

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
Tuesday, June 9, 2020

BOARD MEMBERS:

Anthony Serna, President
Rick Rodriguez, Vice President
Valda Lewis, Secretary
Gilberto Cantu
Eugene Austin

STAFF:

Ateria Allen
Dawn Dawkins-Legal
Mayra Acosta, Dir.

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

Call to Order: 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Present: Anthony Serna
Telephonic: Valda Lewis, Gilberto Cantu, Eugene
Austin

Staff Present: (Telephonic) Dawn Dawkins, Legal Counsel
Ateria Allen, Recording Secretary
Mayra Acosta, Director

CHIEF SERNA: First Rick Rodriguez could
not make the meeting, he's working; but we have a
quorum.

First thing, under Administrative
Matters, I would entertain a motion to approve meeting
minutes of May 26, 2020.

Motion to approve minutes of May 26, 2020, made by Valda
Lewis. Second by Eugene Austin.

CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

CHIEF SERNA: Motion carries.

Next we'll move to approval and
signing of payroll dated May 29, 2020. Entertain a
motion to approve.

Motion to approve payroll dated May 29, 2020, made by
Gilberto Cantu. Second by Valda Lewis.

CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
saying aye?

1 (All signify aye.)
2 Motion carries.

3 Next we have approval of Warrant
4 060920 PB, in the amount of \$40,012.32. Entertain a
5 motion to approve.

6 Motion to approve Warrant 060920 PB, in the amount of
7 \$40,012.32, made by Valda Lewis. Second by Eugene
8 Austin.

9 CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
10 saying aye?

11 (All signify aye.)
12 Motion carries.

13 Next move on to Old Business. We
14 have old business that we'll be able to clean up.
15 First, the general service agreement with Balance
16 Holdings, Inc., maker of ECSIA. That's who deals with
17 our Greenhouse, the fish. Is that right, Mayra?

18 MS. ACOSTA: That is correct.

19 CHIEF SERNA: See if I get this right,
20 all the hydroponics?

21 MS. ACOSTA: Aquaponics.

22 CHIEF SERNA: So everything that has to
23 do with how we grow our vegetables with the aquaponics.

24 MS. ACOSTA: So, the Attorney and I had a
25 meeting. Our attorney was able to add the wording that
26 we needed in order to get credit for unused supplies and
27 apply to services or other supplies not included in this
28 contract. We need the Board to approve so we can send
29 it over to the contractor, see if he would agree with
30 the new terms.

31 CHIEF SERNA: Any questions, Board
32 members?

33 MR. LEWIS: The new terms are agreeable
34 with you and Attorney Dawkins?

35 MS. ACOSTA: Yes, ma'am.

36 MS. DAWKINS: Yes. It's on page 2,
37 number 2; that's what we added, that language. That
38 includes the credit and other concerns that Mayra had.

1 Motion to approve General Service Agreement with Balance
2 Holdings, Inc., made by Valda Lewis. Second by Gilberto
Cantu.

3 CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
4 saying aye?

(All signify aye.)
Motion carries.

5 We have another item of old
6 business, that is the Groupon for MacArthur Golf Course,
the batting cages and mini golf.

7 MS. ACOSTA: So there was two agreements
8 with Groupon. One was for the regular golf and the
9 other agreement is for the miniature golf and batting
cages. One was signed the last time, so we need the
second one approved.

10 CHIEF SERNA: Which one needs to be
11 approved today?

12 MS. ACOSTA: The batting cages and
13 miniature golf.

14 CHIEF SERNA: Any questions on that,
15 Board members? (None) Entertain a motion to approve
16 Groupon agreement.

17 Motion to approve Groupon Agreement for batting cages
18 and miniature golf made by Gilberto Cantu. Second by
19 Eugene Austin.

20 CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
21 saying aye?

(All signify aye.)
Motion carries.

22 We'll move on to New Business.

23 MS. ACOSTA: We have two past due
24 invoices from Heavy Industries. Heavy Industries is
25 located in Canada and they are the ones that are doing
the park sculptures for us.

CHIEF SERNA: We have invoice number
473192, dated January 27, 2020; amount of \$42,500.00.
Also invoice 476240, dated February 29, 2020, in amount
of \$72,500. The total is \$115,000.00. Any questions on
the past due invoices, Board members? (None) I will
entertain a motion to approve payment of the past due

1 invoices.

2 Motion to approve past due invoices to Heavy Industries,
3 made by Valda Lewis. Second by Gilberto Cantu.

4 CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
5 saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

6 Motion carries.

7 Next we have under new business some
8 rates from INOVA Design & Development.

9 MS. ACOSTA: These are electrical rates
10 in case we needed a backup electrician. I know the
11 Board previously approved Midwestern, so this would be a
12 backup in case Midwestern wasn't able to come to our aid
13 for some reason; this is our backup for electrical.

14 CHIEF SERNA: All right. Board members,
15 do you have any questions on the INOVA rate schedule?
16 (None) I would entertain a motion to approve the rate
17 schedule for INOVA for electrical rates.

18 Motion to approve INOVA Design & Development rate
19 schedule made by Valda Lewis. Second by Eugene Austin.

20 CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
21 saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

22 Motion carries.

23 Next we have quotes for golf course
24 walkway extension to the new gazebo.

25 MS. ACOSTA: Now that we have the gazebo
over at the golf course, we actually need to be ADA
compliant, which requires us to extend a walking trail
from the existing trail into the gazebo, along with a
ramp.

So, this is the two quotes. One is
to actually do the slab of concrete and the other one is
to repair the bridge so it can withstand the weight of a
person walking through there.

CHIEF SERNA: These are two quotes. They
are not for the same work, this is two different items
of work?

MS. ACOSTA: No, it's two quotes for the
same work.

1 CHIEF SERNA: One is going to be asphalt
and one is going to be concrete?

2 MS. ACOSTA: They are both going to be
3 asphalt. Just the repair on the bridge will have some
concrete.

4 CHIEF SERNA: I'm looking at the INOVA
5 quote, partial demolition, installation of new concrete
walkway 60 by 4.5. It looks like the concrete work is
6 smaller.

7 MS. ACOSTA: Yes, correct.

8 CHIEF SERNA: Definitely smaller than the
asphalt work.

9 MS. ACOSTA: Yes.

10 CHIEF SERNA: So, because I know that
11 concrete is more expensive than asphalt --

12 MS. ACOSTA: The concrete is only for the
bridge, to repair on the bridge, on the existing bridge.

13 CHIEF SERNA: Basically are these two
14 competing quotes for two different aspects of your
walkway and your bridge?

15 MS. ACOSTA: So there are two quotes for
16 the same work, but I believe INOVA did both.

17 CHIEF SERNA: I'm just trying to compare,
18 you know, apples to apples and the size. For example,
the asphalt quote says 127 by 8, and that's one price.
19 And then they give 327 by 8 of asphalt. And INOVA it
says 60-foot by four and a half. So that's half of what
the asphalt quote is for the other vendor.

20 And then the second bullet point for
INOVA, four-inch concrete slab. They are going to
21 excavate a 5 by 365 to 8-inch depth, so that one, 5 by
365, is compatible to the second line of the asphalt.

22 So, I just want to be sure that you
are getting what you want here, because the INOVA quote,
23 first bullet point for concrete, is only 65.45; where R
& D gives you 127 by 8. So I just want to be sure that
24 we are giving you what you want.

25 So, what is your recommendation,
would it be the concrete with INOVA or asphalt with R &

1 D?

2 MS. ACOSTA: INOVA is the lowest quote,
3 and I believe INOVA is going to do more repairs to the
4 bridge than R & D. R & D was going to just do asphalt,
5 where INOVA is actually going to repair even the metal
6 on the bridge and the beams.

7 CHIEF SERNA: That's what it says,
8 removing of existing wood and asphalt to be replaced
9 with corrugated metal to lay on the bridge I-beams and
10 fasten, pour concrete on top and finish. So they are
11 doing more work. Whereas the quote from R & D, all it
12 says is new construction of asphalt.

13 MS. ACOSTA: Right.

14 CHIEF SERNA: So you are recommending
15 INOVA?

16 MS. ACOSTA: It's a lower price and we
17 are going to get more work.

18 CHIEF SERNA: Any further questions on
19 these two quotes, Board members, for the golf course
20 walkway extension to the new gazebo?

21 MS. LEWIS: No, I'm clear now.

22 MR. AUSTIN: I just want to know the cost
23 for doing this.

24 CHIEF SERNA: The quote from INOVA was
25 actually lower. The concrete work quote was lower than
the quote from R & D for asphalt.

MR. AUSTIN: Okay.

CHIEF SERNA: Entertain a motion to
approve the quote from INOVA Design & Development in the
amount of \$19,665.00, for the work on the golf course
walkway extension to the new gazebo.

Motion to approve INOVA quote for walkway extension made
by Valda Lewis. Second by Eugene Austin.

CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

1 Motion carries.

2 Next we have another two quotes for
3 pool lounges and armchairs.

4 MS. ACOSTA: Yes. This is for furniture
5 for the pool and we have two quotes.

6 CHIEF SERNA: I see the two quotes are
7 from Belsen Outdoors and Donie's Commercial, for
8 quantity of 64 lounges and armchairs. And this is 64,
9 same quantity for both?

10 MS. ACOSTA: Yes.

11 CHIEF SERNA: And both being the same
12 quantities. Belsen is the lower quote by almost
13 \$2,000.00. What is your recommendation, Mayra?

14 MS. ACOSTA: Recommendation for the
15 lowest quote.

16 CHIEF SERNA: The lowest quote is with
17 Belsen for the pool furniture. Are there any questions
18 about these quotes, Board members?

19 MS. LEWIS: Are they for both pools?

20 MS. ACOSTA: Yes, ma'am.

21 MS. LEWIS: And the quality of furniture
22 from one company to the other is about the same?

23 MS. ACOSTA: Yes.

24 CHIEF SERNA: Any further questions,
25 Board members? (None) Entertain a motion to approve
26 quote from Belsen in the amount of \$10,007.32 for the
27 pool furniture.

28 Motion to approve Belsen quote for pool furniture made
29 by Valda Lewis. Second by Gilberto Cantu.

30 CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
31 saying aye?

32 (All signify aye.)

33 Motion carries.

34 Next we have another quote for
35 netting for the batting cages.

1 MS. ACOSTA: Correct. So this is -- we
2 need to purchase netting for our batting cages and the
quote is \$9,026.00.

3 CHIEF SERNA: My question would be, is
4 this the first time we bought replacement netting for
those cages in awhile or did we buy that recently?

5 MS. ACOSTA: The last one was -- I'm
6 going to say -- maybe about ten years ago the last
replacement was purchased.

7 CHIEF SERNA: That isn't bad. Ten years
8 is what we got out of the original netting?

9 MS. ACOSTA: Yes.

10 CHIEF SERNA: Any other questions, Board
11 members? (None) I will entertain a motion to approve
the purchase of batting cage netting, in the amount of
\$9,026.00 from Master Pitching Machine.

12 Motion to approve quote from Master Pitching Machine for
13 batting cage netting made by Gilberto Cantu. Second by
Valda Lewis.

14 CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
saying aye?

15 (All signify aye.)

16 Motion carries.

17 Anything further, Mayra?

18 MS. ACOSTA: I do have an announcement to
19 make to everyone. I want to let you know I have
resigned as the Director of Parks and Recreation
Department. I wanted to introduce you to the new
director, Vanessa Orange.

20 CHIEF SERNA: And she is here with us. I
21 just found out recently -- when I say recently, I mean
like two days ago -- that Mayra was leaving. And then I
22 found out today that it would be Vanessa
Hernandez-Orange taking over.

23 So, we have Vanessa here with us,
Board members. If you would like to ask any questions
24 or if you would like to say anything. Board members, do
you have any questions for either Mayra or for our new
25 director, Vanessa?

1 MS. LEWIS: Not today.

2 MS. ORANGE: I did want to personally
3 introduce myself. I have worked recently with the City
4 as a School Board member and I previously worked at --
5 well, my first experience was actually with Parks and
6 Recreation, that's my background, and my schooling was
7 Parks and Recreation. And I have worked within the
8 schools for over ten years with multiple facets of
9 sports. So, I'm excited for the opportunity to come and
10 work for Parks and Recreation for East Chicago. And I
11 will love to continue to work with the Board and make
12 whatever we can do even better for the City of East
13 Chicago.

14 CHIEF SERNA: Welcome, Vanessa. I'm
15 familiar with you from so many things, which one should
16 I pick from all the things we have worked on together.

17 Mayra, I have got to say that you
18 have done an outstanding job as director since I have
19 been here on this Board. There have been so many
20 improvements, going back to Marino Solorio and yourself.
21 The millions of dollars that we have spent on park
22 improvements throughout these parks, your main office,
23 the improvements -- I tease her and I call it the
24 castle. You are going to the castle, but the
25 improvements.

Mayra has been a great leader of
this Parks and Recreation Department. She has helped us
on the Board tremendously with her leadership, with her
background and organization, things like that. So I
know I am very, very sad to see you go.

So I will let the Board members, if
they have anything to say, I know I am wishing the best
to you Mayra on your next endeavor. I told Rick -- he
couldn't make the meeting -- I told him you would be
leaving. Rick wanted to send his best wishes to you for
the future. And, Board members, did you have anything
you wanted to say to Mayra?

MS. LEWIS: Well, Mayra, I just want to
say congratulations to you and that all your future
holds, all that you are looking for.

MS. ACOSTA: Thank you.

CHIEF SERNA: Well, it's kind of sudden
to me, and Board members too, I'm sure. But one thing I
know for sure is that there is work to do. And, Mayra,

1 you have done a great job working.

2 Vanessa, you are your jumping into
3 something here. With all the skills you have developed,
4 that I know you have developed in working with you in so
5 many different things; it's going to take all of them,
6 from personnel, to having a vision, to the budget, to
7 having to deal with the Board of Public Works, this
8 Board; so many things. So it's going to bring out the
9 best in you and all the skills that you have developed.

10 And one thing I know for sure is, I
11 don't think we are in any better of a position to work
12 with the School City on so many things, than to have a
13 School Board member -- let alone the School Board
14 President -- be our Director of Parks and Recreation.
15 So I am looking forward to a great partnership with the
16 School City, as far as recreation, in so many different
17 things. So welcome, Vanessa, and with a heavy heart
18 saying good-bye to Mayra.

19 And one thing I know for sure is, I
20 don't think we are in any better of a position to work
21 with the School City on so many things, than to have a
22 School Board member -- let alone the School Board
23 President -- be our Director of Parks and Recreation.
24 So I am looking forward to a great partnership with the
25 School City, as far as recreation, in so many different
things. So welcome, Vanessa, and with a heavy heart
saying good-bye to Mayra.

10 And one thing I know for sure is, I

11 MR. AUSTIN: You've done a really
12 wonderful -- a great job. So everything is okay with
13 me.

14 CHIEF SERNA: All right. Are there any
15 public comments? (None)

16 Our next meeting is Tuesday,
17 June 23, 2020, right here at the City Hall Council
18 Chambers, at 5:00 p.m..

19 I will entertain a motion to
20 adjourn.

21 Motion to adjourn meeting made by Gilberto Cantu.
22 Second by Valda Lewis.

23 CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
24 saying aye?

25 (All signify aye.)
Motion carries.

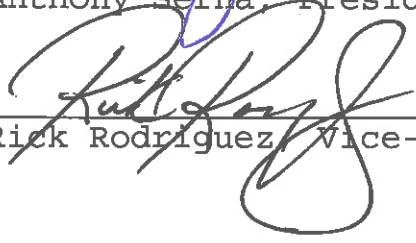
***** Meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.*****

Approval of the Meeting Minutes of Tuesday
June 9, 2020

Approved and signed June 23rd, 2020



Anthony Serna, President



Rick Rodriguez, Vice-President

Valda Lewis, Secretary

Gilberto Cantu, Member

Eugene Austin, Member



Ateria Allen, Recording 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 10th day of June, 2020.

Peggy S. LaLonde



Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR