ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF)
ILLINOIS,)
)
Complainant,)
) PCB 24-33
vs.) (Enforcement -
) Water)
CITY OF LASALLE, an)
Illinois municipal)
corporation,)
)
Respondent.)
)

THE ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD HEARING called for examination pursuant to the provisions of the Illinois Pollution Control Board, as they apply to the taking of IPCB hearings, taken before Kathy L. Johnson, C.S.R., a Notary Public in and for the County of Henry, State of Illinois, on February 29th, 2024, at the hour of 10:00 a.m., at the LaSalle County Courthouse, 119 W. Madison Street, Ottawa, Illinois, 61350.



		Page 2
1	I N D E X	
2		
3	WITNESSES:	PAGE:
4	TERRENCE BOYER	
5	DX BY MR. MCPHEDRAN	20
6	CX BY JOHN LAVIERI	46
7	CX BY JAMIE HICKS	46
8	RD BY MR. MCPHEDRAN	48
9	CX BY MARTY SCHNEIDER	5 2
10	CX BY BRIANNE HICKS	5 4
11	CX BY SHAWNA WILCOX	61
12	FRD BY MR. MCPHEDRAN	63
13	RC BY BRIANNE HICKS	69
14		
15	EXHIBITS	
16		
	Exhibit No. 1	
17	Exhibit No. 2	
	Exhibit No. 3	
18	Exhibit No. 4	
	Exhibit No. 5	
19	Exhibit No. 6	
	Exhibit No. 7	
20	(All marked/retained by	
	counsels and Hearing Officer)	
21		
22	CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER	9 4
23		
24		



		Page 3
1		_
1	APPEARANCES	
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		Page 4
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- 1 (Hearing start time: 10:00 a.m.)
- 2 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Good morning,
- 3 everyone. My name is Bradley Halloran. I'm a
- 4 hearing officer with the Illinois Pollution
- 5 Control Board and I'm also assigned to this case.
- 6 It's entitled People of the State of Illinois,
- 7 Complainant, versus City of LaSalle, Respondent.
- 8 Our docket number is PCB 24-33. It's an
- 9 enforcement in the water. How we got here today
- 10 is the parties filed a stipulation, a proposal
- 11 for settlement. Some of the citizens in a timely
- 12 fashion filed a request to have a public hearing
- 13 and this is where we are today.
- 14 What I propose is to have the parties,
- 15 Complainant first, step up or stay seated and
- 16 give a summary of the stipulation, proposed
- 17 stipulation, and then the City of LaSalle by
- 18 their attorney can do the same.
- 19 And then we can have the public stand up
- 20 or sit up here somewhere and give their public
- 21 comment. I'm aware that there's, it looks like a
- 22 few more people are recording, more so than I
- 23 thought, but as long as the public commentors
- 24 don't mind them being recorded that's fine with



- 1 me. So any questions?
- 2 MR. MCPHEDRAN: No, except, Your Honor,
- 3 we'll have at least one, maybe two witnesses.
- 4 HEARING OFFICER: Okay. All right.
- 5 MR. MCPHEDRAN: They can come up.
- 6 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you. Miss
- 7 Sawyer, give your summation.
- 8 MS. SAWYER: Thank you, Mr. Halloran. As
- 9 the Hearing Officer stated, my name is Cara
- 10 Sawyer. I am here in my capacity as Assistant
- 11 Attorney General for the State of Illinois with
- 12 my co-counsel Christopher Grant.
- 13 Thank you for the opportunity to present
- 14 to you today and discuss the case with the
- 15 citizens. Thanks to them also for wanting to
- 16 share any relevant concerns with us.
- 17 Before we begin, Mr. Halloran, I would
- 18 just like to draw your attention to your last
- 19 order in which you stated that any public comment
- 20 must be relevant according to Section 101-3, and
- 21 relevant to the stipulation and proposal for
- 22 settlement and the related complaint.
- I do have copies. I sent it out by email
- 24 so I assume most people have them, but I do have



- 1 copies if anybody wants. I have three. Maybe
- 2 you can share.
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: I think for the record --
- 4 I don't mean to interrupt -- the stipulation is
- 5 also included in the exhibits I passed out, so
- 6 they should already have it.
- 7 MS. SAWYER: So the State would defer to
- 8 the Hearing Officer's judgment as to relevance
- 9 pursuant to the rules. You may object if
- 10 something seems particularly notable. But we
- 11 have no interest in, you know, stifling anybody's
- 12 statements.
- We are here today though to specifically
- 14 discuss the stipulation that I mentioned. That
- 15 stipulation was filed on November 13th of 2023.
- 16 This document would resolve in the eyes of the
- 17 State any issues that we raised in a relevant
- 18 three count complaint we filed simultaneously
- 19 with that stipulation.
- 20 That three count complaint was regarding
- 21 two very specific three-year old violations
- 22 regarding the Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant
- 23 in the City of LaSalle. So those violations, if
- 24 I may just briefly review them. There were two



- 1 violations. First of all, there was a wastewater
- 2 discharge into the Illinois River. Those
- 3 discharges occurred in 2021 in August and June,
- 4 June and August.
- 5 Those exceeded current monthly and weekly
- 6 overage levels of two pollutants, total suspended
- 7 solids, and required an oxygenation factor. The
- 8 first two counts of that complaint addressed
- 9 these two overages.
- 10 The third count addresses the second
- 11 violation. That violation was a failure to
- 12 submit certain reports required by the permit for
- 13 that wastewater treatment plant from 2019. These
- 14 are the four corners of the document that was
- 15 discussed in that stipulation.
- So the second violation was for three
- 17 report types that were due. And those report
- 18 types was as follows. Combined sewage outfall,
- 19 long-term control planning progress reports.
- 20 Those were due 2019 through 2021. There were
- 21 five reports.
- 22 A biomonitoring reporting schedule
- 23 report. It was required to monitor impact of
- 24 outflow on aquatic species. Four reports were



- 1 due from 2019 through 2020. And then the third
- 2 type of report was a phosphorus discharge
- 3 optimization plan type report. There were three
- 4 reports due from 2019 through 2021. Those were
- 5 required by the permits.
- They were fully submitted. And pursuant
- 7 to the stipulation those report violations were
- 8 deemed completed. So that was the complaint.
- 9 We asked for certain things through that
- 10 complaint, and those things, as I mentioned, were
- 11 fully resolved in the stipulation.
- 12 So the stipulation and proposal for
- 13 settlement, subject to this hearing, it is very
- 14 common to file these two documents together.
- 15 My office and the Illinois Environmental
- 16 Protection Agency find the stipulation is fair
- 17 and that it fully addresses the issues that were
- 18 raised in the four corners of that complaint
- 19 about the wastewater treatment plant.
- It includes relief that addresses each of
- 21 the alleged violations that we allege in the
- 22 complaint and it also includes a penalty amount.
- 23 So briefly let me just go over the details of the
- 24 stipulation and of the stipulated penalty. So on



- 1 page three the stipulation includes LaSalle's
- 2 compliance activities as of the date of that
- 3 filed stipulation. It also addresses both
- 4 violations. That's on page eight.
- 5 And it does so by requiring future
- 6 compliance about both violations, and it requires
- 7 the City cease and desist from future violations
- 8 of the Act in the Illinois regulations. Excuse
- 9 me, of the Illinois Environmental Protection Act.
- 10 As for the penalty amount, the City has
- 11 agreed to pay a civil penalty that both my office
- 12 and the Illinois EPA believes is fair, and it
- 13 also serves the deterrent aspects of the Act.
- 14 Those -- that determination -- is made
- 15 pursuant to Section 42(h) of the Act. It sets
- 16 forth very specific conditions that the Board
- 17 considers for determining a civil penalty.
- 18 Those conditions are actually laid out in
- 19 the Act's -- the conditions are laid out on pages
- 20 five to six of the stipulation -- and they
- 21 include consideration of LaSalle's diligence in
- 22 returning to compliance.
- 23 It also considered it had no prior
- 24 violation of the Act. Further, the City



- 1 submitted its reports on February 22nd of 2022.
- 2 This was before we filed our complaint. And as a
- 3 filing stipulation, the City had had no further
- 4 violations of its Wastewater Treatment Plant
- 5 effluent overages.
- 6 And based on the analysis of these
- 7 factors we determined that a civil penalty of
- 8 \$5470 will both serve the Act's purpose, which is
- 9 to deter future violations, and it will also
- 10 encourage future voluntary compliance of similar
- 11 Respondents with the Act.
- This is not an uncommon type of
- 13 stipulation, as the Hearing Officer may know.
- 14 The wastewater treatment plant is coming back
- 15 into compliance and all reports were submitted.
- 16 We have filed very -- we have filed very many
- 17 other stipulations that the Board has accepted.
- 18 This is no different. This case is not
- 19 unusual or novel. And also settlement in our
- 20 view can resolve things in ways that is much
- 21 better for the environment and also for taxpayer
- 22 dollars considering you're dealing with two
- 23 government entities here.
- Lastly and most importantly, the Board



- 1 has been considering stipulations for over 50
- 2 years. This is a very common practice since the
- 3 Act was passed. So I think that summarizes the
- 4 settlement and I'll go on to the next person.
- 5 Thank you.
- 6 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you, Ms. Sawyer.
- 7 Mr. McPhedran?
- 8 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Yes, Your Honor. Thank
- 9 you, Ms. Sawyer. Thank you. May it please Mr.
- 10 Hearing Officer, Your Honor, and counsel, Ms.
- 11 Sawyer and Mr. Grant, my colleague Mr. Herrmann.
- 12 The participants who have indicated that
- 13 they are here, that would include Dawn Hicks,
- 14 Brianne Hicks, Marty Schneider.
- I don't know if Lindsay is here, but if
- 16 she is, with respect to all the hearing
- 17 officers and -- not hearing officers, the
- 18 participants. Thank you for coming. Thank you
- 19 for your comments. And the City welcomes them.
- 20 I've been in a lot of different legal
- 21 forums in over 30 years of practice and a lot of
- 22 courtrooms. This as far as the proceedings is,
- 23 at least for me, a little bit unique as far as
- 24 finding precedent, because I do not find in my



- 1 research and investigation that there have been
- 2 many prior hearings of this nature. Very few in
- 3 fact. I don't think present counsel for the
- 4 Attorney General's Office have either been
- 5 involved in one in their careers, and they do
- 6 this all the time.
- 7 Having said that, we're going to follow
- 8 the rules of the Pollution Control Board and the
- 9 Hearing Officer's order.
- 10 In that regard, I must let some members
- 11 of the public know, and in this kind of a case I
- 12 feel from the City's standpoint we have two -- we
- 13 have an audience of the Pollution Control Board,
- 14 and we have the audience participants and the
- 15 public as well, and we're sensitive to both of
- 16 those.
- 17 And we want to try and inform the public
- 18 today about more information in regard to the
- 19 stipulation and explain some things.
- 20 But unfortunately, because of the rules
- 21 of the Pollution Control Board and the Hearing
- 22 Officer's order, which was entered because the
- 23 Hearing Officer was on the Pollution Control
- 24 Board, there are some things that public interest



- 1 for both the residents and the City that will not
- 2 be presented; nor will you hear them talked about
- 3 by the State and the Attorney General. Nor will
- 4 you hear us being -- presented in our, what we
- 5 call our case-in-chief -- anything from the City.
- 6 That includes certain topics which I
- 7 believe that the representative of the Attorney
- 8 General representatives will both agree on, and I
- 9 appreciate the Hearing Officer.
- 10 This case is about alleged allegations in
- 11 regard to discharge from the south wastewater
- 12 treatment plant in LaSalle on River Street that
- 13 discharges through outfall 001 into the Illinois
- 14 River.
- 15 It has no relevance as far as the case is
- 16 concerned, even though it may be of great public
- 17 interest, in regard to water quality in the City
- 18 of LaSalle.
- 19 It also has no relevance, which may also
- 20 be of public concern, in regards to -- in regard
- 21 to a certain pipe that goes off in the Carus
- 22 plant into the Vermilion River, not the Illinois
- 23 River.
- 24 And I would ask that, Your Honor, if you



- 1 could indicate that I'm correct in that, and I
- 2 believe that the representatives of the Attorney
- 3 General will also indicate that.
- 4 As far as drinking water, this case is
- 5 not regarding drinking water quality, and it also
- 6 would not be relevant in regard to a pipe that
- 7 discharges into the Vermillion River. That is
- 8 not the subject of this either.
- 9 Do both representatives of the Illinois
- 10 Attorney General's Office concur with that?
- MS. SAWYER: Yes, we do.
- MR. GRANT: Yes.
- 13 HEARING OFFICER: Yeah. I do want to
- 14 underline the fact that the only thing relevant
- 15 are the four corners of the stipulation filed
- 16 November 23rd, 2023.
- 17 The counsels for the parties may object
- 18 if they feel like the comments are going outside
- 19 the relevancy of the document. You may proceed,
- 20 sir.
- 21 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Yes. And so for that
- 22 reason and following the rules of the Pollution
- 23 Control Board and hearing the court's order. I
- 24 may have a responsibility in following those



- 1 rules to make certain objections. And that's
- 2 only because of what the hearing officer has
- 3 indicated, what he's got in his order, and what
- 4 the Attorney General's Office has related.
- It isn't that we don't respect the
- 6 interests of the public and respect the citizens'
- 7 right to comment. We certainly do. But this
- 8 hearing, per the law, per the hearing board
- 9 Pollution Control Board rules, has certain
- 10 parameters that we must respect as well.
- 11 And in regard to that, in the stipulation
- 12 we're going to present some testimony -- you all
- 13 have copies of -- Exhibit One is the stipulation.
- 14 Exhibit Two is the City's acts of compliance as
- 15 the State has appropriately acknowledged.
- In regard to the effluent issues, they
- 17 were with regard to two alleged overages of
- 18 concentration level of BODs in 2021. And those
- 19 were two months out of -- well, we'll have them
- 20 further explain.
- 21 However, it happened in a high rainfall
- 22 and a high storm fall. It hasn't happened, at
- 23 least according to the State's records and my
- 24 knowledge, since. Additionally, in regard to the



- 1 reporting requirements, it's important to note
- 2 that while there's some periods of transition
- 3 with the City and also some of it was during
- 4 COVID, certain reports regarding long-term
- 5 control plan and the extensive work that the City
- 6 was doing, spending hundreds of thousands of
- 7 dollars in regard to working through its
- 8 long-term control plan, certain reports didn't
- 9 get submitted.
- 10 And additionally, in regard to certain
- 11 biomonitoring, while the data was being collected
- 12 the City thought the reports -- and we don't have
- 13 proof -- so for purposes of today we have to
- 14 acknowledge we don't have evidence that they got
- 15 submitted.
- 16 But the data was being collected. And
- 17 that's evident in Exhibit Two that you have. Mr
- 18 Boyer, who's a registered engineer in a number of
- 19 states, will testify to some of this briefly to
- 20 explain to the public.
- 21 Also, in regard to phosphorus, it wasn't
- 22 that phosphorus wasn't reported on -- the levels
- 23 of phosphorus -- in monthly discharge reports.
- 24 It was. There's a suspicion out there, and I



- 1 don't have that confirmed, but there was no
- 2 allegation that phosphorus, only an optimization
- 3 plan, short report needed to be sent in that was
- 4 done. The State agrees the City is in full
- 5 compliance on that.
- 6 And as they have indicated, in total
- 7 compliance in regard to all of the other issues
- 8 that were involved that would be related to this
- 9 hearing through this day.
- 10 That's not just the City's position,
- 11 that's indicated in the stipulation and was
- 12 acknowledged by these representatives of the
- 13 Attorney General's Office who have throughout
- 14 this process expressed very strong interest in
- 15 making sure that the environment is preserved and
- 16 protecting the public and the citizens, and the
- 17 City respects that very much.
- 18 While we did not stipulate to certain of
- 19 the alleged liability in regards to some of these
- 20 we did agree to the settlement. The City
- 21 maintains that considering the statutory factors
- 22 in Section 42(h) -- those are the legal jargon
- 23 for what the parameters that the Pollution
- 24 Control Board is considering and the



- 1 reasonableness of the County -- that the
- 2 settlement is fair and reasonable and should be
- 3 approved by the Pollution Control Board. And
- 4 we're here now to present some good additional
- 5 evidence in furtherance of some of the things
- 6 I've suggested, Your Honor.
- 7 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you, sir. You
- 8 know, I was remiss today. I'm not sure I said
- 9 today was February 29th, 2024. I think it's Leap
- 10 Day. And I notice for the record there are about
- 11 20, 25 folks in the audience.
- 12 I'm not sure how many people are going to
- 13 give public comment. I know Mr. Schneider,
- 14 Brianne Hicks, Dawn Hicks. And I'm not sure,
- 15 I've got two other names here, Karry King and
- 16 Lindsay Jones.
- 17 But in any event, do you think we need a
- 18 sign-up sheet if there's going to be many more
- 19 than the ones I just ticked off? Okay. I see
- 20 some -- yes?
- 21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I would like to speak.
- 22 HEARING OFFICER: Okay. All right.
- 23 Really I think that's all we had to do. Officer,
- 24 can we use this witness area here?



- 1 OFFICER: Yes.
- 2 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you. So
- 3 whoever's -- whoever's first -- they can step up.
- 4 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Well, Your Honor, may I
- 5 call Mr. Boyer first?
- 6 HEARING OFFICER: Oh, I'm sorry. My bad.
- 7 Go ahead, sir.
- 8 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Thank you. I call Mr.
- 9 Terry Boyer.
- 10 HEARING OFFICER: Okay. Would you like
- 11 him sworn in?
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: Yes, please.
- 13 (Witness sworn)
- 14 TERRENCE BOYER,
- 15 Professional Engineer,
- 16 being first duly sworn on oath, was examined and
- 17 testified as follows:
- 18 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY
- MR. MCPHEDRAN:
- Q. Mr. Boyer, could you state your name for
- 21 the record, please?
- 22 A. Terrence Boyer.
- Q. And could you state your profession and
- 24 occupation for the record?



- 1 A. I'm a professional engineer in the state
- 2 of Illinois.
- Q. And how long have you been a professional
- 4 engineer, sir?
- 5 A. Since 1992.
- 6 Q. Could you give us some brief background,
- 7 synopsis, of your education, professional
- 8 training, and things of that nature?
- 9 A. Sure. I graduated University of Illinois
- 10 here with a Bachelors of Science in civil
- 11 engineering. Went on and got my Masters of
- 12 Science in civil environmental engineering.
- 13 I moved to California where I worked
- 14 with the Orange County Sanitation Districts for
- 15 about 11 or 12 years doing wastewater design.
- 16 Came back here in 2000 and have worked
- 17 for two or three different consulting firms, you
- 18 know, in helping small communities around the
- 19 state or other states, you know, accomplish their
- 20 goals for water and wastewater treatment.
- 21 Q. And are you registered as an engineer in
- 22 the state of Illinois?
- 23 A. Yes.
- Q. And how long have you been so registered?



- 1 A. That would be since 2000.
- Q. And have you -- has the focus of your
- 3 work been involved in wastewater treatment plan
- 4 and to a degree what's not subject here, drinking
- 5 water too?
- 6 A. Yes, both wastewater and water.
- 7 Q. And in connection with your working
- 8 background have you also worked for a number of
- 9 years as a consultant engineer in regard to the
- 10 City of LaSalle?
- 11 A. Yeah. I believe I started discussion
- 12 stuff with Sam McNeilly back in 2008, and was
- 13 hired by the City I think around 2012 to start
- 14 working with the City, and I've been working for
- 15 the City since that time.
- Q. And are you familiar in regard to your
- 17 work with the City with the City's wastewater
- 18 treatment plants, and specifically the wastewater
- 19 treatment plant on River Street referenced as the
- 20 south plant?
- 21 A. Yes.
- Q. And you're familiar with the effluent and
- 23 the operation of that plant in regard to outfall
- 24 number one?



- 1 A. Correct. Yes.
- Q. And in regard to the -- have you also --
- 3 when the alleged violations that were filed by the
- 4 State -- not filed but the original notice of
- 5 alleged violations back in the fall of 2021 --
- 6 were you brought in in regard to assisting in
- 7 regard to compliance and response?
- 8 A. Yeah. I believe pretty soon after the
- 9 City had received the Notice of Violation from the
- 10 Illinois EPA they asked me to help resolve what
- 11 was going on with that violation.
- 12 Q. And in regard to what you were called to
- 13 do, did you also eventually assist in preparing a
- 14 report following your investigation?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. In assisting the City making certain it
- 17 got back into compliance?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. And I bring up to you and show you a copy
- 20 of that which has been marked for identification
- 21 purposes as the City's Exhibit Number Two,
- 22 together with a copy of the stipulation regarding
- 23 the settlement, which has been marked as the
- 24 City's Exhibit Number One. May I approach the



- 1 witness, Your Honor?
- 2 HEARING OFFICER: You may.
- 3 BY MR. MCPHEDRAN:
- Q. Now, Mr. Boyer, have you had the
- 5 opportunity to review Exhibit Number One?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. And indeed did you review that exhibit
- 8 prior to the time and were part of the City's team
- 9 in regard to agreeing that that stipulation and
- 10 proposal for settlement was reasonable?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. And did you concur that it was
- 13 reasonable?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. And in regard to Exhibit Number Two,
- 16 you're familiar with that document?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. In fact, while it was signed off on by
- 19 Patrick Watson, who I understand was the
- 20 superintendent of Public Works, is it correct that
- 21 that document that I believe contains 74 pages was
- 22 actually authored by you yourself?
- 23 A. That's correct.
- Q. So you authored it and Mr. Watson signed



- 1 off?
- A. Correct.
- Q. In regard to authoring that document did
- 4 you make what you felt was a reasonably thorough
- 5 investigation in regard to the allegations that
- 6 would be relevant to this stipulation?
- 7 A. Yes.
- Q. And sir, I'd ask you in regard to any
- 9 opinions you render here to render them within a
- 10 reasonable degree of certainty in your profession
- 11 as a registered engineer. May we have that
- 12 understanding?
- 13 A. Yes, understood.
- Q. Now, in regard to -- in regard to number
- 15 one, which is the stipulation, and number two
- 16 which is the exhibit -- and I'm going to reference
- 17 to certain pages so the Hearing Officer and
- 18 counsel, I'm sure Ms. Sawyer is very familiar with
- 19 them anyway, but members of the public can easily
- 20 find what we're talking about. Okay.
- 21 And copies have been sent, given to
- 22 numerous members of the public.
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: Does anyone in the
- 24 public not have one that would like one? Two



- 1 more.
- 2 BY MR. MCPHEDRAN:
- 3 Q. Now, in regard to the stipulation, first
- 4 of all, on page two, paragraph four, is there an
- 5 indication just for the record as to which
- 6 wastewater treatment plant is involved and which F
- 7 -- which discharge outflow we're talking about?
- 8 A. That's correct. It's the south
- 9 wastewater treatment plant through its outfall
- 10 001.
- 11 Q. And then in regard to the allegations,
- 12 are they summarized on page two of that
- 13 stipulation in paragraphs one, two and three?
- 14 A. Correct.
- 15 Q. And in regard to this stipulation, is it
- 16 also indicated, you know, for the record on page
- 17 three, paragraph six, that while the City
- 18 stipulated for the purpose of compromising
- 19 disputed claims, but by entering the stipulation
- 20 it did not formally admit the allegations. Is
- 21 that correct, as part of the stipulation?
- 22 A. Correct.
- 23 Q. Now, having indicated that, in regard to
- 24 those allegations are they also summarized to a



- 1 degree in regard to the stipulation aspect in
- 2 regard to what some of the other provisions are?
- 3 And let's go to page five. Paragraphs one at the
- 4 bottom of the page. Do you see that paragraph
- 5 one?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. Now, it references there alleged
- 8 effluent, effluent violations, in June and August
- 9 of 2021. Could you explain for the ladies and
- 10 gentlemen and Pollution Control Board and the
- 11 public in general what that was involved?
- 12 A. Yeah. If it's okay if I refer to Exhibit
- 13 Two.
- 14 Q. That's fine.
- 15 A. That's where I summarized a lot of that
- 16 in our response to --
- 17 Q. And is the summary in Exhibit Two on page
- 18 one, two and three?
- 19 A. It would be, that's correct.
- Q. And is it also -- all right. Why don't
- 21 you -- and it's also -- is there a relevant
- 22 provision as far as the effluent violations? Is
- 23 that also covered on pages 19 through 22 with page
- 24 23 summarizing what the overages were? 24 I



- 1 should say.
- 2 A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. Just so the public knows what
- 4 we're talking about, why don't you again explain
- 5 if you could?
- 6 A. Sure. I'll just summarize from Exhibit
- 7 Two, you know, what we had found from looking at
- 8 the data that the basic issue on the violations of
- 9 BOD and TSS were due to going through outfall 001
- 10 that's happening during a rain event, a wet
- 11 weather event, in which the treatment plant is
- 12 receiving a high level of flow to the wastewater
- 13 plant.
- 14 On two occasions in August, I think
- 15 one occasion in June, there were very significant
- 16 rainfall events that exceeded the capacity of the
- 17 wastewater plant.
- 18 That resulted in the BOD and TSS
- 19 violations to slightly go above as a monthly
- 20 average for concentration for those months out of
- 21 outfall 001, to in June we -- only BOD was
- 22 exceeded. It went from 30 milligrams per liter,
- 23 which is the limit, to 33.1.
- In August the BOD was 32.5 and the TSS



- 1 concentration for the monthly average was 38.9.
- 2 And during that time frame looking at the
- 3 historical rain issues and the Illinois River
- 4 levels --
- 5 Q. Is that shown on page 23?
- 6 A. This is the rain information as shown on
- 7 page two of Exhibit Two.
- Q. Page two? And there's also I think
- 9 something on page 23.
- 10 A. Correct. And so at the time the Illinois
- 11 River was in a very high flood stage due to heavy
- 12 rains that were happening around that time. And
- 13 so what we looked at was what happened throughout
- 14 the entire year of 2021 for concentrations, and
- 15 the mass concentrations, going into the river at
- 16 the time for BOD and TSS.
- 17 And on the graph below, the river
- 18 graph, there are two graphs there that show that
- 19 day in and day out the pounds per day of BOD and
- 20 the pounds per day of TSS were well below what the
- 21 permitted limits require, even out of the outfall.
- Q. Even in June and August?
- 23 A. That is correct. As a, you know, daily
- 24 reckoning of what was going on. So those graphs



- 1 just show the daily, day in and day out. And the
- 2 intent of that was to identify and for the State
- 3 and for the Attorney General's Office that the
- 4 City day in, day out, is being very protective of
- 5 water quality going to the Illinois River.
- 6 The two events in question for June
- 7 and August were due to unusually high rain events
- 8 that the City didn't have any control over.
- 9 Q. And in your opinion within a reasonable
- 10 degree of certainty do you have an opinion as to
- 11 whether those two limited events adversely
- 12 impacted wastewater discharge and the environment
- 13 at all?
- 14 A. No, at that time there would not have
- 15 been a negative impact to the water quality in the
- 16 receiving stream due to the high level of rains at
- 17 the time.
- 18 O. And that would be in the -- from high
- 19 level rains. And that receiving stream is the
- 20 Illinois River?
- A. Correct.
- Q. Now, is it correct that to your knowledge
- 23 -- and I think the State acknowledged it in their
- 24 opening -- that there have been no other -- what,



- 1 for the record, are BOD and TSS? We talked --
- 2 you're a scientist, you know that stuff -- but the
- 3 rest of us lay folks -- I've learned a bit about
- 4 it becoming a student as some of these things
- 5 arose, but I think it's fair to members of the
- 6 public to let them know what we're talking about.
- 7 A. Sure. BOD is a measure -- it's called --
- 8 it stands for biological oxygen demand. It's just
- 9 a measure of organic strength of what's in the
- 10 wastewater effluent. The treated effluent.
- 11 TSS stands for total suspended solids.
- 12 Again, that's a measure of the suspended solids
- 13 that are kind of left in the treated wastewater as
- 14 it goes into the Illinois River.
- 15 Q. And in regard to the -- in your opinion
- 16 -- it's your opinion that it had no adverse effect
- 17 on the environment as a whole?
- 18 A. Correct. That's what we've stated and
- 19 included in our Exhibit Two to the State.
- Q. Now, in regard to the effluent, that is
- 21 the allegation in regard to Counts I and II,
- 22 correct?
- 23 A. Correct.
- Q. All right. Is there any allegation



- 1 anywhere either in the complaint, you see in the
- 2 complaint, or in the stipulation having anything
- 3 to do with the quality of drinking water or any
- 4 criticism of the quality of drinking water in the
- 5 City of LaSalle?
- 6 A. No, not in these.
- 7 Q. And in regards to the four corners of
- 8 that stipulation, is there any reference or any
- 9 discussion at all with regard to that certain
- 10 discharge pipe that goes from the Carus Chemical
- 11 Company out to the Vermillion River?
- 12 A. No.
- Q. And in regard to the other reporting
- 14 violations -- before we get to that, is it also
- 15 acknowledged in the stipulation specifically on
- 16 page four, paragraph five at the bottom, is it
- 17 correct that the stipulation indicates that the
- 18 respondent, being the City, subsequent to the
- 19 notice of the alleged violations, has complied
- 20 with the Act and the Board and Illinois EPA
- 21 regulations?
- 22 A. That's correct.
- 23 Q. So the City is presently in full
- 24 compliance with regard to the issues that were the



- 1 subject of this complaint?
- 2 A. Correct.
- Q. Now, additionally is it correct that the
- 4 stipulation provides that with regard to the City
- 5 coming into compliance -- well, wait a minute.
- 6 Let's talk about the other two alleged violations.
- 7 We talked about reporting. Reporting
- 8 in regard to the long-term control plan. For
- 9 those members, those of us who might not know,
- 10 what is a long-term control plan?
- 11 A. So the City has a combined sewage system
- 12 which means stormwater and sanitary sewage does
- 13 collect in the collection system.
- 14 And so since around 2009 the City
- 15 hired a consulting firm to perform and develop a
- 16 long-term control plan, which is required by the
- 17 State of Illinois in order to reduce the number of
- 18 overflows from CSO, that's combined sewage
- 19 overflows, to the receiving streams.
- 20 So that had been developed by 2011 I
- 21 want to say. It was approved by Illinois EPA in
- 22 2013. Around that time I started talking with the
- 23 City engineer about the requirements of the
- 24 long-term control plan, which the original



- 1 schedule was very burdensome as far as monetary
- 2 dollars that the City would have to spend very,
- 3 very quickly. So we worked on a financial
- 4 capability assessment to extend the time frame to
- 5 give the City time to, in an economically, you
- 6 know, cost-efficient way, move forward with the
- 7 improvements.
- 8 And since that time city engineers
- 9 have been accomplishing those things and he and I
- 10 worked together to make sure we're getting the
- 11 components of the long-term control plan
- 12 completed.
- Q. And the reason you're assessing it is
- 14 because --
- 15 A. Yes.
- Q. And by the way, with regards to
- 17 compliance of the long-term control plan, this is
- 18 in addressing separating sewers and upgrading
- 19 plants, things of that nature having to do with
- 20 some things that occurred when sewers were built
- 21 50, 100 years ago --
- 22 A. Correct.
- Q. -- or more, correct?
- 24 A. Correct.



- 1 Q. This isn't something that happened
- 2 currently, it's something most cities are
- 3 addressing in regard to their old sewer system?
- 4 A. Correct.
- 5 Q. And indeed while there were issues as far
- 6 as whether the City sent reports, what was your
- 7 understanding as to what happened in regard to not
- 8 sending some reports?
- 9 A. So I think some of these reports, they
- 10 were the long-term control updates were previously
- 11 put together by Jeff Bumgarner. He's no longer
- 12 with the City. I think during transition time
- 13 frame that action item got lost in the shuffle of
- 14 him transitioning out of the City.
- 15 Q. And was some -- some of the time period
- 16 also involved with Covid?
- 17 A. That is correct.
- 18 O. But aside from that, there's a
- 19 requirement to submit the report. But I think
- 20 from the public standpoint, they want to know even
- 21 though the City may not have sent reports to the
- 22 EPA in a timely basis, was the work continuing to
- 23 be done? The substantive work --
- 24 A. Yes.



- 1 Q. -- to address the sewers from 100 years
- 2 ago being continued to being done in furtherance
- 3 of the plan?
- 4 A. Correct.
- 5 Q. And did that work include -- what are
- 6 some of the things that -- that it included? And
- 7 I think that is indicated on the stipulation on
- 8 page 30. Not the stipulation, Exhibit Two, page
- 9 30.
- 10 A. Correct. The long-term control plan
- 11 consists of a number of activities. Some are to
- 12 -- were to upgrade the CSO pump station number
- 13 three. Some were to do sewer separation to get
- 14 stormwater off of the sanitary sewer system.
- 15 And then monitoring components to see
- 16 how well the City was doing with those activities
- 17 and if they were accomplishing their goals.
- 18 Q. So while the report didn't get sent in as
- 19 to all the work the City was doing they were doing
- 20 work in regard to upgrading the pump station? And
- 21 that would be the plant we're talking about,
- 22 right?
- 23 A. No. The CSO three pump station is a
- 24 different location.



- 1 Q. Thanks for correcting me. Okay. But
- 2 that was part of the long-term control plan?
- 3 A. Correct.
- 4 Q. And also they did some sewer separation
- 5 in the area of Hegeler Park and did additionally
- 6 some sewer separation in the area of Harpe, Walnut
- 7 and Porter, amongst other places?
- 8 A. Correct.
- 9 Q. And did the City during that time period
- 10 as far as working spend hundreds of thousands of
- 11 dollars in regard to --
- 12 A. That's my understanding, yeah. Those
- 13 were significant projects.
- Q. And by the way, while the report didn't
- 15 get sent in, is there any allegation either in the
- 16 EPA's complaint or in the stipulation suggesting
- 17 that even though that report might not have got
- 18 sent in, that the work wasn't being done?
- 19 A. No, there was no indication of that.
- Q. And indeed, there's all the work in
- 21 furtherance of that long-term control plan was
- 22 being done even in protecting the City even though
- 23 the reports hadn't been done?
- 24 A. That's correct.



- 1 Q. Let's move on also to the next thing,
- 2 biomonitoring reporting. What's that all about?
- 3 A. So as mentioned by the States Attorney's
- 4 Office that the biomonitoring reports are where
- 5 the effluent from the wastewater treatment plant
- 6 is introduced into a series of minnows, for lack
- 7 of a better word, to see the impact of the
- 8 wastewater effluent, the treated effluent, on the
- 9 receiving stream.
- 10 Q. And is that -- those types of reports --
- 11 required to be sent in on several occasions?
- 12 A. So starting on month 18, so 18 months
- 13 before the expiration of the permit, and then
- 14 again 15 months, then again 12 months, then again
- 15 nine months, so there's four times that it's done
- 16 shortly before the permit gets renewed.
- 17 It's done four times. We have
- 18 statistical repeatability on the test that assure
- 19 the Illinois EPA that your treated effluent does
- 20 not have a harmful impact to the receiving stream,
- 21 so...
- Q. Now, those reports weren't sent in at the
- 23 time, correct?
- 24 A. They were not sent in, that's correct.



- 1 Well, let me back up. There's some at the City
- 2 that believe they were sent in but there was no
- 3 record kept or could not find a record that it had
- 4 been submitted.
- 5 Q. We don't have any proof they were sent
- 6 in, correct?
- 7 A. Right.
- Q. And -- but aside from whether the report
- 9 got sent in -- we have no proof of it?
- 10 A. Yeah.
- 11 Q. We can -- let's own that point. We have
- 12 no proof we sent it in, right?
- 13 A. Right.
- Q. But I suggest from the public standpoint
- 15 more importantly were the biomonitoring reporting
- 16 data being kept in a timely fashion at the time in
- 17 1920 (sic) and '21?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 O. So that there was no issue as far as
- 20 collecting the data. The City in '22 when they
- 21 submitted their report, they didn't go back and
- 22 recreate this. This is something, they just
- 23 reported data that had been kept all along,
- 24 correct?



- 1 A. Correct. So they -- they -- they
- 2 followed the requirements of the permit to do
- 3 those biomonitoring tests at the time frames
- 4 required in the permit but just neglected to
- 5 follow up and send those to the agency.
- 6 Q. And in regard to when they did send them
- 7 into the agency, while the agency had an issue
- 8 with the point that the reports weren't timely
- 9 sent in, was there any issue with the agency in
- 10 the Notice of Violation or in the complaint as
- 11 filed -- and by the way, the Notice of Violation
- 12 originally received by the City also contained as
- 13 part of Exhibit Two, pages five through 10 -- was
- 14 there any mention in that, in any of those or in
- 15 the stipulation, of any concern in regard to the
- 16 substance of the data collected?
- 17 A. No.
- Q. Was there any suggestion that the data
- 19 collected that was done for what your
- 20 investigation shows the timely basis
- 21 contemporaneous at the time, is there any
- 22 suggestion that that was at all in violation of
- 23 any EPA criteria?
- 24 A. No.



- 1 Q. And there was no allegation in regard to
- 2 that, correct?
- 3 A. Correct.
- 4 Q. And those reports did get sent in
- 5 February of 2022?
- 6 A. That's correct.
- Q. In regards to the phosphorus, I think
- 8 there's a misconception. Was phosphorous in
- 9 regard to the discharge monitoring reports -- what
- 10 are discharge monitoring reports -- so the public
- 11 knows?
- 12 A. So every month the City records the data,
- 13 a certain frequency, the treated effluent to the
- 14 receiving stream. They keep track of that and
- 15 then they report that to the IEPA, I think it's
- 16 before the 10th or the 15th of each month for the
- 17 month before.
- 18 So they send the report in. It's
- 19 signed by the operator on record for the City.
- 20 And that documents the City is doing their due
- 21 diligence in operating the Wastewater Treatment
- 22 Plant.
- Q. And were all of those discharge
- 24 monitoring reports sent in on a regular and timely



- 1 basis throughout even back in '19, '20, '21 and
- 2 through the present time?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. Indeed, as those reports being filed
- 5 probably part of the basis for the EPA catching
- 6 the point that there was an effluent issue on
- 7 those two months in 2021?
- 8 A. Correct.
- 9 Q. So this is something that the City did in
- 10 effect report timely to the EPA?
- 11 A. Correct.
- 12 Q. And in regard to the phosphorous levels,
- 13 were they also part of those discharge monitoring
- 14 reports to the EPA on a regular basis throughout
- 15 that time period and through the present?
- 16 A. So the permit, the current permit the
- 17 City has, requires the City to monitor only for
- 18 phosphorous. There's no effluent limit on the
- 19 permit, and so the City's been monitoring for
- 20 phosphorous. It includes that data in the DMR
- 21 submitted to the state.
- Q. My point is, in layman's terms the
- 23 information as to what the phosphorous level was,
- 24 were back at the time reported and still are



- 1 reported to the EPA regularly, from those DMVs?
- 2 A. Correct.
- Q. And there was no complaint to the EPA in
- 4 regard -- providing information -- in regard to
- 5 the level of the phosphorous?
- 6 A. That's correct.
- 7 Q. Now, there was a question that they had
- 8 to send a report in with regard to the -- any
- 9 further optimization plan -- and that is page 74
- 10 indicating -- that was submitted back in February
- 11 of '22, correct?
- 12 A. Correct.
- 13 Q. However, that doesn't have anything to do
- 14 with reporting the level of the phosphorous that
- 15 was coming out from the outflow 001 into the
- 16 receiving stream, the Illinois River, correct?
- 17 A. That's correct.
- 18 Q. And is it correct -- well, we already
- 19 talked about the State now in compliance. Is it
- 20 also correct that the stipulation includes,
- 21 amongst other things, in page six, paragraph two
- 22 thereof, that the Respondent, namely the City, was
- 23 diligent in regard to coming back into compliance
- 24 in regard to the allegations of the Notice of



- 1 Violation that are on page five through 10 of
- 2 Exhibit Two?
- 3 A. That's correct.
- Q. And that was part of the -- what the
- 5 State stipulated to -- in regard to the City
- 6 eventually coming into total compliance, correct?
- 7 A. Correct.
- 8 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Your Honor, at this
- 9 time I would move for admission into evidence of
- 10 the City's Exhibit Number One, which is the
- 11 stipulation, first of all. I'll take them
- 12 separately.
- 13 HEARING OFFICER: Any objection,
- 14 State? Exhibit Number One is admitted.
- MS. SAWYER: No.
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: And I'd also tender
- 17 Exhibit Two for admission into evidence which is
- 18 the 2022 report that I also talked with the State
- 19 about I believe in regard to the City's
- 20 compliance.
- 21 HEARING OFFICER: Any objection, Ms.
- 22 Sawyer?
- MS. SAWYER: No.
- 24 HEARING OFFICER: No objection.



- 1 Exhibit Two is admitted.
- 2 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Your Honor, I don't
- 3 have any further questions at this time for this
- 4 witness.
- 5 HEARING OFFICER: Ms. Sawyer, any
- 6 questions of --
- 7 MR. GRANT: Can we have one minute?
- 8 HEARING OFFICER: Yes.
- 9 MS. SAWYER: No, we're okay, Your
- 10 Honor. Thank you.
- 11 HEARING OFFICER: Okay. Thank you.
- 12 Mr. McFergun, (sic) since we have -- McPhedran,
- 13 I'm sorry. Since we have Mr. Boyer up here could
- 14 we have anybody in the audience would like to
- 15 question him?
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: I'm fine with that.
- 17 HEARING OFFICER: And if Mr. Boyer or
- 18 his attorney, they may want to reserve their
- 19 answer for any kind of post-hearing briefing
- 20 schedule.
- 21 So anybody in the audience that would
- 22 like to ask Mr. Boyer a question stand, state your
- 23 name, spell it for the court reporter, and
- 24 proceed. I see none.



- 1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'll ask.
- 2 HEARING OFFICER: Okay, sir. Stand
- 3 up, please.
- 4 CROSS EXAMINATION BY
- 5 MR. LAVIERI:
- Q. John Lavieri, L-a-v, like in Victor,
- 7 i-e-r-i. Under current regulations how many
- 8 combined CSO discharges during storms is any city
- 9 allowed per year? Is that a definite number even
- 10 though we're working toward zero?
- 11 A. Well, you're working towards four
- 12 overflows or less per year. That's the stated
- 13 goal of the long-term control plan. So as of the
- 14 last three years I believe that goal was met.
- 15 So that's what we documented back to
- 16 the Illinois EPA, is that we've achieved the
- 17 objective of the long-term control plan and asked
- 18 to be released from any further efforts on it.
- 19 MR. LAVIERI: Okay. Thank you.
- THE WITNESS: You're welcome.
- 21 HEARING OFFICER: Okay. Sir?
- 22 CROSS EXAMINATION BY
- MR. HICKS:
- Q. My name's Jamie Hicks. J-a-m-i-e,



- 1 H-i-c-k-s. I just have one question. It's
- 2 basically on the reports. We're trying to blame a
- 3 guy that doesn't work for the City no more. We're
- 4 trying to say that forms got turned in but people
- 5 are saying they did, but they didn't. It
- 6 basically means they didn't. That's why the
- 7 violations are here.
- 8 My question is, is when you go back
- 9 and you start looking at some of the forms that
- 10 were filled out how do we know as citizens, as
- 11 residents of LaSalle, that these forms aren't just
- 12 filled in to make up for what wasn't being done at
- 13 that specific time?
- 14 Also, Jeff Bumgartner would not have
- 15 been the operator of the sewage treatment plant,
- 16 he would have been the Public Works Director. So
- 17 I'm a little confused as to why there isn't two
- 18 steps to this -- this paperwork thing.
- 19 A. Yeah, you'd have to discuss that with the
- 20 City personnel. I'm not involved in that, so...
- 21 Q. They refused to answer that kind of stuff
- 22 for me, so...
- 23 HEARING OFFICER: Keep your voice up,
- 24 please.



- 1 MR. HICKS: The City refuses to answer
- 2 that stuff for us. We've asked in meetings but I
- 3 figured I would ask you. Thank you.
- 4 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you, sir.
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: Your Honor, we're here
- 6 to be responsive.
- 7 REDIRECT EXAMINATION BY
- 8 MR. MCPHEDRAN:
- 9 Q. And to answer, this is based on your
- 10 investigation -- and by the way, I'm not trying to
- 11 guess. Maybe it wasn't Mr. Bumgartner. It
- 12 doesn't matter. The City missed the dates. We're
- 13 not quarreling with that.
- 14 We have no evidence they were sent in.
- 15 That's part of the reason that the stipulation was
- 16 agreed to. That's not -- that's not an issue.
- 17 The important thing is, sir, are you confident
- 18 from your investigation at the City at the time
- 19 that these reports were prepared
- 20 contemporaneously, not picked up and gotten later?
- 21 A. So the long-term control plan efforts
- 22 were ongoing at the time. The reports were not
- 23 done contemporaneously because they were missed,
- 24 so they were done afterwards and documented, the



- 1 actual efforts that were done in a timely manner.
- 2 The biomonitoring reports were done on the time
- 3 that they were required. They just were not
- 4 reported to the agency in a timely manner.
- Q. Are you confident based on your
- 6 investigation that that happened in that it wasn't
- 7 the City coming in and just making up things later
- 8 on?
- 9 A. The dates are all in there from the lab,
- 10 you know, of when those were performed. So that
- 11 can all be documented and dated from Exhibit Two.
- 12 Q. So there's lab data to support what's in
- 13 your --
- 14 A. Right.
- 15 Q. -- report?
- 16 A. Correct.
- 17 Q. And you knew at least to some measure of
- 18 verification back at the time you sent these?
- 19 A. Yeah, I double-checked that it was
- 20 completed and trusted the conversation I had with
- 21 the City that these were completed.
- 22 Q. So you --
- 23 A. And then the last one, the phosphorous
- 24 discharge optimization plan, that report was done



- 1 after we were notified that it was not completed,
- 2 so that was done after the fact.
- Q. The report was done after the fact but it
- 4 didn't have anything to do with the levels of
- 5 phosphorous?
- 6 A. Correct. It's a reporting feature in the
- 7 permit that, you know, it marks the 31st of every
- 8 year to report on activities related to optimizing
- 9 discharge of phosphorous out of the treatment
- 10 plant. And since the --
- 11 O. You --
- 12 A. Since the optimization measures that we
- 13 had reviewed were far too expensive for the City
- 14 to do in a cost-effective manner the report would
- 15 simply say that there's nothing to report. But
- 16 it's a requirement to send that in even though
- 17 there's nothing to report.
- 18 Q. And that report that was sent in was
- 19 accepted by the State as being in full compliance?
- 20 A. Correct.
- 21 Q. But being since the question's been
- 22 raised since the City did this timely I just want
- 23 to be clear, in your opinion these reports and the
- 24 data collected are supported by, more likely than



- 1 not, by lab data, that the actual data was
- 2 collected in the manner that you reported it?
- 3 A. That's correct.
- Q. And EPA also had an opportunity, should
- 5 they wish to, to investigate that lab data or
- 6 anything else that they wished in regard to
- 7 verifying that, correct?
- 8 A. That's correct. The EPA or the States
- 9 Attorney's Office as well.
- 10 Q. Meaning the Attorney General?
- 11 A. Yes. Sorry.
- 12 Q. Did the City fully cooperate with the
- 13 Attorney General's Office in regard with -- I
- 14 should say with the EPA because most of the
- 15 investigation was done by them -- in regard to
- 16 complying with any requests that were made as part
- 17 of the EPA's investigation of the alleged
- 18 violations?
- 19 A. I'd have to have you repeat the question,
- 20 it's so long. But --
- 21 Q. Sorry. Sometimes we ask convoluted
- 22 questions. In a nutshell, did the City fully
- 23 cooperate with the State EPA in regard to their
- 24 investigation when these Notice of Violations came



- 1 out?
- 2 A. Yes.
- Q. Was anything withheld from the State?
- A. Not to my knowledge, no.
- 5 Q. And you've prepared that report?
- 6 A. That's correct.
- 7 Q. You wouldn't want to be part of anything
- 8 that was hiding data or keeping anything --
- 9 A. Correct. The City's been very
- 10 transparent with the agencies.
- 11 MR. MCPHEDRAN: I have no other
- 12 questions for the witness.
- 13 HEARING OFFICER: I see a hand back
- 14 with the man in the hat. Please stand, state your
- 15 name and spell it for the court reporter, please.
- MR. SCHNEIDER: Pardon me?
- 17 HEARING OFFICER: State your name and
- 18 spell it for the court reporter, please.
- 19 MR. SCHNEIDER: Marty Schneider.
- 20 M-a-r-t-y, S-c-h-n-e-i-d-e-r.
- 21 CROSS EXAMINATION BY
- MR. SCHNEIDER:
- Q. I just want to know when Jamie asked you
- 24 questions about it you didn't have anything to do



- 1 with it and you couldn't answer it, but when he
- 2 led you in questioning and led you to your
- 3 answers, you seem to know everything about what
- 4 we're talking about when it comes to the data.
- 5 A. Do you have a specific question?
- 6 Q. The data that's provided --
- 7 HEARING OFFICER: Do you have a
- 8 question, sir?
- 9 MR. SCHNEIDER: Yeah. Huh?
- 10 HEARING OFFICER: Do you have a
- 11 question?
- MR. SCHNEIDER: Why does he have
- 13 amnesia when Jamie -- and he's not the person to
- 14 talk to when Jamie asked the question -- but when
- 15 the attorney asked you the same, basically the
- 16 same questions in different ways, you seem to have
- 17 the answers.
- 18 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Objection. Form of
- 19 the question, but I'll let him answer
- 20 HEARING OFFICER: Sustained.
- 21 THE WITNESS: And maybe I understood
- 22 the question a little bit better from the
- 23 attorney.
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: The question's been



- 1 sustained.
- 2 HEARING OFFICER: Yeah. We have one
- 3 more question.
- 4 MS. HICKS: Yes, please.
- 5 HEARING OFFICER: Could you stand,
- 6 please, state your name and spell it for the court
- 7 reporter?
- MS. HICKS: My name's Brianne,
- 9 B-r-i-a-n-n-e, Hicks, H-i-c-k-s.
- 10 CROSS EXAMINATION BY
- 11 MS. BRIANNE HICKS:
- 12 O. So there's one statement that I didn't
- 13 find within the stipulation that I just wanted to
- 14 quote. The Illinois EPA information-gathering
- 15 responsibilities were hindered by the Respondent's
- 16 violations, thereby threatening human health and
- 17 the environment.
- 18 So that kind of contradicts what was
- 19 just said that there was no threat to the
- 20 wildlife.
- 21 HEARING OFFICER: Mr. McPhedran?
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: That's a compound
- 23 question.
- 24 HEARING OFFICER: Yeah, I'm having



- 1 trouble understanding the question as well. Could
- 2 you restate, Ms. Hicks, please?
- 3 BY MS. HICKS:
- 4 Q. Why does it say within the stipulation
- 5 that the Illinois EPA information-gathering
- 6 responsibilities were hindered by the Respondent,
- 7 the City of LaSalle's, violations, but it was just
- 8 stated that there was no hindrance in their
- 9 information gathering?
- 10 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Your Honor --
- MR. HICKS: Basically she's saying off
- 12 the EPA report --
- HEARING OFFICER: Sir, you've got to
- 14 stand up, please, for the court reporter.
- 15 MR. HICKS: Basically what she's
- 16 asking, sir -- and it's Jamie Hicks, J-a-m-i-e,
- 17 H-i-c-k-s. Because in the report it says -- she
- 18 spent time on this, and she may not be asking it
- 19 right.
- 20 He's trying to -- he's trying to say
- 21 that the City was compliant with giving the
- 22 reports and all this information. But she's got
- 23 -- would you point to it again? I'm sorry. It
- 24 states here that the EPA info-gathering



- 1 responsibilities were hindered by the Respondent's
- 2 violations. They were hindered because you
- 3 weren't responding. But you just said we were
- 4 responding and being compliant with the EPA.
- 5 So her question is, is there's an
- 6 issue between what you're saying and what's being
- 7 said.
- 8 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Your Honor, in regard
- 9 to form of the question I don't believe that there
- 10 is an issue. I believe what the IEP is saying is
- 11 that if you don't make a timely report that it
- 12 could hinder their effect.
- 13 If they later find out there's a
- 14 problem and it shows up that your data has a
- 15 problem --
- MR. HICKS: They say --
- 17 HEARING OFFICER: One at a time, sir.
- 18 MR. HICKS: I'm sorry.
- 19 MR. MCPHEDRAN: And I think that's
- 20 what they're saying, and that's correct. And we
- 21 recognize that timely reporting is important.
- 22 That's a part of the reason why we agreed to the
- 23 stipulation that the reports weren't sent in a
- 24 timely basis. But that doesn't mean that the data



- 1 that was eventually collected was an issue with
- 2 the EPA, nor do they have any allegation on that.
- 3 HEARING OFFICER: Yeah, I think the
- 4 transcript will reflect what the Hicks' are
- 5 asking, what Mr. Boyer testified to, and what his
- 6 counsel just stated. Yes, sir?
- 7 MR. HICKS: Just one more comment. It
- 8 says responsibilities were hindered. That means
- 9 at that time they were hindered. That's all I've
- 10 got to say.
- 11 HEARING OFFICER: Okay. All right.
- 12 Thank you. Sir?
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: We'll acknowledge
- 14 theoretically they should be reported timely. We
- 15 don't disagree with that.
- MR. GRANT: I think that the language
- 17 in the stipulation speaks for itself if there was
- 18 hindrance. I mean, you know, you can explain it
- 19 away as much as you want, but the stipulation
- 20 speaks for itself.
- 21 HEARING OFFICER: I agree, Mr. Grant.
- 22 Ms. Hicks?
- 23 MS. HICKS: Still -- do I have to say
- 24 my name again?



- 1 HEARING OFFICER: Well, I don't know.
- 2 Is this part of your public comment?
- 3 MS. HICKS: I do have another question
- 4 on the chart that --
- 5 HEARING OFFICER: Okay.
- 6 MS. HICKS: -- he had created.
- 7 BY MS. HICKS:
- Q. So this is for Exhibit Two, page two. It
- 9 says there's the following graph demonstrate on a
- 10 day-to-day basis. And of the stipulation the meat
- 11 -- or the measuring units -- are milligrams per
- 12 liter in this chart and provided as PPD, which I
- 13 assume is pounds per day?
- 14 A. That's correct.
- Q. How do you convert that into milligrams
- 16 per deciliter?
- 17 A. I can give you the formula, so if you're
- 18 willing to do some math. But you take the
- 19 concentration of milligrams per liter, multiply it
- 20 by the flow in million gallons a day, and you
- 21 multiply that by 8.345 is the correct conversion
- 22 factor. And that gives you --
- Q. Why would you not give it in milligrams
- 24 per liter in the chart?



- 1 A. So the -- what I was trying to
- 2 demonstrate with those charts -- is that the State
- 3 allows a certain pounds per day to the receiving
- 4 stream.
- 5 So those little boxes on the top of
- 6 that chart show that we can, you know, we can
- 7 discharge up to 834 pounds per day of BOD or on
- 8 the TSS up to 1000 in 43 pounds per day of TSS to
- 9 the Illinois River as a monthly average, you know,
- 10 on a day-by-day basis. So you can see by the left
- 11 hand access on the graph we're well below 200.
- 12 So for the entire year of 2021 the
- 13 City's been very protective of water quality going
- 14 to the Illinois River. So that was the intent of
- 15 those graphs just to demonstrate the City is on
- 16 top of what they're supposed to be doing with
- 17 wastewater treatment to the Illinois River.
- 18 Q. Okay. And then a follow-up question to
- 19 that is, this graph is bimonthly through 2021.
- 20 And this says it's a day-to-day check but there's
- 21 definitely not enough on the chart --
- 22 O. So the --
- 23 A. -- to say the day-to-day --
- Q. So the City is required to collect, I



- 1 think it's four or five sample points per week.
- THE WITNESS: Is that correct,
- 3 Melanie?
- 4 MELANIE: Three. Three days --
- 5 THE WITNESS: Three days.
- 6 MELANIE: -- per week.
- 7 THE WITNESS: So, yeah. So it's not
- 8 going to be 365 data points. There's going to be,
- 9 you know, 550 points or so data points.
- 10 MS. HICKS: Thank you.
- THE WITNESS: You're welcome.
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: May I ask one more
- 13 question, Your Honor? I'm sorry. The --
- 14 HEARING OFFICER: Yes, we have a
- 15 question back there.
- 16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I have a question
- 17 about the graph. My name is Shawna Wilcox. I'm a
- 18 resident of LaSalle.
- 19 HEARING OFFICER: Could you state your
- 20 last name, please, and speak up? It's hard for
- 21 the -- me and the court reporter. Yeah, you can
- 22 come to the front. It might make it easier.
- 23 Thank you.
- MS. WILCOX: Shawna, S-h-a-w-n-a,



- 1 Wilcox, W-i-l-c-o-x. Sorry.
- 2 CROSS EXAMINATION BY
- 3 MS. WILCOX:
- 4 Q. You just said that you extrapolated that
- 5 exhibit from three days per week of milligrams per
- 6 liter data. And you extrapolated that to a daily
- 7 pounds per day?
- 8 A. No, the data is collected every day. It
- 9 says --
- 10 Q. How many times per day is that data
- 11 collected, that milligrams per liter?
- 12 A. Well, it's collected every day on a daily
- 13 basis three days a week for concentration. Every
- 14 day they're measuring flow. So it's flow on that
- 15 day, concentration on that day, and the conversion
- 16 factor per pounds.
- 17 Q. And do you think that that milligram per
- 18 liter to pounds per day is accurate? Do you think
- 19 that those measures --
- 20 A. It's a standard engineering formula.
- 21 Q. Okay.
- 22 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you. Mr.
- 23 Grant?
- 24 MR. GRANT: Can I say for the record



- 1 that I think we're getting -- we're having a
- 2 little bit of a relevance problem. We're not
- 3 alleging a pounds per day violation, we're
- 4 alleging violations of the permit conditions as
- 5 far as milligrams per liter.
- And there's been no dispute that those
- 7 were violated. So getting into some of these
- 8 off-the-road details in an attempt to defend what
- 9 we did do right has nothing to do with what we're
- 10 alleging in the Complaint or in the stipulation.
- 11 What's being resolved is the
- 12 stipulation. And I just want to make that
- 13 statement for the record so the Board has an
- 14 understanding what's going on here.
- 15 MR. MCPHEDRAN: And, Your Honor, the
- 16 City has no issue with what counsel is saying or
- 17 what the State did and how appropriately
- 18 aggressive they were in regard to their
- 19 investigation. We respected that all along.
- Our city officials did, and we still
- 21 do. And we're not quarreling with that. I think
- 22 the reason the pounds per day was brought in,
- 23 that's a measure, another measure, of measuring
- 24 what effect the BOD and the TSS can have on the



- 1 environment, because there's pounds per day and
- 2 there's concentration. The concentration limits
- 3 were over but I think he's explained with the
- 4 testimony. But we're not quarreling at all with
- 5 what the State had said or what they did.
- 6 HEARING OFFICER: I agree. And I
- 7 think the record will note Mr. Grant and the
- 8 State's issues with relevancy. And, you know, I
- 9 allowed -- it's out now. I allowed a little
- 10 latitude, but just be leery about the relevancy in
- 11 the four corners of the document. Thank you.
- 12 Any other questions before we release
- 13 Mr. Boyer? Mr. McPhedran?
- 14 FURTHER REDIRECT BY
- 15 MR. MCPHEDRAN:
- 16 Q. Just one other question. On the data
- 17 that they were questioning on whether it was taken
- 18 contemporaneously, are the actual lab reports a
- 19 part of Exhibit Two, pages 33 through 73?
- 20 A. For those two data graphs?
- Q. No, I'm not talking about that. I'm
- 22 talking about the BODs, which was the question
- 23 before. The biomonitoring.
- 24 A. The biomonitoring, yeah, they're included



- 1 in there.
- Q. So with regard to addressing whether or
- 3 not the data was taken timely in regard to the
- 4 biomonitoring, the lab reports are there as a part
- 5 of Exhibit Two that indicates the date the data
- 6 was collected?
- 7 A. Correct.
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: That's all I have,
- 9 Judge.
- 10 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you. Thank
- 11 you. You may step down, Mr. Boyer.
- 12 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
- 13 HEARING OFFICER: I appreciate it. I
- 14 suggest we move in -- continue in alphabetical
- 15 order. I think Brianne Hicks.
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: Your Honor, may I have
- 17 one other point in regard -- counsel, are we going
- 18 to be able to stipulate to the Exhibit Four in
- 19 regard to the agenda, Exhibit Five in regard to
- 20 the ordinance, and to redact the relevant portions
- 21 of the minutes and the --
- MS. SAWYER: Maybe instead of
- 23 admitting these as exhibits we can read them into
- 24 the record, portions of them. They're not that



- 1 long. Is that possible, counsel?
- 2 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Sure.
- 3 MS. SAWYER: I mean, I think Exhibit
- 4 Five is the ordinance so that's entirely relevant.
- 5 Exhibit Four, I think there's other items in here
- 6 but there's a portion that's relevant. So to the
- 7 extent it's relevant we'll stipulate to that.
- 8 Mr. --
- 9 MR. GRANT: Yeah, I think we can
- 10 stipulate to the authenticity.
- MS. SAYWER: Yeah.
- MR. GRANT: We're not going to
- 13 question --
- MS. SAWYER: These are --
- 15 HEARING OFFICER: Wait a minute.
- 16 We're still on -- speak one at a time and keep
- 17 your voice up. Thank you.
- 18 MR. MCPHEDRAN: I think we can work
- 19 that out with Four, Five, Six and Seven without
- 20 having to read all that stuff into the record.
- 21 Just have the relevant portions of the minutes
- 22 that are related to this put in, because I
- 23 understand the State's concern there are some
- 24 things that are discussed there that I agree are



- 1 not relevant. We only included it to show we're
- 2 not hiding something or keeping it out.
- 3 HEARING OFFICER: Okay. What -- what
- 4 am I doing now?
- 5 MR. MCPHEDRAN: I think we'll work
- 6 that out later within -- Four and Five can go in
- 7 right now. Exhibits Six and Seven, the relevant
- 8 portions of the minutes and relevant portion of
- 9 the transcript will go in, but only the specific
- 10 parts that have mentioned relation to the
- 11 ordinance.
- MS. SAWYER: And we stipulate as to
- 13 authenticity.
- 14 MR. MCPHEDRAN: And you stipulated to
- 15 authenticity. So I don't need to call somebody
- 16 here or have here on foundation.
- 17 MS. SAWYER: That's right.
- 18 HEARING OFFICER: Okay. So I assume
- 19 there's no objection to Respondent's Exhibit
- 20 Number Four and Five, right? So admitted?
- 21 MS. SAYWER: So admitted with the
- 22 relevant portions. So Exhibit Five in its
- 23 entirety and Exhibit Four -- they're not numbered
- 24 pages -- but the second page, an ordinance



- 1 authorizing and approving stipulation proposal for
- 2 settlement with the Illinois EPA and the Attorney
- 3 General, that portion between the two bolded
- 4 sections. So everyone's --
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: Agreed.
- 6 HEARING OFFICER: All right. I'll
- 7 have to take a look at the transcript to see what
- 8 you just agreed to and what Ms. Sawyer read as far
- 9 as relevancy. Exhibit Number Six, are we moving
- 10 this yet?
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: Yes, Your Honor. And
- 12 Six, I think that the portion that we would agree
- 13 would be relevant would be -- let me find it here.
- MS. SAYWER: So it's Exhibit Six, page
- 15 one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight,
- 16 discussion and potential action on the following
- 17 additional ordinances and resolutions, beginning
- 18 at that portion.
- 19 MR. MCPHEDRAN: That would be admitted
- 20 and I agree.
- 21 MS. SAWYER: And then ending with
- 22 motion carried. So again, movement to enter the
- 23 ordinance authorizing and approving the
- 24 stipulation, et cetera.



- 1 HEARING OFFICER: Okay. Again, I'll
- 2 have to look at the transcript to see what you
- 3 just agreed to. And my minutes are not paginated
- 4 so I don't know if yours are.
- 5 MS. SAWYER: They're not.
- 6 HEARING OFFICER: All right.
- 7 MR. MCPHEDRAN: I think there would
- 8 also be a portion on the next page after the --
- 9 HEARING OFFICER: What I'm going to
- 10 ask you to do during your post-hearing briefing is
- 11 spell out exactly what you're agreeing to and what
- 12 you worked out.
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: We can do that with
- 14 regard to Exhibit Six and Seven.
- MS. SAWYER: Six and Seven.
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: I hope we agreed on
- 17 that.
- 18 HEARING OFFICER: Okay.
- 19 MR. MCPHEDRAN: We'll agree on
- 20 principle.
- 21 HEARING OFFICER: Exhibit Seven?
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: The same.
- MS. SAYWER: Yeah.
- 24 HEARING OFFICER: Admitted?



- 1 MS. SAYWER: Yes.
- 2 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Subject to --
- 3 MS. SAWYER: I think what we're trying
- 4 to do here is just make sure everyone is subject
- 5 to the same relevance, the public, the City, the
- 6 State.
- 7 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Agreed.
- MS. SAWYER: We agree to also do the
- 9 same.
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: And that's why we're
- 11 agreed to take some of that stuff out.
- 12 HEARING OFFICER: And I'm just trying
- 13 to make the record clear for the Board.
- 14 MR. MCPHEDRAN: I understand, Your
- 15 Honor.
- 16 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you. I think
- 17 we're ready to start. As I stated, I think Ms.
- 18 Brianne Hicks, you want to stand up and give
- 19 public comment? If you can just stand up here or
- 20 sit up here next to the court reporter so we can
- 21 take it all in. Thank you.
- 22 RECROSS EXAMINATION BY
- 23 MS. HICKS:
- Q. I'm Brianne Hicks. I have mainly



- 1 questions which I know you guys may not be able to
- 2 answer here today but I do want them just on the
- 3 record, some things that I was confused about that
- 4 maybe you guys can provide some clarification on.
- 5 So my first one was for June 2021, the
- 6 levels that were checked, because it gives you a
- 7 month and every day that it was checked. It said
- 8 that it was checked on June 7th, 2021 and then it
- 9 was not checked again until June 21st, 2021.
- 10 How do we get a weekly and monthly
- 11 average if this was only checked once between the
- 12 1st of June and the 21st of June?
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: Can we allow that to
- 14 be answered to the degree right now?
- MR. BOYER: So we're talking about
- 16 outfall 001, correct? So outfall 001 is checked
- 17 when there's a rain event and there is flow
- 18 through, excess flow, outfall 801 --
- MS. HICKS: Okay.
- 20 MR. BOYER: -- for the permit. So you
- 21 won't have data on outfall 001 if there's no rain
- 22 event and no flow through the outfall 801.
- 23 BY MS. HICKS:
- Q. Okay. So it's only recorded if there was



- 1 an event?
- A. If there was an event it would be
- 3 recorded, that's right.
- Q. Okay. And then in the stipulation it was
- 5 stated that the TSS monthly average was not
- 6 applicable for June. How is that possible if
- 7 there wasn't a monthly average?
- 8 MS. SAWYER: There wasn't an average.
- 9 MR. MCPHEDRAN: There wasn't -- there
- 10 wasn't a violation.
- 11 HEARING OFFICER: Okay. We're going
- 12 to have to speak one at a time.
- MS. SAWYER: There wasn't a violation
- 14 of TSS at that time, that's why you're not seeing
- 15 TSS. Is that what you're asking?
- MS. HICKS: Yes.
- 17 MS. SAWYER: Why it says N/A?
- MS. HICKS: Yes.
- 19 MS. SAWYER: Because there wasn't an
- 20 overage.
- MS. HICKS: Okay.
- MS. SAWYER: This chart that I created
- 23 is just noting overages, effluent violations.
- 24 Since there was no violation I had to put



- 1 something in that box.
- 2 MS. HICKS: Okay. Okay. Thank you
- 3 for clarifying.
- 4 MR. MCPHEDRAN: The City was compliant
- 5 in June.
- 6 MS. SAWYER: With that particular one.
- 7 MR. MCPHEDRAN: With that one.
- 8 MS. HICKS: Okay.
- 9 BY MS. HICKS:
- 10 Q. Are the reports for the NPDES permits
- 11 public knowledge? Like are we able to go back and
- 12 backtrack to 2015 to see the current?
- MS. SAWYER: Are they public records,
- 14 is that what you're asking?
- MS. HICKS: Yes. Yes.
- 16 MR. GRANT: I would -- I don't know
- 17 but I think they're probably subject to FOIA, the
- 18 Freedom of Information Act.
- 19 MS. SAWYER: We don't always get
- 20 those.
- MS. HICKS: Okay.
- MS. SAWYER: IEPA generates them, and
- 23 to the extent there's a violation we may get them.
- MS. HICKS: Okay.



- 1 MS. SAWYER: But yes.
- 2 BY MS. HICKS:
- Q. Was there any research or studies done
- 4 after the increased pollution in the water to see
- 5 how this impacted human or wildlife health?
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: Your Honor, there's
- 7 been no allegation of a lead issue.
- 8 HEARING OFFICER: Yeah, that's not
- 9 relevant as to the stipulation.
- MS. HICKS: Okay.
- 11 HEARING OFFICER: Feel free to follow
- 12 up during post-hearing briefing if you so choose,
- 13 counsel.
- 14 BY MS. HICKS:
- 15 Q. Did the City publicly notify anyone of
- 16 the pollution when it occurred in June and August?
- 17 MR. MCPHEDRAN: You want to take it as
- 18 part of the monthly discharge?
- 19 MR. BOYER: It would be recorded in
- 20 the DMR that gets submitted every month.
- 21 MR. MCPHEDRAN: It gets reported by
- 22 the -- yes, it was, I believe. That's how the
- 23 city was eventually cited for the violation is
- 24 they turn in monthly discharge reports to the EPA.



- 1 Those monthly discharge reports for those months,
- 2 as I understand it -- I'm not the one who did
- 3 them, but as I understand it -- they reported
- 4 voluntarily, compliant with the law, the overage
- 5 that occurred in June in regard to BOD, and in
- 6 August with regard to BOD and TSS.
- 7 And I think that's how the EPA then
- 8 came up with sending their notice in November that
- 9 year for the alleged violation because the City
- 10 had voluntarily reported it there.
- 11 BY MS. HICKS:
- 12 Q. But was like the public notified during
- 13 June or August of 2021 --
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: I --
- 15 BY MS. HICKS:
- 16 Q. -- that there was a pollutant in the
- 17 river?
- 18 MR. MCPHEDRAN: I don't know if
- 19 there's any requirement that the public be
- 20 notified, but that's why we had Mr. Boyer testify.
- 21 Mr. Boyer, was there any adverse impact on the
- 22 river quality at that time by those two overages?
- 23 MR. BOYER: Well, keep in mind also
- 24 that the BOD test, to do it in a lab takes five



- 1 days to get the result back. You have to let that
- 2 sit for five days. So the turnaround on that
- 3 could be a good, you know, six to seven days
- 4 before there's a result. So you won't know on the
- 5 same day if a BOD had exceeded or not.
- MS. HICKS: Okay.
- 7 MR. BOYER: Does that answer your
- 8 question?
- 9 MS. HICKS: Yes. Thank you.
- 10 BY MS. HICKS:
- 11 Q. How is the water mon -- the wastewater --
- 12 monitored now? Does the EPA remotely access the
- 13 results or is it submitted from the City
- 14 physically?
- 15 MS. SAWYER: So just really quick,
- 16 that I want to be very clear that the stipulation
- 17 isn't for a term that doesn't include right now.
- 18 That's not -- I'm not trying to shut you down.
- 19 MS. HICKS: No, go ahead.
- MS. SAYWER: But just -- I mean, to be
- 21 clear, because some of this legal jargon can be
- 22 confusing, the stipulation is for a time period
- 23 that is not including right now. Like the
- 24 stipulation is through whatever dates are in



- 1 the --
- MS. HICKS: Okay.
- 3 HEARING OFFICER: I agree.
- 4 MS. HICKS: Thank you for clarifying.
- 5 BY MS. HICKS:
- Q. And then I guess my follow-up question
- 7 was just how do we know that this won't happen
- 8 again in the future?
- 9 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Does the City report
- 10 this on a timely fashion? Anything? We can't
- 11 guarantee if you get a torrential rain that
- 12 something couldn't happen. But anything that
- 13 happens will get reported in the monthly report.
- MR. BOYER: Correct. That's in the
- 15 monthly report.
- MS. HICKS: Thank you.
- 17 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you, Ms.
- 18 Hicks. All right. Ms. Dawn Hicks. Please.
- 19 MS. DAWN HICKS: Dawn Hicks. D-a-w-n
- H-i-c-k-s.
- 21 HEARING OFFICER: You may proceed.
- 22 MS. DAWN HICKS: I wrote kind of a
- 23 little statement. I figured it would just be
- 24 easier that way. For nearly a year or more myself



- 1 and others have directly asked Mayor Grove at
- 2 multiple city meetings what was going on with our
- 3 water in our water treatment plant.
- 4 Every few weeks I would see social
- 5 media posts about -- asking about our water and
- 6 our water treatment plant -- talking with friends
- 7 and neighbors, and even having problems of our own
- 8 despite the brownish color and overly potent odor
- 9 of chlorine.
- 10 Mayor Grove would continuously tell us
- 11 our water in LaSalle was just fine. That doesn't
- 12 look fine (showing photo).
- 13 HEARING OFFICER: For the record, Ms.
- 14 Hicks is holding up a photo of a glass of brown
- 15 water.
- MS. DAWN HICKS: A company called
- 17 Viserine (phonetic) has been repairing our water
- 18 treatment plant. A representative from Viserine
- 19 did make a statement at a city meeting earlier
- 20 this year. He claimed our water treatment plant
- 21 was in very poor condition for quite sometime.
- Due to the mayor's lack of
- 23 transparency, I along with others, began looking
- 24 into what our water really contains. From January



- 1 2021 through March 2021 --
- 2 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Your Honor, may I just
- 3 indicate for the record this is regarding drinking
- 4 water.
- 5 MS. DAWN HICKS: Well, Mr. McPhedran,
- 6 you brought up the quality of our drinking water
- 7 when you talked to --
- 8 HEARING OFFICER: Wait, wait, wait,
- 9 please.
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: I brought up --
- 11 HEARING OFFICER: One at a time.
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: -- the quality of the
- 13 wastewater only. We're not talking -- it's only
- 14 wastewater discharge. It didn't have an adverse
- 15 effect on the water. It didn't go into the
- 16 drinking water at all, and it's not relevant to
- 17 the stipulation.
- 18 HEARING OFFICER: It's not relevant,
- 19 Ms. Hicks.
- MS. DAWN HICKS: Even though --
- 21 HEARING OFFICER: It's a stipulation.
- 22 No, I don't think he opened the door. I think he
- 23 was talking about wastewater.
- MS. DAWN HICKS: At 10:28 this morning



- 1 he asked the engineer about the quality of our
- 2 drinking water. Those were his exact words.
- 3 HEARING OFFICER: Okay.
- 4 MR. MCPHEDRAN: No, I don't believe we
- 5 did, Judge.
- 6 HEARING OFFICER: Well, the record
- 7 will reflect. I'll give you a little latitude.
- 8 (talking over one another)
- 9 MR. MCPHEDRAN: (Inaudible)
- 10 HEARING OFFICER: I'm talking. We
- 11 have -- we have to kind of, you know, keep a
- 12 decorum. I'll allow her some latitude. You may
- 13 proceed, Ms. Hicks.
- 14 MS. DAWN HICKS: Thank you. From
- 15 January 2021 to March 2021 the Illinois EPA
- 16 reported on EWG.org that the water had 17
- 17 contaminants detected. 12 exceeded health
- 18 quidelines. Arsenic was 363 times the health
- 19 quideline. Radium was 7.2 times. Nitrate 15
- 20 times. Chloroform 74 times.
- 21 There has been a lack of
- 22 accountability in LaSalle. We are respectfully
- 23 requesting that our mayor be honest and more
- 24 forthcoming about our water issues in the future.



- 1 It could quite possibly save lives.
- 2 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you, Ms.
- 3 Hicks. I appreciate it.
- 4 MR. GRANT: Just a --
- 5 HEARING OFFICER: Sure.
- 6 MR. GRANT: To clarify, you're not
- 7 talking about exceedances of state and federal
- 8 regulations, correct?
- 9 MS. DAWN HICKS: I'm sorry, could you
- 10 repeat that?
- 11 MR. GRANT: To clarify, you're not
- 12 talking about exceedances of state and federal
- 13 regulations, correct?
- 14 MS. DAWN HICKS: What I'm speaking of
- 15 is the website EWG.org that apparently you can go
- 16 on and click on the town that you live in or any
- 17 other town you're interested in and find Illinois
- 18 EPA reports for water that the EPA tested in that
- 19 town and what their findings were.
- 20 And I'm just naming off a few. A lot
- 21 of them I could not pronounce if I tried.
- MR. GRANT: Doesn't that website state
- 23 that the City of LaSalle was in compliance with
- 24 all state and federal regulations?



- 1 MS. DAWN HICKS: I do not know. It
- 2 was awhile ago that I had looked these results up
- 3 so I couldn't say for sure without going back onto
- 4 that page.
- 5 MR. GRANT: And aren't the standards
- 6 that are used in the EWG website standards that
- 7 are essentially made up by EWG?
- MS. DAWN HICKS: It says on their page
- 9 that their information is from the Illinois EPA.
- 10 MS. SAWYER: So it states specifically
- 11 on the website that the Illinois EPA is the
- 12 standards that they're deploying? The Illinois
- 13 EPA standards?
- 14 MS. DAWN HICKS: Is the results, yeah,
- 15 from the EPA testing. LaSalle's water from
- 16 January 2021 to March of 2021.
- 17 MS. SAWYER: So are you saying that
- 18 the Illinois EPA testing results are used or the
- 19 Illinois EPA standards are used?
- 20 MS. DAWN HICKS: Their -- the way I
- 21 understood it -- was the testing of their results.
- 22 I don't know if it was the standards. The -- what
- 23 I understood of it was that the -- like the
- 24 arsenic being 363 times exceeded the health



- 1 guidelines is how I understood it. So I'm still
- 2 learning.
- MS. SAWYER: It's a lot of data.
- 4 MS. DAWN HICKS: Yes.
- 5 MS. SAWYER: Do you -- do you know if
- 6 EWG.org, is that a government organization or is
- 7 that a private entity?
- 8 MS. DAWN HICKS: I'm not completely
- 9 sure.
- MS. SAYWER: Okay.
- MS. DAWN HICKS: I'm still learning.
- MS. SAWYER: Okay. Sure. Thank you.
- MS. DAWN HICKS: Thank you.
- 14 HEARING OFFICER: Mr. McPhedran, any
- 15 questions?
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: Yes, Your Honor. And
- 17 I think that, from what I understand, the State,
- 18 is it correct, Mr. Grant, that based on the report
- 19 that the City has regularly sent in, to your
- 20 knowledge, the City's been -- while it's not
- 21 relevant being the City's -- the City's been in
- 22 compliance with the EPA regulations? They haven't
- 23 been exceeding?
- 24 MR. GRANT: The stipulation is limited



- 1 to violations from three years ago at a wastewater
- 2 treatment plant. I'm very reluctant, not having
- 3 any information right now, to give the City a free
- 4 pass on anything else that's happened since 2021,
- 5 particularly with drinking water, which is not the
- 6 subject matter of this case.
- 7 So as much as you'd like to get -- to
- 8 get an out of jail free card -- if I get back to
- 9 my office tomorrow and find out --
- MR. MCPHEDRAN: We're not --
- 11 MR. GRANT: -- there were exceedances
- 12 of the drinking water standards, we take those
- 13 very seriously.
- 14 MR. MCPHEDRAN: The City takes them
- 15 very seriously too, Your Honor. And our results
- 16 are posted on our website. There's been no
- 17 foundation for what she's saying.
- 18 If the Pollution Control Board wants,
- 19 I have with me reports of drinking water because I
- 20 expected this to come up, because even though it
- 21 wasn't to be part of the stipulation I expected
- 22 the residents or the Pollution Control Board and
- 23 Your Honor wants to receive it.
- 24 We have our monthly monitoring



- 1 reports, that at least the representative of the
- 2 City told me, and I'm not an expert on this, to
- 3 our knowledge while many of these levels are high
- 4 there is no, from what I understand on that, and
- 5 everything is in compliance. But the reports
- 6 should speak for themselves.
- 7 If they want to raise this issue and
- 8 the Pollution Control Board wants to look at any
- 9 of those reports specifically, I don't want to
- 10 make it look like the City isn't being transparent
- 11 or hiding anything.
- 12 HEARING OFFICER: You have to speak
- 13 up.
- 14 MR. MCPHEDRAN: I want to make certain
- 15 that the record's clear that the City is willing
- 16 to submit those reports. We even have them with
- 17 us because I expected this to come up, even though
- 18 it's not within the four corners of the
- 19 stipulation, and we're not wanting to hide
- 20 anything or impair even the EPA or anybody else
- 21 that wants to look into it.
- In fact, I think the EPA regularly
- 23 gets these reports.
- 24 HEARING OFFICER: I agree, it's not



- 1 part of the stipulation. Whether or not you
- 2 opened the door when you mentioned water quality,
- 3 I don't know. I don't want the court reporter to
- 4 go back an hour and find it. So the transcript
- 5 will reflect that.
- 6 You may submit your water quality
- 7 reports during your post-hearing briefing time,
- 8 which I have not set yet. And I think we can move
- 9 on.
- MS. DAWN HICKS: Okay.
- 11 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you, Ms.
- 12 Hicks.
- MS. DAWN HICKS: Thank you.
- 14 HEARING OFFICER: Here we have -- is
- 15 there a Lindsay Jones? No. Karry King? No. Mr.
- 16 Schneider?
- 17 MR. SCHNEICER: Yeah, I'll go after
- 18 Jamie if you don't mind. Let Jamie go first.
- 19 HEARING OFFICER: I'm sorry?
- 20 MR. SCHNEIDER: Could you let Jamie go
- 21 first, please?
- 22 HEARING OFFICER: Sure. Jamie wasn't
- 23 on my list but he did raise his hand earlier.
- 24 And, sir, it's got to be relevant to the four



- 1 corners --
- 2 MR. HICKS: Yes.
- 3 HEARING OFFICER: -- of the
- 4 stipulation.
- MR. HICKS: Yes, sir. My name's
- 6 Jamie Hicks. J-a-m-i-e, H-i-c-k-s. There's a lot
- 7 of -- a lot of repairs going on in our treatment
- 8 plant.
- 9 Are these related to EPA violations or
- 10 were they part of a stipulation or a side
- 11 agreement to if they make these updates would, you
- 12 know, the fine be lowered or something like that?
- 13 Because not only at our treatment
- 14 plant, but also like Dawn had mentioned a lot on
- 15 our water treatment plant as well affecting our
- 16 quality of water. So, I mean, that is my only
- 17 question that I have for you guys, are them
- 18 repairs part of that?
- MS. SAWYER: Can I just clarify?
- 20 HEARING OFFICER: Yes.
- 21 MS. SAWYER: So are you asking if
- 22 there was additional agreements that we're not
- 23 seeing in the stipulation that were related to the
- 24 stipulation that you might not have seen?



- 1 MR. HICKS: Right.
- MS. SAYWER: To my knowledge, no.
- MR. HICKS: I mean, like --
- 4 MS. SAWYER: Because you mentioned a
- 5 side agreement. There wasn't like --
- 6 MR. HICKS: Not -- I don't know about
- 7 the side. I don't know how it all works. But
- 8 like, you know, how, you know, you negotiate and
- 9 you say okay, I'm going to make these repairs --
- 10 MS. SAYWER: This is it. The
- 11 stipulation is it.
- MR. HICKS: So all the repairs that's
- 13 going on at the treatment plant has nothing to do
- 14 with you guys?
- 15 MS. SAWYER: What you just said is the
- 16 first time I've heard about that. We're not
- 17 involved in the City of LaSalle's --
- 18 MR. HICKS: Okay. But I do know it's
- 19 got everything to do with monitoring equipment and
- 20 things like that, so --
- 21 MR. GRANT: Just if I may. I'm sorry.
- MS. SAYWER: No, go ahead.
- 23 MR. GRANT: Just so you understand the
- 24 process, we're the prosecuting agency so we get



- 1 referrals from Illinois EPA that say here's proof
- 2 of violation, we want you to do something about
- 3 it. Prior to us even seeing this, after they
- 4 issue a violation notice there's always a lot of
- 5 ongoing discussions between the regulated entity
- 6 and Illinois EPA, at which point we would expect
- 7 them to say we're going to make improvements.
- 8 We're spending all this money, here's our budget.
- 9 You know, we're a municipality. All
- 10 that discussion would have had -- would have come
- 11 -- before we got the referral. So I think to the
- 12 extent that that discussion, future plans, capital
- 13 expenditures, that probably would have happened
- 14 before the Attorney General got the case.
- 15 When we get the case they, the
- 16 Illinois EPA, has already made a penalty
- 17 recommendation. And for the record, this is not a
- 18 significant penalty for an NPDES violation.
- 19 I've got a case right now, NPDES,
- 20 where we're going to get a \$60,000 penalty, for
- 21 example. It's a private entity, it's not a
- 22 municipality. So where we are on penalty, I think
- 23 to answer your question, no, because we've already
- 24 got an agreement that --



- 1 MR. HICKS: That's your guys'
- 2 agreement?
- 3 MR. GRANT: Yeah. And the City of
- 4 LaSalle has agreed to. And so there's really no
- 5 question about what the settlement terms are at
- 6 this point.
- 7 MR. HICKS: Okay.
- 8 MR. GRANT: Okay?
- 9 MR. HICKS: Okay.
- 10 MR. GRANT: It's not like we ignore --
- MR. HICKS: No, you answered my
- 12 question.
- MS. SAWYER: And also just really
- 14 quick to add on to what Mr. Grant said. The
- 15 Illinois EPA does a lot of things that we don't
- 16 know about and -- because they're the regulating
- 17 entity.
- MR. HICKS: Right.
- 19 MS. SAWYER: Once it comes to us, and
- 20 sometimes there's processes it just triggers a
- 21 violation because of all kinds of factors. They
- 22 consider a lot of stuff. So there may be other
- 23 things happening I'm not aware of.
- MR. HICKS: Correct.



- 1 MS. SAYWER: Which is why I said I --
- 2 this is the first time I heard this, because it's
- 3 true.
- 4 MR. HICKS: Okay.
- MS. SAWYER: Yeah.
- 6 MR. HICKS: No, I appreciate it.
- 7 MS. SAWYER: Yeah.
- 8 MR. MCPHEDRAN: I just want to be
- 9 clear. Just so that, again, at least nothing else
- 10 was part of your discussions with the City other
- 11 than what's in the four corners of the document,
- 12 and there's been nothing else referred by the
- 13 agency indicating any other concern regarding
- 14 drinking water or that was brought up only -- only
- 15 from bringing that up for a limited discussion.
- And we aren't looking for a get out of
- 17 jail free card because we don't -- we didn't do
- 18 any -- we maintain we didn't do anything wrong.
- 19 My -- just to be clear -- that there hasn't been
- 20 any other side agreements or any other independent
- 21 agreements, no other referrals to your office,
- 22 correct, to your knowledge?
- MR. GRANT: I can't confirm.
- MS. SAWYER: We're talking about this



- 1 particular document. Not -- we're not talking
- 2 about that. That's outside of the scope.
- 3 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you --
- 4 MR. HICKS: Okay. Thank you.
- 5 HEARING OFFICER: -- Mr. Hicks, I
- 6 appreciate it. Mr. Schneider?
- 7 MR. SCHNEIDER: I'm okay.
- 8 HEARING OFFICER: Okay. Would anybody
- 9 else like to step up and give public comment
- 10 today? All right. It's approximately 11:26 a.m.
- 11 We're going to go off the record for a minute and
- 12 discuss the transcript due date, post comments,
- 13 and any kind of post-hearing briefs.
- 14 We're off the record. Thank you.
- 15 (Discussion off the record)
- 16 HEARING OFFICER: We're back on the
- 17 record. It's approximately 11:30 now. We've
- 18 figured out the transcript will be due on March
- 19 14th. And when I say due they'll submit it to the
- 20 Pollution Control Board.
- 21 Our clerk will put it on our site and
- 22 then you can download it from there or take a look
- 23 at it on our site March 14th. Public comment due
- 24 April 4th and then the parties' briefs,



- 1 post-hearing briefs, due April 25th. Am I missing
- 2 anything for now? I do want to thank the City for
- 3 the use of the courtroom, Mr. McPhedran.
- 4 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Well, it's not me,
- 5 it's the County.
- 6 HEARING OFFICER: Yeah.
- 7 MR. MCPHEDRAN: I just helped
- 8 facilitate it to try to cooperate with everybody
- 9 to get this done in a forum that would be -- work
- 10 the best.
- i thought it's a setting -- this is an
- 12 important matter to everybody -- and I think doing
- 13 it in a courthouse in a courtroom adds the dignity
- 14 to it that it deserves and the public have this
- 15 information as well.
- 16 Let me also indicate just one other
- 17 thing on these water reports. I have asked for
- 18 copies if any member of the public wants them. I
- 19 brought them because I knew that this is a very
- 20 big concern, and we're sensitive to that.
- 21 So I'll give whatever I have today to
- 22 anyone here that wants it.
- 23 HEARING OFFICER: All right. Thank
- 24 you, sir. And thank you --



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Page 93
                 MR. MCPHEDRAN: Even though it's not
 1
    part of the hearing. I'm not waiving my objection
 2
    but it's -- we have nothing to hide.
                 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you all for
 4
    your civility. We're off the record.
 5
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7
               (Hearing end time: 11:30 a.m.)
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address 24:9 68:11 53:3,17 A 36:1 anybody agreement ability addressed 86:11 87:5 88:24 7:1 45:14,21 84:20 94:10 8:8 89:2 91:8 able addresses anybody's agreements 64:18 70:1 72:11 8:10 9:17,20 10:3 86:22 90:20,21 7:11 accepted addressing agrees anyway 11:17 50:19 34:18 35:3 64:2 18:4 25:19 access adds ahead apparently 59:11 75:12 20:7 75:19 87:22 92:13 80:15 accomplish ADMINISTRATI... allegation Appeared 21:19 3:12,18,23 4:7 5:2 18:2 31:21,24 37:15 accomplishing applicable admission 41:1 57:2 73:7 34:9 36:17 44:9,17 allegations 71:6 accountability 14:10 25:5 26:11,20 apply admit 79:22 26:20 26:24 43:24 1:15 accurate allege admitted appreciate 61:18 9:21 14:9 64:13 80:3 90:6 44:14 45:1 66:20,21 achieved alleged 67:19 68:24 91:6 46:16 admitting 9:21 14:10 16:17 approach acknowledge 64:23 18:19 23:3,5 27:7 23:24 17:14 57:13 32:19 33:6 51:17 adverse appropriately acknowledged 31:16 74:21 78:14 74:9 16:15 62:17 16:15 18:12 30:23 adversely alleging approved 32:15 30:11 62:3,4,10 19:3 33:21 Act agencies allow approving 10:8,9,13,15,24 70:13 79:12 52:10 67:1,23 11:11 12:3 32:20 approximately allowed agency 72:18 9:16 40:5,7,7,9 49:4 46:9 63:9,9 91:10,17 action 87:24 90:13 allows **April** 35:13 67:16 94:14,18 59:3 agenda 91:24 92:1 activities 64:19 alphabetical aquatic 10:2 36:11,16 50:8 64:14 aggressive 8:24 acts 62:18 amnesia area 16:14 53:13 19:24 37:5,6 ago actual 34:21 36:2 81:2 83:1 amount arose 49:1 51:1 63:18 9:22 10:10 31:5 agree Act's 14:8 18:20 57:21 analysis arsenic 10:19 11:8 79:18 81:24 63:6 65:24 67:12,20 11:6 add 68:19 69:8 76:3 aside answer 89:14 84:24 45:19 47:21 48:1,9 35:18 39:8 additional 53:1,19 70:2 75:7 agreed asked 19:4 67:17 86:22 88:23 10:11 48:16 56:22 9:9 23:10 46:17 48:2 additionally 67:5,8 68:3,16 69:7 answered 52:23 53:14,15 77:1 16:24 17:10 33:3 69:11 89:4 70:14 89:11 79:1 92:17 37:5 agreeing answers asking



55:16,18 57:5 71:15 25:3 77:23 **bolded** 72:14 77:5 86:21 authorizing beginning 67:3 aspect 67:1,23 67:17 bottom 27:1 behalf 27:4 32:16 average 28:20 29:1 59:9 3:12,18,23 4:7 aspects box 72:1 10:13 70:11 71:5,7,8 believe 14:7 15:2 22:11 23:8 boxes assessing aware 34:13 5:21 89:23 24:21 39:2 44:19 59:5 awhile 46:14 56:9,10 73:22 **Bover** assessment 79:4 34:4 81:2 2:4 17:18 20:5,9,14 believes assigned a.m 20:20,22 24:4 45:13 5:5 1:19 5:1 91:10 93:7 10:12 45:17,22 57:5 63:13 assist best 64:11 70:15,20 В 23:13 92:10 94:9 73:19 74:20,21,23 В 75:7 76:14 Assistant better 2:15 6:10 11:21 38:7 53:22 **BRAD Bachelors** 3:3 assisting big 21:10 23:6.16 92:20 **Bradley** back assume bimonthly 5:3 11:14 21:16 22:12 6:24 58:13 66:18 Brad.Halloran@ill... 59:19 23:5,17 39:1,21 assure biological 3:6 42:1,24 43:10,23 31:8 38:18 Brianne 46:15 47:8 49:18 attempt biomonitoring 2:10,13 12:14 19:14 52:13 60:15 72:11 62:8 8:22 17:11 38:2.4 54:8.11 64:15 69:18 75:1 81:3 83:8 85:4 attention 39:15 40:3 49:2 69:24 91:16 6:18 63:23.24 64:4 brief background bit attorney 21:6 21:6 22:8 12:23 31:3 53:22 briefing 3:8,14 5:18 6:11 13:4 backtrack 45:19 68:10 73:12 14:3,7 15:2,10 16:4 62:2 72:12 18:13 30:3 45:18 blame 85:7 bad 51:10,13 53:15,23 47:2 briefly 20:6 67:2 88:14 94:13,16 board 7:24 9:23 17:19 based 1:1,12,15 3:3 5:5 briefs Attorney's 11:6 48:9 49:5 82:18 38:3 51:9 10:16 11:17,24 13:8 91:13,24 92:1 basic audience 13:13.21.24 15:23 bring 28:8 13:13,14 19:11,21 16:8,9 18:24 19:3 23:19 basically 45:14,21 46:1 60:16 27:10 32:20 62:13 bringing 47:2,6 53:15 55:11 August 69:13 83:18,22 84:8 90:15 55:15 91:20 8:3,4 27:8 28:14,24 brought basis **BOD** 29:22 30:7 73:16 23:6 62:22 78:6,10 35:22 40:20 42:1,5 74:6,13 28:9,18,21,24 29:16 90:14 92:19 42:14 56:24 58:10 authenticity 29:19 31:1,7 59:7 brown 59:10 61:13 77:14 65:10 66:13,15 62:24 74:5,6,24 becoming authored 75:5 brownish 31:4 24:22,24 **BODs** 77:8 began authoring 16:18 63:22 budget



88:8 3:9 6:12 clarification case-in-chief built 14:5 cited 70:4 34:20 catching 73:23 clarify 80:6,11 86:19 Bumgarner 42:5 cities 35:2 clarifying 35:11 cease 72:3 76:4 **Bumgartner** 10:7 citizens 47:14 48:11 certain 5:11 6:15 16:6 18:16 clear burdensome 8:12 9:9 14:6,21 16:1 47:10 50:23 69:13 75:16,21 34:1 16:9 17:4,8,10 city 84:15 90:9,19 Buren 18:18 23:16 25:17 1:7 5:7,17 7:23 10:7 clerk 91:21 3:4 32:9 41:13 59:3 10:10,24 11:3 12:19 B-r-i-a-n-n-e 84:14 14:1,5,17 17:3,5,12 click 54:9 certainly 18:4,17,20 22:10,13 80:16 16:7 22:14,15,17 23:9,16 colleague \mathbf{C} certainty 26:17 30:4,8 32:5 12:11 \mathbf{C} 25:10 30:10 32:18,23 33:4,11,14 collect 3:1 4:1 CERTIFICATE 33:13 59:24 33:23 34:2,5,8 35:6 California 2:22 94:1 35:12,14,21 36:16 collected 21:13 36:19 37:9,22 39:1 17:11,16 40:16,19 Certified call 94:3,21 39:20 40:12 41:12 50:24 51:2 57:1 14:5 20:5,8 66:15 certify 41:19,20 42:9,17,17 61:8,11,12 64:6 called 94:5,12 43:22 44:5 46:8 collecting 1:13 23:12 31:7 cetera 47:3,20 48:1,12,18 39:20 77:16 67:24 49:7,21 50:13,22 collection capability cgrant@atg.state.il... 51:12,22 55:7,21 33:13 34:4 3:11 59:15,24 62:16,20 color capacity 69:5 72:4 73:15,23 77:8 chart 6:10 28:16 58:4,12,24 59:6,21 74:9 75:13 76:9 combined capital 77:2,19 80:23 82:19 8:18 33:11,18 46:8 71:22 88:12 charts 83:3,14 84:2,10,15 come Cara 59:2 87:17 89:3 90:10 6:5 60:22 83:20 3:15 6:9 92:2 check 84:17 88:10 cara.sawyer@ilag.... Citv's 59:20 comes 3:17 13:12 16:14 18:10 checked 53:4 89:19 card 22:17 23:21,24 24:8 70:6,7,8,9,11,16 coming 83:8 90:17 Chemical 42:19 44:10,19 52:9 11:14 12:18 33:5 careers 59:13 82:20,21,21 32:10 43:15,23 44:6 49:7 13:5 Chicago civil comment carried 10:11,17 11:7 21:10 3:5,10,16 5:21 6:19 16:7 19:13 67:22 57:7 58:2 69:19 chlorine 21:12 Carus 77:9 civility 91:9,23 14:21 32:10 Chloroform 93:5 commentors case 79:20 claimed 5:23 5:5 6:14 11:18 13:11 77:20 choose comments 14:10,15 15:4 83:6 claims 73:12 12:19 15:18 91:12 88:14,15,19 Christopher 26:19 common



9:14 12:2 14:16 48:20.23 63:18 30:21,22 31:18,22 31:23 32:17.22 33:2 communities continue concerns 21:18 6:16 64:14 33:3 34:22,23,24 35:4,17 36:4,10 company continued concur 32:11 77:16 15:10 24:12 36:2 37:3,8,24 38:23,24 Complainant continuing 39:6,24 40:1 41:2,3 condition 1:5 3:12,18 5:7,15 77:21 35:22 41:6 42:8,11 43:2,6 complaint conditions continuously 43:11,12,16,17,18 77:10 43:20 44:3,6,7 6:22 7:18,20 8:8 9:8 10:16,18,19 62:4 contradicts 49:16 50:6,20 51:3 9:10,18,22 11:2 confident 48:17 49:5 51:7.8 52:6.9 56:20 32:1,2 33:1 37:16 54:18 40:10 43:3 62:10 confirm control 58:14,21 60:2 64:7 completed 90:23 1:1,12,14 3:3 5:5 70:16 76:14 80:8.13 9:8 34:12 49:20,21 confirmed 8:19 13:8,13,21,23 82:18 89:24 90:22 correcting 50:1 18:1 15:23 16:9 17:5,8 completely confused 18:24 19:3 27:10 37:1 cost-effective 82:8 47:17 70:3 30:8 33:8,10,16,24 34:11,17 35:10 50:14 compliance confusing 10:2,6,22 11:10,15 cost-efficient 75:22 36:10 37:2,21 46:13 46:17 48:21 83:18 connection 16:14 18:5,7 23:7 34:6 83:22 84:8 91:20 23:17 32:24 33:5 22:7 counsel conversation 34:17 43:19,23 44:6 consider 12:10 13:3 25:18 44:20 50:19 80:23 89:22 49:20 57:6 62:16 64:17 82:22 84:5 consideration conversion 65:1 73:13 94:13,17 compliant 10:21 58:21 61:15 counsels 55:21 56:4 72:4 74:4 considered convert 2:20 15:17 complied 10:23 58:15 count 32:19 convoluted 7:18,20 8:10 considering complying 11:22 12:1 18:21,24 51:21 counts 51:16 considers 8:8 31:21 cooperate components 10:17 51:12,23 92:8 County 34:11 36:15 copies 1:17,19 19:1 21:14 consists compound 6:23 7:1 16:13 25:21 92:5 36:11 54:22 92:18 consultant court compromising 22:9 45:23 52:15.18 54:6 copy 26:18 consulting 23:19.22 55:14 60:21 69:20 85:3 94:3 concentration 21:17 33:15 corners 16:18 28:20 29:1 contained 8:14 9:18 15:15 32:7 courthouse 1:20 92:13 58:19 61:13,15 63:2 40:12 63:11 84:18 86:1 63:2 90:11 courtroom contains concentrations 24:21 77:24 corporation 92:3,13 contaminants courtrooms 29:14,15 1:8 12:22 79:17 concern correct 14:20 40:15 65:23 contemporaneous 15:1 23:1 24:20,23 court's 25:2 26:8,14,21,22 15:23 90:13 92:20 contemporaneously 27:19 29:10,23 covered concerned



27:23 12:13 19:14 76:18,19 94:15 discharge 76:19.22 77:16 78:5 8:2 9:2 14:11 17:23 Covid deserves 17:4 35:16 78:20.24 79:14 80:9 92:14 26:7 30:12 32:10 80:14 81:1,8,14,20 co-counsel design 41:9,10,23 42:13 82:4,8,11,13 85:10 21:15 49:24 50:9 59:7 6:12 85:13 86:14 desist created 73:18,24 74:1 78:14 58:6 71:22 10:7 discharges day criteria 18:9 19:10 29:19,19 despite 8:3 14:13 15:7 46:8 40:23 77:8 29:19,20 30:1,1,4,4 discuss criticism 58:13,20 59:3,7,8 details 6:14 7:14 47:19 9:23 62:8 32:4 61:7,8,10,12,14,15 91:12 CROSS 61:15,18 62:3,22 detected discussed 46:4,22 52:21 54:10 63:1 70:7 75:5 79:17 8:15 65:24 61:2 days deter discussion **CSO** 60:4,5 61:5,13 75:1,2 11:9 22:11 32:9 67:16 33:18 36:12,23 46:8 75:3 determination 88:10,12 90:15 91:15 dav-bv-dav 10:14 current 8:5 42:16 46:7 72:12 59:10 determined discussions day-to-day 88:5 90:10 11:7 currently 58:10 59:20,23 determining dispute 35:2 CX dealing 10:17 62:6 2:6,7,9,10,11 11:22 deterrent disputed C.S.R deciliter 10:13 26:19 1:16 58:16 develop **Districts** decorum 33:15 21:14 D 79:12 developed **DMR** D deemed 33:20 42:20 73:20 2:1 9:8 different **DMVs** daily defend 11:18 12:20 21:17 43:1 29:23 30:1 61:6,12 62:8 36:24 53:16 docket data defer dignity 5:8 17:11,16 28:8 39:16 7:7 92:13 document 39:20,23 40:16,18 definite 7:16 8:14 15:19 diligence 41:12 42:20 49:12 46:9 10:21 41:21 24:16,21 25:3 63:11 50:24 51:1,1,5 52:8 definitely 90:11 91:1 diligent 53:4,6 56:14,24 59:21 43:23 documented 60:8,9 61:6,8,10 degree DIRECT 46:15 48:24 49:11 63:16,20 64:3,5 22:4 25:10 27:1 20:18 documents 70:21 82:3 30:10 70:14 direction 9:14 41:20 date demand 94:11 doing 10:2 64:5 91:12 31:8 directly 17:6 21:15 36:16,19 dated 36:19 41:20 59:16 demonstrate 77:1 49:11 58:9 59:2,15 Director 66:4 92:12 dates deploying 47:16 dollars 48:12 49:9 75:24 81:12 disagree 11:22 17:7 34:2 Dawn deposition 57:15 37:11



41:13 42:6,18 71:23 exactly door environmental 78:22 85:2 efforts 9:15 10:9 21:12 68:11 double-checked 46:18 48:21 49:1 **EPA** examination 49:19 eight 10:12 23:10 32:20 1:13 20:18 46:4,22 download 10:4 67:15 33:21 35:22 38:19 48:7 52:21 54:10 61:2 69:22 91:22 either 40:23 42:5,10,14 13:4 15:8 32:1 37:15 draw 43:1,3 46:16 51:4,8 examined 6:18 email 51:14,23 54:14 55:5 20:16 6:23 drinking 55:12,24 56:4 57:2 example 88:21 15:4,5 22:4 32:3,4 employed 67:2 73:24 74:7 78:3,6,16 79:2 83:5 94:14,17 75:12 79:15 80:18 exceedances 83:12,19 90:14 employee 80:18 81:9,11,13,15 80:7,12 83:11 **Drive** 94:16 81:18,19 82:22 exceeded 3:21 4:5 encourage 84:20,22 86:9 88:1 8:5 28:16,22 75:5 due 11:10 88:6,16 89:15 79:17 81:24 8:17,20 9:1,4 28:9 enforcement EPA's exceeding 37:16 51:17 29:11 30:7.16 41:20 1:6 5:9 82:23 77:22 91:12,18,19 engineer equipment excess 91:23 92:1 17:18 20:15 21:1,4 87:19 70:18 duly 21:21 22:9 25:11 essentially Excuse 20:16 94:6 33:23 79:1 81:7 10:8 DX engineering et exhibit 2:5 21:11,12 61:20 67:24 2:16,17,17,18,18,19 engineers D-a-w-n event 2:19 16:13,14 17:17 76:19 34:8 19:17 28:10,11 70:17 23:21,24 24:5,7,15 enter 70:22 71:1.2 25:16 27:12,17 28:6 \mathbf{E} 67:22 events 29:7 31:19 36:8 entered 28:16 30:6,7,11 40:13 44:2.10.14.17 2:1,15 3:1,1,4 4:1,1 13:22 eventually 45:1 49:11 58:8 earlier entering 23:13 44:6 57:1 61:5 63:19 64:5,18 77:19 85:23 26:19 73:23 64:19 65:3,5 66:19 easier everybody 66:22,23 67:9,14 entire 60:22 76:24 68:14.21 29:14 59:12 92:8.12 easily everyone's exhibits entirely 25:19 7:5 64:23 66:7 67:4 65:4 economically entirety evidence expect 34:5 17:14 19:5 44:9.17 66:23 88:6 education entities 48:14 expected 21:7 evident 83:20,21 84:17 11:23 effect expenditures entitled 17:17 31:16 42:10 56:12 **EWG** 5:6 88:13 62:24 78:15 expensive entity 81:6,7 effluent 82:7 88:5,21 89:17 EWG.org 50:13 11:5 16:16 22:22 environment 79:16 80:15 82:6 expert 27:8,8,22 31:10,10 84:2 11:21 18:15 30:12 exact 31:20 38:5,8,8,19 79:2 expiration 31:17 54:17 63:1



92:9 38:13 feature 85:18,21 87:16 90:2 explain 50:6 five forums 13:19 16:20 17:20 February 8:21 10:20 27:3 12:21 27:9 28:4 57:18 1:18 11:1 19:9 41:5 32:16 40:13 44:1 forward 43:10 60:1 64:19 65:4,19 34:6 explained 63:3 federal 66:6,20,22 67:15 found 80:7,12,24 74:24 75:2 28:7 expressed 18:14 feel flood foundation 13:12 15:18 73:11 29:11 66:16 83:17 extend 34:4 felt flow four extensive 25:4 28:12 58:20 61:14,14 8:14,24 9:18 15:15 figured 17:5 70:17,18,22 26:4 32:7,16 38:15 extent 48:3 76:23 91:18 **FLOWERS** 38:17 46:11 60:1 65:7 72:23 88:12 file 3:20 4:4 63:11 64:18 65:5,19 extrapolated 9:14 focus 66:6,20,23 67:15 22:2 61:4,6 filed 84:18 85:24 90:11 **FOIA** frame eves 5:10.12 7:15.18 10:3 7:16 72:17 29:2 34:4 35:13 11:2.16.16 15:15 23:3,4 40:11 42:4 folks frames \mathbf{F} 19:11 31:3 40:3 filing F 11:3 follow **FRD** 26:6 filled 13:7 40:5 73:11 2:12 facilitate 47:10,12 followed free 92:8 financial 40:2 73:11 83:3,8 90:17 fact 34:3 following Freedom 13:3 15:14 24:18 financially 15:22.24 23:14 58:9 72:18 50:2.3 84:22 94:18 67:16 frequency factor find follows 41:13 8:7 58:22 61:16 9:16 12:24 25:20 8:18 20:17 friends factors 39:3 54:13 56:13 follow-up 77:6 11:7 18:21 89:21 67:13 80:17 83:9 59:18 76:6 front failure 85:4 foregoing 60:22 8:11 94:6 full finding fair 12:24 form 18:4 32:23 50:19 9:16 10:12 19:2 31:5 53:18 56:9 findings fully fall 80:19 formally 9:6,11,17 51:12,22 16:22 23:5 fine 26:20 further familiar 10:24 11:3 16:20 5:24 27:14 45:16 forms 22:16,22 24:16 25:18 77:11,12 86:12 47:4,9,11 43:9 45:3 46:18 far firm formula 63:14 94:12,15 12:22,23 14:15 15:4 33:15 58:17 61:20 **furtherance** 27:22 34:1 35:5 firms 19:5 36:2 37:21 forth 37:10 39:19 50:13 21:17 10:16 future 62:5 67:8 first forthcoming 10:5,7 11:9,10 76:8 fashion 5:15 8:1,8 20:3,5,16 79:24 79:24 88:12 5:12 39:16 76:10 26:3 44:11 70:5 forum



	13:7 15:18 16:12		56:17 57:3,11,21
	19:12,18 23:11		58:1,5 60:14,19
gallons	25:16 28:9 29:15,24	H	61:22 63:6 64:10,13
58:20	30:5 59:13 60:8,8	2:15	65:15 66:3,18 67:6
gathering	62:14 64:17 65:12	Halloran	68:1,6,9,18,21,24
55:9	68:9 71:11 77:2	3:3 5:3 6:8,17	69:12,16 71:11 73:8
general	81:3 86:7 87:9,13	hand	73:11 76:3,17,21
3:8,14 6:11 14:3,8	88:7,20 91:11	52:13 59:11 85:23	
15:3 27:11 51:10	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	happen	77:13 78:8,11,18,21
67:3 88:14	good	76:7,12	79:3,6,10 80:2,5
General's	5:2 19:4 75:3	happened	82:14 84:12,24
13:4 15:10 16:4	gotten	16:21,22 29:13 35:1	85:11,14,19,22 86:3
18:13 30:3 51:13	48:20	35:7 49:6 83:4	86:20 91:3,5,8,16
generates	government	88:13	92:6,23 93:2,4,7
72:22	11:23 82:6	happening	94:6
gentlemen	graduated	28:10 29:12 89:23	hearings
27:10	21:9	happens	1:16 13:2
getting	Grant	76:13	heavy
34:10 62:1,7	3:9 6:12 12:11 15:12	hard	29:11
give	45:7 57:16,21 61:23	60:20	Hegeler
5:16,20 6:7 19:13	61:24 63:7 65:9,12	harmful	37:5
21:6 34:5 58:17,23	72:16 80:4,6,11,22	38:20	help
69:18 79:7 83:3	81:5 82:18,24 83:11	Harpe	23:10
91:9 92:21	87:21,23 89:3,8,10	37:6	helped
given	89:14 90:23	hat	92:7
25:21	graph	52:14	helping
gives	29:17,18 58:9 59:11	health	21:18
58:22 70:6	59:19 60:17	54:16 73:5 79:17,18	Henry
giving	graphs	81:24	1:17
55:21	29:18,24 59:15 63:20	hear	hereto
glass	great	14:2,4	94:17
77:14	14:16	heard	Herrmann
	Grove	87:16 90:2	4:4 12:11
go 9:23 12:4 20:7 27:3	77:1,10	hearing	Hicks
28:19 39:21 47:8	guarantee	1:13 2:20 3:4 5:1,4	2:7,10,13 12:13,14
66:6,9 72:11 75:19	76:11	5:12 6:4,6,9 7:8	19:14,14 46:23,24
78:15 80:15 85:4,17	guess	9:13 11:13 12:6,10	48:1 54:4,8,9,11
85:18,20 87:22	48:11 76:6	12:16,17 13:9,21,23	55:2,3,11,15,16
91:11	guideline	14:9 15:13,23 16:2	56:16,18 57:4,7,22
	79:19	•	57:23 58:3,6,7
goal	guidelines	16:8,8 18:9 19:7,22	60:10 64:15 69:18
46:13,14	79:18 82:1	20:2,6,10 24:2	69:23,24 70:19,23
goals	guy	25:17 44:13,21,24	71:16,18,21 72:2,8
21:20 36:17	47:3	45:5,8,11,17 46:2	72:9,15,21,24 73:2
goes	guys	46:21 47:23 48:4	73:10,14 74:11,15
14:21 31:14 32:10	70:1,4 86:17 87:14	52:13,17 53:7,10,20	75:6,9,10,19 76:2,4
going	89:1	54:2,5,21,24 55:13	76:5,16,18,18,19,19
	07.1		70.5,10,10,10,17,17



76:22 77:14,16 78:5 54:16 73:5 **importantly** 18:14 78:19.20.24 79:13 hundreds 11:24 39:15 interested 79:14 80:3,9,14 17:6 37:10 **improvements** 80:17 94:18 81:1,8,14,20 82:4,8 H-i-c-k-s 34:7 88:7 interests 82:11,13 85:10,12 47:1 54:9 55:17 Inaudible 16:6 85:13 86:2,5,6 87:1 79:9 76:20 86:6 interrupt 87:3,6,12,18 89:1,7 include 7:4 89:9,11,18,24 90:4 10:21 12:13 36:5 introduced identification 90:6 91:4.5 75:17 38:6 23:20 hide investigate included identify 84:19 93:3 7:5 31:19 36:6 63:24 51:5 30:2 hiding 66:1 investigation **IEP** 52:8 66:2 84:11 includes 13:1 23:14 25:5 56:10 high 9:20,22 10:1 14:6 40:20 48:10,18 49:6 **IEPA** 16:21,22 28:12 29:11 42:20 43:20 51:15,17,24 62:19 41:15 72:22 30:7,16,18 84:3 including involved ignore hinder 75:23 13:5 18:8 22:3 26:6 89:10 56:12 27:11 35:16 47:20 increased II hindered 73:4 87:17 31:21 54:15 55:6 56:1,2 independent **IPCB** IL57:8,9 90:20 1:15 3:5,10,16,21 4:5 hindrance indicate issue Illinois 55:8 57:18 15:1,3 78:3 92:16 28:8 39:19 40:7,9 1:1,4,7,12,14,18,21 hired indicated 42:6 48:16 56:6.10 3:3.8.14 5:4.6 6:11 22:13 33:15 12:12 16:3 18:6,11 57:1 62:16 73:7 8:2 9:15 10:8,9,12 historical 26:16.23 36:7 84:7 88:4 14:13,22 15:9 21:2 29:3 indicates issues 21:9,22 23:10 29:3 holding 32:17 64:5 7:17 9:17 16:16 18:7 29:10 30:5,20 31:14 77:14 29:3 32:24 35:5 indicating 32:20 33:17,21 honest 43:10 90:13 63:8 79:24 38:19 43:16 46:16 79:23 indication item 54:14 55:5 59:9.14 **Honor** 26:5 37:19 35:13 59:17 67:2 79:15 6:2 12:8,10 14:24 inform items 80:17 81:9,11,12,18 19:6 20:4 24:1 44:8 13:17 65:5 81:19 88:1,6,16 information 45:2.10 48:5 55:10 i-e-r-i 89:15 94:4 56:8 60:13 62:15 13:18 29:6 42:23 46:7 impact 64:16 67:11 69:15 43:4 55:9,22 72:18 J 8:23 30:15 38:7,20 73:6 78:2 82:16 81:9 83:3 92:15 74:21 J 83:15,23 information-gathe... impacted 3:9 4:4 hope 54:14 55:5 30:12 73:5 iail 68:16 info-gathering impair 83:8 90:17 hour 55:24 84:20 1:19 85:4 **JAMES** intent **important** 3:20 Huh 30:2 59:14 17:1 48:17 56:21 Jamie 53:9 interest 2:7 46:24 52:23 92:12 human 7:11 13:24 14:17



87:17 12:15 19:16 85:15 53:13,14 55:16 King 85:18,18,20,22 86:6 19:15 85:15 list Lastly January knew 11:24 85:23 77:24 79:15 81:16 49:17 92:19 latitude liter 63:10 79:7,12 28:22 58:12,19,24 jargon know 18:22 75:21 7:11 11:13 12:15 Lavieri 61:6,11,18 62:5 **Jeff** 13:11 19:8,13 21:18 2:6 46:5,6,19 little 35:11 47:14 21:19 26:16 28:7 law 12:23 47:17 53:22 jim@meyers-flowe... 29:23 31:2,6 33:9 5:2 16:8 74:4 59:5 62:2 63:9 3:22 34:6 35:20 47:10 76:23 79:7 lav 31:3 John 49:10 50:7 52:23 live 2:6 46:6 53:3 57:18 58:1 layman's 80:16 **Johnson** 59:6,9 60:9 63:8 42:22 lives 1:16 94:3,20 68:4 70:1 72:16 lead 80:1 location **Jones** 74:18 75:3,4 76:7 73:7 19:16 85:15 79:11 81:1,22 82:5 Leap 36:24 85:3 86:12 87:6,7,8 19:9 Judge long 5:2 64:9 79:5 87:8,18 88:9 89:16 learned 5:23 21:3,24 51:20 judgment knowledge 31:3 65:1 16:24 30:22 52:4 7:8 learning longer June 72:11 82:20 84:3 82:2,11 35:11 8:3,4 27:8 28:15,21 87:2 90:22 led long-term 29:22 30:6 70:5,8,9 knows 53:2,2 8:19 17:4,8 33:8,10 70:12,12 71:6 72:5 28:3 41:11 33:16,24 34:11,17 leery 73:16 74:5,13 63:10 35:10 36:10 37:2,21 \mathbf{L} J-a-m-i-e left 46:13.17 48:21 \mathbf{L} 46:24 55:16 86:6 31:13 59:10 look 1:16 94:3 67:7 68:2 77:12 84:8 legal K lab 12:20 18:22 75:21 84:10.21 91:22 49:9,12 51:1,5 63:18 Karry let's looked 19:15 85:15 64:4 74:24 29:13 81:2 27:3 33:6 38:1 39:11 Kathy lack level looking 38:6 77:22 79:21 1:16 94:3,20 28:7 29:2 47:9 77:23 16:18 28:12 30:16,19 ladies keep 42:23 43:5,14 90:16 27:9 41:14 47:23 65:16 looks levels 74:23 79:11 laid 8:6 17:22 29:4 42:12 5:21 keeping 10:18,19 50:4 70:6 84:3 lost language 52:8 66:2 liability 35:13 kept 57:16 18:19 lot LaSalle 39:3,16,23 limit 12:20,21 27:15 80:20 kind 1:7,19 5:7,17 7:23 28:23 42:18 82:3 86:6,7,14 88:4 13:11 31:13 45:19 14:12,18 22:10 32:5 limited 89:15,22 47:11 60:18 77:11 47:21 54:18 76:22 30:11 82:24 90:15 lowered 79:22 80:23 89:4 79:11 91:13 limits 86:12 kinds LaSalle's 29:21 63:2 L-a-v 89:21 10:1,21 55:7 81:15 46:6 Lindsay



33:9 87:19 \mathbf{M} 20:4,8,12,19 24:3 25:23 26:2 44:8.16 mention month Madison 45:2,12,16 48:5,8 40:14 38:12 41:12,16,17 1:20 70:7 73:20 52:11 53:18,24 mentioned maintain 54:21,22 55:10 56:8 7:14 9:10 38:3 66:10 monthly 90:18 56:19 57:13 60:12 8:5 17:23 28:19 29:1 85:2 86:14 87:4 maintains 62:15 63:13,15 64:8 59:9 70:10 71:5,7 met 18:21 64:16 65:2,18 66:5 46:14 73:18,24 74:1 76:13 making 66:14 67:5,11,19 **MEYER** 76:15 83:24 18:15 23:16 49:7 68:7,13,16,19,22 3:20 4:4 months man 69:2,7,10,14 70:13 milligram 16:19 28:20 38:12,14 52:14 71:9 72:4,7 73:6,17 61:17 38:14,15 42:7 74:1 manner 73:21 74:14.18 76:9 milligrams morning 49:1,4 50:14 51:2 78:2,5,10,12 79:4,9 28:22 58:11,15,19,23 5:2 78:24 Maple 82:14,16 83:10,14 motion 61:5,11 62:5 3:21 4:5 84:14 90:8 92:3,4,7 million 67:22 March 93:1 58:20 move 78:1 79:15 81:16 mind 34:6 38:1 44:9 64:14 mean 91:18.23 7:4 56:24 57:18 65:3 5:24 74:23 85:18 85:8 marked 75:20 86:16 87:3 moved minnows 23:20,23 Meaning 38:6 21:13 marked/retained 51:10 minute movement 2:20 means 33:5 45:7 65:15 67:22 marks 33:12 47:6 57:8 94:9 91:11 moving 50:7 67:9 measure minutes Marty 31:7,9,12 49:17 64:21 65:21 66:8 multiple 2:9 12:14 52:19 62:23,23 68:3 77:2 mass misconception measures multiply 29:15 50:12 61:19 41:8 58:19,21 **Masters** measuring missed municipal 21:11 58:11 61:14 62:23 48:12.23 1:7 math meat missing municipality 58:18 58:10 88:9,22 92:1 matter media M-a-r-t-v mon 48:12 83:6 92:12 77:5 52:20 75:11 mayor meeting monetary 77:1,10 79:23 N 77:19 34:1 mayor's meetings money 77:22 2:1 3:1 4:1 48:2 77:2 88:8 **McFergun** name Melanie monitor 45:12 5:3 6:9 20:20 45:23 60:3,4,6 8:23 42:17 **McNeilly** 52:15,17 54:6 57:24 member monitored 22:12 19:21 46:1 60:16 60:17,20 75:12 **McPhedran** names 92:18 monitoring 2:5,8,12 3:20 6:2,5 19:15 members 36:15 41:9,10,24 7:3 12:7,8 15:21 name's 13:10 25:19,22 31:5 42:13,19 83:24



