter that I presented to the
13 Board addressed to President Milton Reed.

14 The following eight candidates have successfully
15 met all requirements set forth by the City of East Chicago
16 Fire Department and by IMPRS. That's downstate, the State
17 Pension. For acceptance as a Probationary Firefighter.

18 Those eight are Gabriel Alvarado, William J.
19 Torres, Donald W. Pecker, Daniel J. Sullivan, Joseph T.
20 Villegas, II, James R. Rodriguez, Nickolas J. Melendez and
21 Hannah Buckley.

22 I respectfully request your approval to hire these
23 eight candidates listed above on Monday, March 2, 2020.

24 MR. REED: Thank you. Is there a motion to accept the
25 recommendation of Fire Chief Anthony Serna and hire these
26 eight gentlemen as --

27 CHIEF SERNA: And one lady.

28 MR. REED: These ladies and gentlemen.

29 Motion to approve Fire Chief Serna's Recommendation to Hire
30 Eight Probationary Firefighters made by Richard Trembczynski.
31 Second by Thomas Davis.

32 Questions/Comments: None.

33 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
34 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

35

1 CHIEF SERNA: Thank you very much, Board Members.

2 MR. REED: Thank you for your work on this.

3 CHIEF SERNA: And I appreciate your cooperation
4 throughout the whole way. Thank you.

5 MR. REED: Good process together. Thank you.

6 And now we'll move on to the Building Department.
7 Mr. Kevin Smith, if you would come before us.

8 MR. SMITH: Good evening, Mr. President and Board. We
9 have several as you can see new demolitions as well as status
10 demolitions. And, Mr. President, would you like us to
11 proceed as we always do where we report out the ones that
12 didn't or would you like us just to go through the list?

13 MR. REED: Well, I think we can go through the list if
14 we don't have anyone here represented. I don't see anyone.

15 MR. SMITH: No. I think we've done a good job out in
16 the hallway today.

17 MR. REED: We can just go down the list then.

18 MR. SMITH: Wanted to avoid a packed house here. So 605
19 East 150th Street. This is owned by Mr. Jones. This is a
20 paper siding house with a boarded up door, damaged roof and
21 no gutters.

22 We have not received response from the owner to the
23 notice. There's been no progress. We would request the
24 Order be entered on this property.

25 The Board will take action at the end; is that
right?

MR. REED: Yes. Correct.

MR. SMITH: 4715 Alexander. The Hurt Family actually
drove up from Houston, Texas and visited us outside. They
are looking forward to self demolishing the property. And we
agreed to enter the Order and set it over for status for 4/22
to determine whether we need to bid it out or hopefully
they'll have it knocked down by then.

But they came up. And we had a nice visit with
them out in the hallway.

1 4717 Alexander, front and garage. The owner is
2 listed as Knox Development Group, LLC. The photos show a
3 boarded up front door, broken windows. The back porch has
4 open windows as well.

5 No progress and no one has appeared. We would
6 request the Order be entered as presented.

7 4806 Alexander Avenue. The owners are listed as
8 Mario Furtado and Carmen Cervantes. There is a falling over
9 porch, dilapidated back porch and boarded up structure.

10 No one appears. There's been no progress. We
11 request the Order be entered as presented.

12 4833 Alexander. The owner is listed as KT Robeson
13 and Milton Harris. Greg Floyd is the tax sale purchaser.
14 It's a commercial structure which is boarded up with some
15 fire damage and a caved in roof.

16 There's been no progress. No one appears. We
17 would request the Order be entered as presented.

18 4846 Alexander Avenue. The owner is listed as
19 Robert Davis. He appeared. We had a discussion with him
20 outside. We agreed to enter the Order. And he has requested
21 an inspection that will be set over for April 22.

22 4854 Alexander --

23 MR. REED: So we're going to enter the Order. But he
24 already knows he is already going to do repairs.

25 MR. SMITH: Correct.

 MR. REED: But you don't have a formal list with him?

 MR. SMITH: Not yet.

 MR. REED: I just wanted to make sure.

 MR. SMITH: So we will enter the Order just so it's kind
of hanging over his head. But that one will be set for
status because he did come and appear.

 4854 Alexander. The Brooks Family are the owners.
It's actually next door to the 4846 property. They're
neighbors, both here.

1 This property has a very poor situation regarding
2 the garage. And the house also has some damage with a
3 boarded up structure.

4 Mr. Brooks appeared. We're going to enter the
5 Order. But again we're going to stay that to allow him some
6 time to enter into a Rehab Agreement. And that will be set
7 over for status for April 22.

8 4858 Alexander. Owned by Enrico Francioni. His
9 attorney, Mr. Peplowski, appeared as well the tenant,
10 Mr. Courtney Harris.

11 Mr. Harris indicated he would like to repair the
12 building and is planning on meeting with James regarding
13 that. We will enter the Order and set it over April 22.

14 4713 McCook. The owner is listed as Eric Lewis.
15 We received a call at my office this afternoon that Mr. Lewis
16 is stuck in the Bahamas as we probably wish we all were. But
17 he was not able to come today because he is stuck in the
18 Bahamas.

19 There's been no progress on this property. It's
20 boarded up. And there's a dilapidated falling apart porch.
21 The garage is a stone structure. Also boarded up with a
22 collapsing roof and boarded up rear door.

23 There's been no progress. Mr. Lewis did call. But
24 given the situation we would request the Order be entered as
25 presented. And if Mr. Lewis wants to get a hold of
26 Mr. Portalatin, we'll instruct him to do so. We would
27 request that the Order be entered as presented.

28 MR. REED: When he called, he was told that it's on him
29 to make and reach out. So he is aware of that, right, and
30 that the call doesn't satisfy?

31 MR. SMITH: Yeah. And I do have his phone number. So
32 we will emphasize that with him when we get a chance to call.

33 MR. REED: As long as he doesn't think that it's fitting
34 that he has called.

35 MS. SMITH: And obviously he'll get a copy of the Order
36 as well. So we can get good notice out.

37 And I should probably mention this. But it goes
38 for all the properties we're talking about this evening. We

1 do have good notice and good service on them either through
2 publication or through certified mail. And of course we also
post on the properties.

3 MR. REED: Right. And I'm just more concerned about the
4 ones that we're kind of holding over or someone gave a
promise and there's no official repair plan from the Building
5 Department that they know. Because I don't want to come back
with James and then we're like, well, now they're going to meet
6 with James and now we'll try to put a plan together. We
should use this two months to do that.

7 MR. PORTALATIN: We have their phone number. We're
going to reach them to get the inspection.

8 MR. SMITH: Anyone who showed up. Not this gentleman.

9 MR. REED: And this is what I am saying. He did not
10 show up because he's in the Bahamas. So I don't want April
-- all I'm saying is I want to try to avoid if at all
11 possible April and then we're saying, well, now he comes and
now he meets with James and now they're trying to put a plan
12 together and then we're on down the road.

13 MR. SMITH: I'll make sure to call him and see if I can
make contact with him. If he's responsive, I will let him
14 know what the plan is always which is he's got to reach out
to James.

15 And if he is nonresponsive, he's just going to get
16 a copy of the Order. And we'll bid it out.

17 4715 McCook. This is owned by Blackhall Partners
XIII, LLC. They purchased the property on tax sale in 2018.
18 It has a boarded up front door, windows and siding, roof in
very poor condition, no eaves or gutters.

19 There's been no progress. There's been no contact.
20 We request the Order be entered as presented.

21 4807 McCook. The owner is listed as Diandria J.
Davis. It is a two-story structure, boarded up front door,
22 boarded up shed. There's a no trespassing sign on the back
door with broken windows on the rear as of December last
23 year.

24 No progress. No one appears. We would request the
Order be entered as presented.

25

1 MR. REED: I want to speak to this one too. I have
2 received multiple phone calls on this particular property
3 just with the overgrowth, the nuisance or even at one point
4 in time guys were just hanging out in front of there. And so
5 it's become a bit of a nuisance for awhile.

6 And I would like for this one because I have
7 personally received calls on this. Obviously people know I
8 am involved. So this one has been out there as a nuisance
9 for awhile. I just want to point that out to you.

10 I don't know if I ever discussed that with you or
11 not. But there are a number of issues, not only the
12 overgrowth, the building structure itself, but just the
13 entire property from that perspective.

14 MR. SMITH: We can get James if you want me to move
15 forward on bid?

16 MR. REED: Again I am not saying do anything out of the
17 process. I just want to put this one on alert because of the
18 other concerns that I have.

19 And I am not sure if people are still hanging out
20 in front. But they were leaning on the fence. It was just a
21 bad area right at this particular address for sure.

22 MR. SMITH: So we would request the Order be entered as
23 presented. We'll work on getting it out to bid.

24 4841 McCook, front and garage. The owner is listed
25 as Mich-Alta Management. Cracking porch, front door and
26 windows are boarded up. The rear of the structure is in
27 disrepair. There's a tar paper siding in the back. Rear
28 windows are open to the elements. Garage is collapsing with
29 graffiti on the rear door.

30 There's been no progress. No one appears. We
31 request the Order be entered as presented.

32 4749 Melville. The owner is listed as Petapelli
33 (phonetic), LLC. It is a two-and-a-half story tan brick
34 structure. No trespassing sign on the front boarded door.
35 Roof is in poor condition, no gutters. Graffiti is on the
36 back of the building. The gas and electric have been turned
37 off. Chimney is also in poor condition, broken windows on
38 the side and rear.

39 No progress. No one appears. We would request the

1 Order be entered as presented.

2 4750 Melville. Both Mr. Stanley Bell and I believe
3 Jenny, his daughter perhaps, were here today. The permits
4 have been pulled. There's work in progress. This will be
5 set over for status for April 22.

6 4817 Melville. The owners are listed as Thompson,
7 Rogers, Lacy and the Williams Family. There's been no estate
8 opened. It's a long barn like struck which has been boarded
9 up, but collapsing due to a missing roof. It's open to the
10 elements and in very poor condition. The garage does have
11 graffiti and peeling paint.

12 There's been no progress. No one appears. We
13 request that property, the Order to Demolish be entered as
14 presented.

15 5007-09 Melville. The owner is listed as last name
16 Lara, L-a-r-a, with a Texas address. It's a vacant property
17 with some repaired siding, but boarded up side of the
18 building and rear with peeling siding and boarded up door
19 with no trespassing sign present.

20 There's been no progress. No one appears. We
21 request that that Order be entered as presented.

22 425 Vernon is owned by Benchmark Enterprise. I
23 spoke with Mr. Marich who is one of the owners of Benchmark.
24 And he has no objection to the Order being entered. However
25 we have negotiated a donation agreement with Mr. Marich. And
I'm sure the donation agreement will be before you or
probably before the Board of Works in no time.

So we're going to enter the Order. And we expect
that property to be donated to the City.

That takes care of the New Demolitions,
Mr. President.

MR. REED: So what I would like to do especially when we
have the New Demolitions is to just -- we don't need the
images in our packet. But we would like to pass them among
ourselves.

I know you generally have images.

MR. SMITH: We can get those to you.

1 MR. REED: For the new ones. Not necessarily for all
2 the statuses. Because some of the addresses, they tend to
3 blur a little bit. And it's good to get a visual. Some of
4 these get embedded in our heads after awhile. But it's good
5 to get a visual for the new ones.

6 And even if we don't do it tonight just for future
7 reference we'd like to get a visual as we go through.

8 MR. SMITH: We'll pass them along as you guys are going
9 through the status if you'd like. We can pile them up and
10 pass them along for you if you'd like.

11 MR. REED: Don't worry. We'll just grab them after the
12 meeting. But it's good to kind of walk through just for
13 future reference.

14 MR. SMITH: I will make sure to have them ready so that
15 you can look them as I'm going through them.

16 MR. REED: Thank you.

17 MR. SMITH: And you can see. You don't have to listen
18 to my boring recitation of the property.

19 MR. REED: Well, we know most of them. But some of them
20 like I said they begin to blur. It's the same block, same
21 street. And it's like wait, which one is that.

22 MR. SMITH: Yep. So we'll get those for you and it will
23 be available for your perusal.

24 MR. REED: Thank you.

25 MR. SMITH: Mr. President, if you don't mind, then we'll
go on to status items.

MR. REED: Please do.

MR. SMITH: 1102 East 138th Street. This is a property
owned by Johnny Mae Smith with Daman Garg, the tax sale
purchaser for 2019.

We had someone appear. And he wanted to entered
into a rehab agreement. It was Brandon Oglesby from Duco
Disaster, LLC. He has appeared before you. He asked to
enter into a rehab agreement. We set it for status today.
He's from Bolingbrook, Illinois.

1 There's been no progress on the property and no
2 reported Rehab Agreement. So I think we're going to plan on
moving this out to bid. So that's the status on that.

3 3926 Alexander. The tax sale purchaser and new
4 owner is New Hannah, LLC. Attorney Adam Decker appeared
earlier in the hallway. And he is still waiting, his client,
5 the receipt of the tax deed. He hopes to have that in the
next couple of weeks.

6 Mr. Portalatin took the information down. And
7 we'll be calling them for inspection as soon as that occurs.
So we set this over for status or March 25.

8 1802 Broadway Street, rear property. Owner is
9 listed as Reliable Real Estate NWI, Inc. I set it over for
status. However there's been no progress. And therefore
10 this property will go out to bid.

11 Did you want to see the photos any of these as we
go through them?

12 MR. REED: We can keep going. Like I said I would just
13 like -- I mean just maybe as a practice we can just start to.
And we used to do that.

14 MR. SMITH: Yeah. We can get you a packet and then
15 we'll tab it.

16 MR. REED: Like I said I don't want to make those
17 photocopies for every packet necessarily because the paper
just stacks up.

18 MR. SMITH: We'll just do one binder and you guys can
pass it if that's okay.

19 MR. REED: That might be a good idea.

20 MR. SMITH: Whatever you like. 3806 Catalpa and 3808
21 Catalpa I think can be taken in combination. They're both
owned by Mr. Morris who has been before you before. He has
22 been in contact with Mr. Portalatin. And an inspection just
recently occurred or is about to occur. I think he contacted
23 Mr. Portalatin a couple days ago.

24 So we are going to set this over for status for
4/22, both of those on Catalpa.

25 3927 Deodar Street, the front. This is owned by

1 Connect the Dots, LLC. However there's a contract purchaser,
2 Mr. Alarcon who did appear with Mr. Portalatin today out in
the hallway. They have pulled permits and progress is being
made on the property.

3
4 Mr. Portalatin has indicated to Mr. Alarcon that he
needs to have the roof done by the end of April. So we set
this over for status with your permission for April 22 of
5 2020.

6 3435 Fir Street, front and rear. This is owned by
the Villarruels. There's abandoned vehicles the driveway.
7 It's in poor condition. We gave them a chance to see if they
wanted to do a Rehab Agreement. However no arrangements have
8 been made with Mr. Portalatin.

9 It remains vacant. There's been no process. We're
going to move this forward towards open bid.

10
11 3618 Hemlock, rear. Mr. Portalatin did meet with
the owner. Permits have been obtained and work is in
progress. We're going to set this over for further status on
12 April 22. And hopefully at that time the work will be
completed.

13
14 3809 Ivy Street, front and garage. It's owned
currently by 381 Investments, LLC. Miss Holmes appeared
today outside in the hallway. And we got confirmation that
15 the inspection took place on February 11 for the exterior.
And it needs an interior inspection which will take place in
16 the near future.

17 A Rehab Agreement will be placed before you. This
will be set over for status on April 22.

18
19 4831 McCook. This is another Blackhall Partner
XII, LLC with a tax sale purchaser. There's been no
progress. Even though we set it over for status today, the
20 Order has already been entered. We would request that this
matter be moved forward for open bid.

21
22 As in any of these that we're saying open bid if
the Orders haven't been entered we request the Order be
entered.

23
24 The last file is 4834 McCook. The good news is
that the work has been completed. And Mr. Portalatin is
requesting this be removed from the Demolition List.

25

1 It was recently purchased. So that's a good news
2 story to finish out the list.

3 That's all we have on behalf of the Building
4 Commissioner. And we request the Orders be entered and
5 statuses be set as requested.

6 MR. REED: Thank you for that report, sir. Is there a
7 motion to accept the recommendation from the Building
8 Department as stated before us?

9 Motion to approve Building Department's Recommendation made
10 by Richard Trembczynski. Second by Thomas Davis.

11 Questions/Comments: None.

12 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
13 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

14 OTHER/AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: None.

15 * Next Regular Meeting Date: Wednesday, March 11,
16 2020 @ 5:30 p.m.

17 Motion to adjourn made by Thomas Davis. Second by Richard
18 Trembczynski.

19 Questions/Comments: None.

20 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
21 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

22 * Meeting ended at 5:52 p.m.

1 Approval of the Meeting Minutes of
2 Wednesday, February 26, 2020

3 Approved and Signed _____

4
5 _____
6 Milton Reed, President

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8 _____
9 Richard Trembczynski, Vice President

10
11 _____
12 Thomas Davis, Member

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14 _____
15 Olga Cosme, Board Secretary

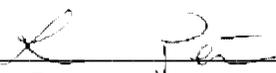
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Lisa Pena, 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 said proceedings taken at said time and place, so ordered to be transcribed.

Dated at Portage, Indiana, this 9th day of March, 2020.



Lisa Pena
Notary Public Porter County
Certified Shorthand Reporter
License Number 084-003483

