

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
Tuesday, September 22, 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,
Eugene Austin
Telephonic: Valda Lewis, Gilberto Cantu,

Staff Present: Ateria Allen, Recording Secretary
Vanessa Hernandez-Orange, Director

CHIEF SERNA: We have a quorum. Ms. Lewis and Mr. Cantu via Zoom call, myself, Mr. Rodriguez, and Mr. Austin are here in person. I'd like to call to order today's Board of Parks and Recreation meeting for Tuesday, September 22, 2020.

First item on the agenda is Administrative Matters. Approval of the September 8, 2020, meeting minutes. I'll entertain a motion to approve the September 8, 2020, meeting minutes.

MR. AUSTIN: So moved.

CHIEF SERNA: Do I have a second?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Second.

CHIEF SERNA: Any questions on the motion? (None) All in favor signify by saying aye? (All signify aye.)

CHIEF SERNA: Motion carries.

Next we have approval of payroll dated September 18, 2020. I will entertain a motion to approve the payroll dated September 18, 2020.

1 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Make a motion to approve.

2 MR. AUSTIN: Second.

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

(All signify aye.)

5 CHIEF SERNA: Motion carries.

6 Next we have approval and signing of
7 Warrant Report 092220 PB, in the amount of \$14,876.84.
8 I will entertain a motion to approve Warrant Report
9 092220 PB.

10 MS. LEWIS: I move for approval.

11 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Second.

12 CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
13 saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

14 CHIEF SERNA: Motion carries.

15 Next we have approval and signing of
16 Warrant Report 093020 PB, in the amount of \$180,770.89.
17 I'll entertain a motion to approve Warrant Report 093020
18 PB.

19 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Make a motion to approve.

20 MS. LEWIS: Second.

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

(All signify aye.)

23 CHIEF SERNA: Motion carries.

24 Next we have Old Business. Any old
25 business, Madame Secretary?

MS. ALLEN: No.

26 CHIEF SERNA: We'll move on to new
27 business. Is there any new business? Our director,
28 Vanessa Hernandez-Orange is here with us.

29 MRS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: No new business.

30 CHIEF SERNA: Then we'll move to Public
31 Comment. Any public comment?

32 MR. AUSTIN: I have a question. Down at

1 the park -- I don't know what they call that, on Kennedy
2 Avenue.

3 CHIEF SERNA: Kennedy Gardens.

4 MR. AUSTIN: Right. They said they have
5 got a function down there and they don't have any water.

6 CHIEF SERNA: Because I don't think there
7 is piped water there. They might have electricity in
8 the shelter, but I don't think there is water there.
9 Vanessa, can you answer that?

10 MRS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: Yes, we don't
11 have any water in that area. So, there is electricity
12 being put in currently. I actually just got off the
13 phone on the way here with Will, from our Engineering
14 Department. They are working with Nipsco to make sure
15 to get the electricity there. But the water, from what
16 I have been noticing, that residents are bringing their
17 own water and tying the cooler to the shelter. Which I
18 have let the person who does that know that as long as
19 they are okay with people just grabbing whatever.
20 That's not my responsibility. I asked them to remove
21 them because I don't want them to blame us as the Park
22 Department. That's solely on them. They did remove it.
23 I did see it there over the weekend however. So I let
24 Public Works know they have to remove any items that are
25 not put there by us.

CHIEF SERNA: That's why there is no
water, there is no piping for water.

MR. AUSTIN: The reason why I want to
bring it up, because they had came to me -- they came to
me over the weekend and said, hey, Gene, why don't we
have water.

CHIEF SERNA: Right. That's like Mr.
Cantu always brings up the water fountains in the park.
We have no water at that park. And it is really not a
park per se, they made it into a park for the residents
who are always there any way. So they are getting
electricity. They have got a shelter and are getting
electricity. Maybe water is something down in the
future.

MR. AUSTIN: Well, like I told them, I
would check and say something about it. And now I think

1 if they push me again, I have a little bit more to tell
2 them. Cool them down a little till sometime we might
3 have some water pumped in there, but right now --
4 there's a whole lot going on.

5 MRS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: At the same time,
6 right now all the water in any of our parks, any spigots
7 or whatever, it's all shut down because of COVID. So
8 there is no water in any one of our public areas.

9 CHIEF SERNA: They can't say there is
10 water in other parks, they don't have it because there
11 is no water anywhere due to COVID. Thank you, Gene.
12 Any other public comments?

13 MR. RODRIGUEZ: What are those panels in
14 Riley Park? What is going to be built there?

15 MRS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: That's actually
16 for our last two murals that are being brought to East
17 Chicago from Heavy Industries. They are actually
18 currently working on it. We had -- there was two of
19 them. We decided what one was going to be and what the
20 other one is going to be -- Mayra had that decision
21 made. When I spoke with the Mayor, what it was suppose
22 to be, we are going to do a change of what it's suppose
23 to be on those panels.

24 So, currently now we have decided
25 that it is going to be East Chicago former athletes on
those panels, to just kind of commemorate them. It's
going to have some type of lighting in it. Midwest
Electric was there and did that. They were suppose to
be here by the end of this month. That's not going to
happen, just because we had to reconfigure the second
pole or statute with the panels. We are currently
getting that together.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Like a Hall of Fame?

MRS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: Not really a Hall
of Fame because we are not doing it completely like the
one we have at the high school, but it was just finding
a way to commemorate some of the outstanding athletes,
especially those that have given back to the community.
For instance, we have one that solidified this, Kenny
Lofton; then Kawann Short, E'Twaun Moore and Miguel
Torres; those three are going to be on one for sure.

Like I kind of let the Mayor know,
I don't see any women that on there. I need to have a

1 woman on there. And actually we have Bridget Pettis
2 coming on Wednesday to tour our greenhouse. She was on
3 women's basketball when they won the State championship
4 and also State champion WNBA basketball player, who went
5 on to coach. So she is going to be on there, but she is
6 also doing work with the greenhouses in Gary now, so I
7 invited her to come, kind of check us out. That's one
8 female that we have. I am trying to figure out the
9 other panels. Kind of put a question out to the
10 community, like who they thought should be there.

11
12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: That's nice, but wouldn't
13 it be better at a bigger park. I'm just saying.

14 MRS. HERNANDEZ-ORANGE: Most parks have
15 something. Riley Park was kind of left out. Sunnyside
16 has got that big monarch with all the colors. Tod had
17 the "My City", where you are able to take the picture
18 and has got the heart. So we do have them at some of
19 the bigger parks. Riley Park, because of the fact that
20 we used Riley Hall, that was explained to me why it was
21 also put there.

22 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

23 CHIEF SERNA: All right. Any other
24 comments -- public comment? (None)

25 Our next meeting date is Tuesday,
October 13th, 2020, right here at City Hall Council
Chambers, at 5:00 p.m.. I will entertain a motion to
adjourn.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Make a motion to adjourn.

MR. AUSTIN: Second.

CHIEF SERNA: All in favor signify by
saying aye?

(All signify aye.)

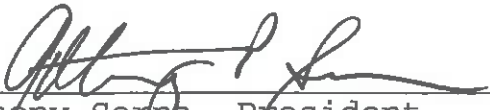
CHIEF SERNA: Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned.

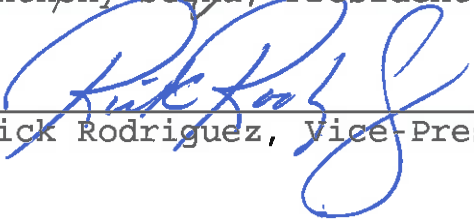
**** Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m. ****

Approval of the Meeting Minutes of Tuesday
September 22, 2020

Approved and signed October 13, 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 25th day of September, 2020.

Peggy S. LaLonde



Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR