

Water System Advisory Council Meeting

March 21, 2022

Call to Order

Water System Advisory Council meeting was held on March 21, 2022, in person at the Flint City Hall Dome and livestreamed on YouTube for public access. The meeting began at 5:39 and was presided over by Sheryl Thompson, Water System Advisory Council Chair.

Attendees

Ben Pauli, E. Yvonne Lewis, Nancy Love, Jamie Gaskin, Sheryl Thompson, Lawrence Reynolds, Gina Smith

Members not in attendance:

Shawn McEmurry, Wendy Braun, Jaron Houston, Nayyirah Shariff, Laura Sullivan

Agenda

Meeting was called to order at 5:39pm by WSAC chair, Sheryl Thompson.

Roll call is held.

Chair asks council to approve the agenda. WSAC member Jamie Gaskin motions to approve the agenda. Lawrence Reynolds seconds the motion. The agenda is approved.

WSAC Chair opens the floor for public comment. Public comment is held.

Public comment begins with comments made by resident, Ms. Taylor. She states that the meeting needs to be more publicized and more accessible to the community to receive information regarding their water. She asks the council what changes they will be making to ensure the residents concerns are met and resident can be confident in the council.

WSAC Vice President, Ben Pauli responds to these statements by clarifying the meeting schedule of the Water System Advisory Council and the goals of the council to help residents within the city of Flint. The Vice President asks residents to provide suggestions on how the council can be more accessible to community members while meeting the requirement of holding public meetings in person per state law.

WSAC member, Jamie Gaskin, responds to the public comment by clarifying the role of the Water System Advisory Council which is only to advise the Mayor, City Council, and advocate for the concerns of city residents.

WSAC member, Dr. Lawrence Reynolds, responds to the public comment by stating that there are restrictions to the council such as the Open Meetings Act, the pandemic, and disseminating information.

Another resident, Pastor Threllkell, makes a public comment explaining how the Flint Water Crisis has affected the city and its residents for seven years. He was extremely concerned about how many people do not know about this meeting and its purpose.

WSAC members respond to the resident's concern regarding councilmember involvement and what the purpose of the council is.

Another resident makes a public comment expressing concerns about the marketing of these meetings and the need for the public to be aware about these meetings and the opportunity for public comment.

Another resident makes a public comment about the high price of water bills and water sampling. He is frustrated with the process of waiting for results and how much his water bill for water that he is not using.

WSAC Vice President explains that residents can direct their questions to the Public Works Directors who is in attendance. Director Mike Brown provides resources to residents in attendance. **The first is for water emergencies line, (810) 766-7202, which is manned 24/7. The second line for sewer emergencies is (810) 766-7079. If WSAC members or residents have any questions pertaining to water and sewer related issues, they should email water@cityofflint.com. For all questions, DPW will answer as soon as they can.**

WSAC members ask DPW Director, Mike Brown, about water testing options for residents in the city of Flint. Residents can receive a water test kit from Flint City Hall at the Information Desk and receive results after a couple weeks. Water can be tested as frequently as they need to and if any issues occur, they can direct questions to EGLE and the Flint Water Plant.

Another resident makes a public comment expressing gratitude for the Water System Advisory Council. They explain that this is a positive atmosphere to allow residents to hold elected officials responsible, advocate for better infrastructure for water and sewer lines in the city, and to properly represent residents and their concerns.

Another resident makes a public comment asking about ARPA funds and where that money will go for residents. WSAC Chair explains that this meeting is not to discuss those funds and suggests that a City Council member should attend a meeting to explain their process to the public.

WSAC Chair ends public comment and transitions the meeting to introduce DPW Director, Mike Brown. Mike Brown presents updates to the WSAC and the public regarding water blending and water conservation mandate. During the presentation, the DPW Director explained the timeline of transitioning to the secondary pipeline.

WSAC Chair thanks the DPW Director for his presentation and transitions the meeting to MDHHS to present an update for their Water Testing Program. MDHHS provided insight into their methods for water sampling and presented the data collected from their program. In the last round they sampled a total of 55 homes within the city of Flint. **Residents can access the results found in each round of sampling on the Taking Action on Flint Water website (www.michigan.gov/flintwater) under the Community Results tab.** During the presentation,

WSAC members expressed concerns about not receiving timely results from water testing and asked if MDHHS can have a better process of disseminating information. WSAC members make suggestions to MDHHS by requesting that an improvement of communications and improve the accessibility of the website. Members also ask if MDHHS can provide a description of their sampling protocol in their next update at the next Water System Advisory Council meeting.

WSAC Chair thanks MDHHS for their presentation and transitions the meeting to WSAC Vice Chair, Ben Pauli, and WSAC Member, Gina to present bylaws for the Water System Advisory Council. WSAC members and the public discuss the bylaws and receive recommendations from residents.

WSAC Vice Chair transitions the conversation to discuss the formation of subcommittees within the council to discuss goals of the group moving forward. These subcommittees will include communications and community outreach planning.

WSAC members transition to scheduling the next WSAC meeting. The council will meet on the third Monday every other month and subcommittees will meet each month between public forums. WSAC Chair asks if a meeting can be scheduled with Legal to explore venue options to open accessibility to the public. **The next subcommittee meeting is tentatively April 18, 2022, at 5:30p and the next tentative public meeting is scheduled for May 16, 2022.** The possible dates for scheduling WSAC meetings moving forward without conflicting city business is Mondays and Thursdays.

WSAC opens the floor to adjourn the meeting. WSAC Secretary motions to adjourn the meeting. WSAC member Dr. Reynolds seconds the motion. The meeting ends at 8:13pm.