



# Minutes

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**YPSILANTI COMMUNITY UTILITIES AUTHORITY  
WATER SYSTEM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
Tuesday, May 31, 2022 – 3:00 p.m.  
YCUA Administration Building  
2777 State Road  
Ypsilanti, MI 48198-9112**

**Members Present:** Anthony Morgan, Luther Blackburn, Kristina Scarcelli, Mike Shaffer, Jerry Evans, Sean Knapp, and Eric Sizemore.

**Members Absent:** Scott D. Westover.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Blackburn called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
2. **NEW BUSINESS**
  - A. **EPA Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) - Changes and Intent to Strengthen** – Sean Knapp

Mr. Knapp advised that, on December 22, 2020, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized the first major update to the lead and copper rule (LCR) in nearly 30 years. He explained that on December 16, 2021, the EPA announced the next steps to strengthen the regulatory framework on lead in drinking water. Mr. Knapp indicated that the agency's proposal takes a proactive approach to improving the current rule from testing to treatment to public awareness about the levels and risks in drinking water. He acknowledged that this approach focuses on six key areas:

1. Identifying the most impacted areas,
2. Strengthening the drinking water treatment requirements,
3. Replacing lead service lines,
4. Increasing sample reliability,
5. Improving risk communication, and
6. Protecting children in schools and childcare facilities.

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Mr. Knapp confirmed that, under this new proposal, 100% of service lines will be fully identified with a trigger level of 10 parts per billion (ppb), which would increase the percentage of lines that would need to be replaced. He pointed out that the EPA would require 3% annual replacements but that EGLE's requirements are a little more stringent than the EPA's in that Michigan is already at 5%, and this lower action level trigger would increase it to 7%.

Mr. Knapp stated that the EPA proposal is also calling for 20% of schools and childcare facilities to be tested for lead annually, even if they are not serviced by a lead service line. He further advised that the proposal would also rescind the 48-month allowance for a system to complete a lead service line replacement and require that those plans be put in place immediately.

Mr. Knapp also explained that this proposal, if passed, will go into effect in December of 2024.

Mr. Morgan inquired as to how the schools and childcare facilities would be selected. Mr. Knapp responded that he would have to look into that further but his assumption is that they would be randomly chosen.

Mr. Shaffer interjected that the action level is already dropping from 15 to 12 ppb. Mr. Knapp concurred and added that there will be no more 90% percentile in 2025.

Informational only; no motion from the council required.

**B. Capital Improvements - 2022 Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Replacements – Luther Blackburn**

Mr. Blackburn advised that there is an \$11 million, two-year project in the city for primarily water main replacements along with service line identifications and some sanitary improvements. He explained that phase 1A is currently underway south of Harriet Street and phase 1B will be primarily north of that on South Hamilton and South Huron. Mr. Blackburn indicated that there is information regarding this work on the City of Ypsilanti website.

He acknowledged that YCUA recently posted a public notice regarding its Drinking Water Revolving Fund project plan, which includes water system projects through 2025 starting with replacements at Bridge Road, Textile Road, and Clark Road pump stations. He then outlined those improvements in greater detail.

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Mr. Blackburn confirmed that fiscal year 2024 includes the Clark Road water main replacement, Merritt Road pump station, and Harriet Street water main replacement. He then summarized those upgrades.

He pointed out that this could change going forward as the Authority works with MDOT on their road construction schedule.

Mr. Blackburn stated that YCUA has received notification from EGLE that the application for DWRP projects needs to be submitted by November.

Mr. Morgan inquired as to whether the smart meter technology upgrade will include security enhancements to help protect from cyber threats. Mr. Knapp responded that the customer portal will be read-only, which will minimize the potential for hacking.

Mr. Shaffer interjected that the new meter technology will allow the Authority to identify the service line materials in every home. He advised that the new system will also provide real-time communication with homeowners regarding water main breaks, hydrant repairs, boil water advisories, etc. via their portals, which will, in turn, generate an email and / or text notification. Mr. Shaffer explained that YCUA staff has been working very hard to bridge the gap between the Authority and its customers in providing a system of efficient notifications. He also indicated that when the Harriet Street work is complete, a lot of lead services will be identified.

Informational only; no motion from the council required.

**C. Distribution System Materials Inventory (DSMI) - Minimum Service Line Identification Guidance – Jerry Evans**

Mr. Evans advised that EGLE has provided the Authority with 352 random addresses to identify by January 1, 2023. He explained the process used in these identifications, which involves vactoring 18 inches on both sides of the curb box (the water shut-off to the home). Mr. Evans indicated that, out of the 352, 81 have been done to date. Mr. Knapp interjected that these identifications couldn't get underway until after the last frost and staff is doing a great job getting them done. The process was then discussed further.

Informational only; no motion from the council required.

**D. Review of Educational Materials - e.g. How to Reduce Exposure to Lead – Sean Knapp**

Mr. Knapp advised that the number one way for homeowners to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water is to identify the materials in the

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home's service line. He explained that homes with lead service lines have a high risk of having lead in their drinking water. Mr. Knapp indicated that customers can visit the Authority's website and utilize the YCUA Residential Water Service Line Data Collection link to upload pictures of their service directly to Authority staff, who can identify the materials for them.

Mr. Morgan inquired as to whether the website has any information allowing residents to self-identify. Mr. Knapp responded affirmatively and thanked Ms. Scarcelli for the great job on the YCUA Get the Lead Out webpage.

Mr. Knapp confirmed that another method to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water is to run the water before drinking it. He pointed out that the longer water sits stagnant in the pipes, the greater the chance that lead has leached into it. Mr. Knapp stated that running the water doesn't necessarily mean that it will be wasted, as simply flushing a toilet, washing dishes or laundry, or watering the lawn or house plants would be sufficient.

He further advised that routine maintenance is an important part of reducing exposure to lead in drinking water, including cleaning faucet aerators every six months. Mr. Knapp also explained that point of use filters are helpful and can be provided by the Authority.

He further indicated that it may be necessary for a homeowner to replace any plumbing fixtures that likely contain lead such as older faucets, fittings, and valves sold before 2014, which can contain higher levels of lead even if they are labeled lead-free. Mr. Knapp also acknowledged that faucets, fittings, and valves sold after 2014 are subject to a more stringent lead-free definition but can still contain up to .25% lead.

He further confirmed that faucets should be run for at least five minutes or more and aerators cleaned after an extended period of non-use such as moving into a previously unoccupied home.

Mr. Blackburn inquired as to whether copper plumbing with lead solder is a concern. Mr. Knapp responded that YCUA used to test sample sites containing lead solder dating prior to 1986 but these locations are no longer Tier 1 sites. He indicated that they have been downgraded to Tier 3 sites because high concentrations of lead are not expected and, therefore, can't be sampled.

Informational only; no motion from the council required.

**E. 2021 Consumer Confidence Water Quality Report (CCR) – Luther Blackburn**

Mr. Blackburn advised that he is very proud of this year's Consumer Confidence Water Quality Report (CCR) and that this the first time the Authority has utilized the electronic delivery option versus bulk mailing the reports as has been done in the past. He explained that, over the past nine years, a message was periodically placed in the water bills and the *Mainstream* newsletter encouraging customers to call if they wish to continue to have paper copies of the CCR mailed them and, to date, only 36 customers have opted in.

Mr. Blackburn indicated that going electronic has allowed the Authority more freedom in utilizing color and graphics into the report, which should greatly enhance readability. He acknowledged that the electronic CCR will be posted each year at the same hyperlink location on the YCUA website and that, in future years, there will likely be new regulations in place which may require that the reports be published semiannually.

He further confirmed that this year's report contained a notice for Augusta Township's residents regarding a monitoring error originating with their contract laboratory.

Mr. Shaffer interjected that, in 2025, all utilities with over 10,000 customers will be required to move to electronic CCRs and the Authority was proactive in that regard.

Mr. Morgan inquired as to whether staff is of the opinion that the document will still achieve its goals if it is not being mailed. Mr. Shaffer responded that he is hopeful and that the small number of requests for paper copies should be indicative that it will.

Informational only; no motion from the council required.

**F. YCUA Water Supply Advisory Council (WSAC) Rules Revision re: Meeting Frequency – Mike Shaffer**

Mr. Shaffer advised that the Michigan administrative rule for water system advisory councils that went into effect in June 2018 requires a meeting at least annually. He explained that YCUA's WSAC bylaws sets forth a minimum of semiannual meetings in May and November. Mr. Shaffer indicated that staff would like feedback on their recommendation for annual meetings per state requirements going forward. He acknowledged that it is staff's opinion that this is sufficient because all of the LCR results for the previous year are available in May but there is nothing new to report in November. Mr. Shaffer confirmed that his research shows that

most WSACs meet annually. Mr. Knapp concurred and indicated that a lot of the same information is covered in semiannual meetings.

Mr. Morgan commented that regardless of redundancy, two public meetings offer customers more opportunities to reach out to the committee. Mr. Knapp commented that he would be amenable to ideas to get more community input, such as setting up a booth at the Heritage Festival and other local events.

The matter was then discussed further. After deliberation, a motion was made to continue with semiannual meetings for the time being and to re-address the issue at the November meeting.

### **3. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **A. 2021 LCR Results – Eric Sizemore**

Mr. Sizemore advised that the Authority is required each year to collect 30 lead and copper samples from residents that have lead service lines. He explained that, as in 2019 and 2020, all 30 samples from 2021 came back below the action level. Mr. Sizemore indicated that the 2022 sampling begins on June 1<sup>st</sup> and continues through the end of September. He acknowledged that 30 letters were sent out to the previous year's participants and 11 responses were received, which requires staff to locate other Tier 1 sites to volunteer. The matter was then discussed further.

Informational only; no motion from the council required.

#### **B. 2021 Lead Service Line Replacements – Eric Sizemore**

Mr. Sizemore advised that, in 2021, YCUA replaced 20 lead service lines. He explained that sampling needs to occur within 30 days after the replacement. Mr. Sizemore indicated that, year-to-date, staff has replaced 22 lead services and is projecting to replace at least 45 total. He acknowledged that the Authority is required to replace 5% of known lead service lines per year. Mr. Knapp interjected that there were originally 231 identified lead services and that number is current 234. He added that the number changes constantly as new lead services are identified and more are replaced.

Mr. Blackburn commented that all private-side work was previously accomplished by plumbers and is new to the Authority.

Mr. Morgan inquired as to how many of these replacements can be accomplished in one day. Mr. Knapp responded that the contractors working on the Huron / Hamilton project can do four in a day. He then explained in detail the process used. Mr. Knapp indicated that

replacements will begin again in about three weeks and invited Mr. Morgan to visit the site. The matter was then discussed further.

Informational only; no motion from the council required.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no Public Comments for the month.
5. **ADJOURNMENT:** Motion by Blackburn to adjourn the meeting at 3:42 p.m. In favor: All. Opposed: None. (Motion carried.)



Respectfully submitted,

KRISTINA SCARCELLI, Public Information Coordinator