72:10 88:18,19 70:11 89:19 46:24 54:8 86:5 14:9 15:13 16:2 19:7.22.23 20:1.2.6 number naming ones 80:20 5:8 17:18 22:8,24 20:10 24:2 25:17 19:19 44:13,21,24 45:5,8 nature 23:21,24 24:5,15 ongoing 13:2 21:8 34:19 45:11,17 46:2,21 48:22 88:5 25:14,15 33:17 47:23 48:4 52:13,17 nearly 36:11,12 44:10,14 opened 76:24 46:9 66:20 67:9 53:7,10,20 54:2,5 78:22 85:2 need numbered 54:21,24 55:13 opening 19:17 66:15 56:17 57:3,11,21 30:24 66:23 58:1,5 60:14,19 operating needed numerous 61:22 63:6 64:10.13 18:3 25:22 41:21 negative nutshell 65:15 66:3,18 67:6 operation 30:15 51:22 68:1,6,9,18,21,24 22:23 neglected N/A 69:12,16 71:11 73:8 operator 73:11 76:3,17,21 40:4 71:17 41:19 47:15 negotiate 77:13 78:8,11,18,21 opinion 0 79:3,6,10 80:2,5 87:8 30:9.10 31:15.16 oath 82:14 84:12,24 neighbors 50:23 20:16 77:7 85:11,14,19,22 86:3 opinions object 86:20 91:3,5,8,16 neither 25:9 7:9 15:17 92:6,23 93:4 94:12 opportunity objection nine officers 6:13 24:5 51:4 44:13,21,24 53:18 38:15 12:17,17 optimization 66:19 93:2 9:3 18:2 43:9 49:24 Officer's Nitrate objections 79:19 7:8 13:9,22 50:12 16:1 officials notable optimizing objective 62:20 7:10 50:8 46:17 off-the-road **Orange Notary** occasion 62:8 1:17 21:14 28:15 Oh order note occasions 17:1 63:7 20:6 6:19 13:9,22 15:23 28:14 38:11 okay 16:3 33:17 64:15 notice occupation 6:4 19:19,22 20:10 19:10 23:4,9 32:19 ordinance 20:24 25:20 27:12 28:3 64:20 65:4 66:11,24 40:10,11 43:24 occurred 37:1 45:9,11 46:2 51:24 74:8 88:4 67:23 8:3 34:20 73:16 74:5 46:19,21 57:11 58:5 notified ordinances odor 59:18 61:21 66:3,18 50:1 74:12,20 67:17 77:8 notify 68:1,18 70:19,24 organic office 71:4,11,21 72:2,2,8 31:9 73:15 3:8,14 9:15 10:11 72:21,24 73:10 75:6 organization noting 13:4 15:10 16:4 71:23 76:2 79:3 82:10,12 82:6 18:13 30:3 38:4 85:10 87:9,18 89:7 novel original 51:9,13 83:9 90:21 89:8,9 90:4 91:4,7,8 23:4 33:24 11:19 officer November old originally 2:20 3:4 5:4 6:4,6,9 7:21 35:3 7:15 15:16 74:8 40:12 11:13 12:6,10 13:23 **NPDES** once Ottawa



8:19 1:20 35:15 37:9 42:15 parameters outfall 16:10 18:23 75:22 plans 8:18 14:13 22:23 Pardon periods 88:12 plant 26:9 28:9,21 29:21 52:16 17:2 Park 7:22 8:13 9:19 11:4 70:16,16,18,21,22 permit outflow 37:5 8:12 38:13,16 40:2,4 11:14 14:12,22 8:24 26:7 43:15 42:16,16,19 50:7 22:19,20,23 26:6,9 part outside 24:8 26:21 37:2 62:4 70:20 28:11,13,17 36:21 15:18 91:2 40:13 42:5,13 44:4 permits 38:5 41:22 47:15 48:15 51:16 52:7 9:5 72:10 50:10 77:3,6,18,20 overage permitted 8:6 71:20 74:4 56:22 58:2 63:19 83:2 86:8,14,15 overages 64:4 73:18 83:21 29:21 87:13 8:9 11:5 16:17 27:24 85:1 86:10,18 90:10 plants person 71:23 74:22 93:2 12:4 53:13 22:18 34:19 participants overflows personnel please 33:18,19 46:12 12:12,18 13:14 47:20 12:9 20:12,21 46:3 particular Peru overly 47:24 52:14,15,18 77:8 72:6 91:1 54:4,6 55:2,14 3:21 4:5 particularly phonetic 60:20 76:18 78:9 oxygen 85:21 31:8 7:10 83:5 77:17 oxygenation parties phosphorous point 8:7 5:10,14 15:17 91:24 39:11 40:8 42:6,22 41:8 42:12,18,20,23 94:14,17 43:5,14 49:23 50:5 55:23 64:17 88:6 P 50:9 89:6 parts P 66:10 phosphorus points 3:1,1 4:1,1 9:2 17:21.22.23 18:2 60:1,8,9,9 pass page pollutant 83:4 41:7 2:3 10:1,4 26:4,12,16 photo 74:16 passed 27:3,4,17,23 29:5,7 7:5 12:3 77:12,14 pollutants 29:8,9 32:16 36:8,8 **Patrick** physically 8:6 43:9,21 44:1 58:8 4:4 24:19 75:14 pollution 66:24 67:14 68:8 picked 1:1,12,14 3:3 5:4 pay 81:4,8 48:20 10:11 13:8,13,21,23 15:22 pages **PCB** pipe 16:9 18:23 19:3 10:19 24:21 25:17 1:5 5:8 14:21 15:6 32:10 27:10 73:4.16 83:18 27:23 40:13 63:19 pjh@mfbhlaw.com penalty 83:22 84:8 91:20 66:24 9:22,24 10:10,11,17 4:6 poor paginated 11:7 88:16,18,20,22 places 77:21 68:3 **Porter** people 37:7 paperwork 37:7 1:3 5:6,22 6:24 19:12 plan 47:18 47:4 9:3 17:5,8 18:3 22:3 portion paragraph perform 65:6 66:8 67:3,12,18 33:8,10,16,24 34:11 26:4,17 27:4 32:16 33:15 68:8 34:17 36:3,10 37:2 43:21 performed 37:21 43:9 46:13,17 portions paragraphs 48:21 49:24 49:10 64:20,24 65:21 66:8 26:13 27:3 period planning 66:22



position 18:10 possible 65:1 71:6 possibly 80:1 post 91:12 posted 83:16 posts 77:5 post-hearing 45:19 68:10 73:12 85:7 91:13 92:1 potent 77:8 potential 67:16 pounds 29:19,20 58:13 59:3 59:7,8 61:7,16,18 62:3,22 63:1 **PPD** 58:12 practice 12:2,21 precedent 12:24 prepared 48:19 52:5 preparing 23:13 present 6:13 13:3 16:12 19:4 42:2,15 presented 14:2,4 presently 32:23 preserved 18:15 pretty 23:8 previously

35:10

principle 68:20 print 94:10 prior 10:23 13:2 24:8 88:3 private 82:7 88:21 probably 42:5 72:17 88:13 problem 56:14,15 62:2 problems 77:7 proceed 15:19 45:24 76:21 79:13 proceedings 12:22 process 18:14 87:24 processes 89:20 profession 20:23 25:10 professional 20:15 21:1,3,7 progress 8:19 projects 37:13 pronounce 80:21 proof 17:13 39:5,9,12 88:1 proposal 5:10 6:21 9:12 24:10 67:1 propose 5:14 proposed 5:16 prosecuting 87:24

Protection 9:16 10:9 protective 30:4 59:13 provide 70:4 provided 53:6 58:12 provides 33:4 providing 43:4 provision 27:22 provisions 1:14 27:2 public 1:17 5:12,19,20,23 6:19 13:11,15,17,24 14:16,20 16:6 17:20 18:16 19:13 24:20 25:19,22,24 27:11 28:3 31:6 35:20 39:14 41:10 47:16 58:2 69:5,19 72:11 72:13 74:12.19 91:9 91:23 92:14,18 publicly 73:15 pump 36:12,20,23 purpose 11:8 26:18 purposes 17:13 23:21 pursuant 1:13 7:9 9:6 10:15 put

Q

35:11 65:22 71:24

91:21

quality14:17 15:5 30:5,15
32:3,4 59:13 74:22
78:6,12 79:1 85:2,6

86:16 quarreling 48:13 62:21 63:4 question 30:6 43:7 45:15,22 47:1,8 51:19 53:5,8 53:11,14,19,22 54:3 54:23 55:1 56:5,9 58:3 59:18 60:13,15 60:16 63:16,22 65:13 75:8 76:6 86:17 88:23 89:5,12 questioning 53:2 63:17 questions 6:1 45:3,6 51:22 52:12,24 53:16 63:12 70:1 82:15 question's 50:21 53:24 quick 75:15 89:14 quickly 34:3 quite 77:21 80:1 quote 54:14

R 3:1 4:1 Radium 79:19 rain 28:10 29:3,6 30:7 70:17,21 76:11 rainfall 16:21 28:16 rains 29:12 30:16,19 raise 84:7 85:23 raised

7:17 9:18 50:22

RC



protecting

18:16 37:22

	5.22	22.24 22.4 0 25.2 7	66.1 7 9 22 67.12
2:13 RD	5:22	32:24 33:4,8 35:3,7 36:20 37:11 40:6,15	66:1,7,8,22 67:13
	records	, · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	73:9 78:16,18 82:21
2:8	16:23 41:12 72:13	41:1,9 42:12 43:4,4	85:24
read	record's	43:8,23,24 44:5,19	relief
64:23 65:20 67:8	84:15	51:6,13,15,23 56:8	9:20
ready	recreate	62:18 64:2,3,17,19	reluctant
69:17	39:22	64:19 68:14 74:5,6	83:2
really	RECROSS	regarding	remiss
19:23 75:15 77:24	69:22	7:20,22 15:5 17:4	19:8
89:4,13	redact	23:22 78:3 90:13	remotely
reason	64:20 DEDIDECT	regards	75:12
15:22 34:13 48:15	REDIRECT	14:20 18:19 32:7	render
56:22 62:22	48:7 63:14	34:16 41:7	25:9,9
reasonable	reduce	registered	renewed
19:2 24:10,13 25:10	33:17	17:18 21:21,24 25:11	38:16
30:9	reduced	regular	repairing
reasonableness	94:10	41:24 42:14	77:17
19:1	refer	regularly	repairs
reasonably	27:12	43:1 82:19 84:22	86:7,18 87:9,12
25:4	reference	regulated	repeat
receive	25:16 32:8	88:5	51:19 80:10
83:23	referenced	regulating	repeatability
received	22:19	89:16	38:18
23:9 40:12	references	regulations	report
receiving	27:7	10:8 32:21 46:7 80:8	8:17,17,23 9:2,3,7
28:12 30:16,19 33:19	referral	80:13,24 82:22	18:3 23:14 35:19
38:9,20 41:14 43:16	88:11	related	36:18 37:14,17 39:8
59:3	referrals	6:22 16:4 18:8 50:8	39:21 41:15,18
reckoning	88:1 90:21		
1 20 24		65:22 86:9,23 94:13	42:10 43:8 44:18
29:24	referred	relation	49:15,24 50:3,8,14
recognize	referred 90:12	relation 66:10	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5
recognize 56:21	referred 90:12 reflect	relation 66:10 relative	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9
recognize 56:21 recommendation	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5	relation 66:10 relative 94:16	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18
recognize 56:21 recommendation 88:17	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5 refused	relation 66:10 relative 94:16 release	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18 reported
recognize 56:21 recommendation 88:17 record	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5 refused 47:21	relation 66:10 relative 94:16 release 63:12	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18 reported 17:22 39:23 42:24
recognize 56:21 recommendation 88:17 record 7:3 19:10 20:21,24	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5 refused 47:21 refuses	relation 66:10 relative 94:16 release 63:12 released	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18 reported 17:22 39:23 42:24 43:1 49:4 51:2
recognize 56:21 recommendation 88:17 record 7:3 19:10 20:21,24 26:5,16 31:1 39:3,3	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5 refused 47:21 refuses 48:1	relation 66:10 relative 94:16 release 63:12 released 46:18	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18 reported 17:22 39:23 42:24 43:1 49:4 51:2 57:14 73:21 74:3,10
recognize 56:21 recommendation 88:17 record 7:3 19:10 20:21,24 26:5,16 31:1 39:3,3 41:19 61:24 62:13	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5 refused 47:21 refuses 48:1 regard	relation 66:10 relative 94:16 release 63:12 released 46:18 relevance	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18 reported 17:22 39:23 42:24 43:1 49:4 51:2 57:14 73:21 74:3,10 76:13 79:16
recognize 56:21 recommendation 88:17 record 7:3 19:10 20:21,24 26:5,16 31:1 39:3,3 41:19 61:24 62:13 63:7 64:24 65:20	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5 refused 47:21 refuses 48:1 regard 13:10,18 14:11,17,20	relation 66:10 relative 94:16 release 63:12 released 46:18 relevance 7:8 14:15,19 62:2	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18 reported 17:22 39:23 42:24 43:1 49:4 51:2 57:14 73:21 74:3,10 76:13 79:16 reporter
recognize 56:21 recommendation 88:17 record 7:3 19:10 20:21,24 26:5,16 31:1 39:3,3 41:19 61:24 62:13 63:7 64:24 65:20 69:13 70:3 77:13	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5 refused 47:21 refuses 48:1 regard 13:10,18 14:11,17,20 15:6 16:11,16,17,24	relation 66:10 relative 94:16 release 63:12 released 46:18 relevance 7:8 14:15,19 62:2 69:5	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18 reported 17:22 39:23 42:24 43:1 49:4 51:2 57:14 73:21 74:3,10 76:13 79:16 reporter 2:22 45:23 52:15,18
recognize 56:21 recommendation 88:17 record 7:3 19:10 20:21,24 26:5,16 31:1 39:3,3 41:19 61:24 62:13 63:7 64:24 65:20 69:13 70:3 77:13 78:3 79:6 88:17	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5 refused 47:21 refuses 48:1 regard 13:10,18 14:11,17,20 15:6 16:11,16,17,24 17:7,10,21 18:7	relation 66:10 relative 94:16 release 63:12 released 46:18 relevance 7:8 14:15,19 62:2 69:5 relevancy	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18 reported 17:22 39:23 42:24 43:1 49:4 51:2 57:14 73:21 74:3,10 76:13 79:16 reporter 2:22 45:23 52:15,18 54:7 55:14 60:21
recognize 56:21 recommendation 88:17 record 7:3 19:10 20:21,24 26:5,16 31:1 39:3,3 41:19 61:24 62:13 63:7 64:24 65:20 69:13 70:3 77:13 78:3 79:6 88:17 91:11,14,15,17 93:5	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5 refused 47:21 refuses 48:1 regard 13:10,18 14:11,17,20 15:6 16:11,16,17,24 17:7,10,21 18:7 22:9,16,23 23:2,6,7	relation 66:10 relative 94:16 release 63:12 released 46:18 relevance 7:8 14:15,19 62:2 69:5 relevancy 15:19 63:8,10 67:9	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18 reported 17:22 39:23 42:24 43:1 49:4 51:2 57:14 73:21 74:3,10 76:13 79:16 reporter 2:22 45:23 52:15,18 54:7 55:14 60:21 69:20 85:3 94:1,4
recognize 56:21 recommendation 88:17 record 7:3 19:10 20:21,24 26:5,16 31:1 39:3,3 41:19 61:24 62:13 63:7 64:24 65:20 69:13 70:3 77:13 78:3 79:6 88:17 91:11,14,15,17 93:5 recorded	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5 refused 47:21 refuses 48:1 regard 13:10,18 14:11,17,20 15:6 16:11,16,17,24 17:7,10,21 18:7 22:9,16,23 23:2,6,7 23:12 24:9,15 25:3	relation 66:10 relative 94:16 release 63:12 released 46:18 relevance 7:8 14:15,19 62:2 69:5 relevancy 15:19 63:8,10 67:9 relevant	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18 reported 17:22 39:23 42:24 43:1 49:4 51:2 57:14 73:21 74:3,10 76:13 79:16 reporter 2:22 45:23 52:15,18 54:7 55:14 60:21 69:20 85:3 94:1,4 94:21
recognize 56:21 recommendation 88:17 record 7:3 19:10 20:21,24 26:5,16 31:1 39:3,3 41:19 61:24 62:13 63:7 64:24 65:20 69:13 70:3 77:13 78:3 79:6 88:17 91:11,14,15,17 93:5 recorded 5:24 70:24 71:3	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5 refused 47:21 refuses 48:1 regard 13:10,18 14:11,17,20 15:6 16:11,16,17,24 17:7,10,21 18:7 22:9,16,23 23:2,6,7 23:12 24:9,15 25:3 25:5,8,14,14 26:3	relation 66:10 relative 94:16 release 63:12 released 46:18 relevance 7:8 14:15,19 62:2 69:5 relevancy 15:19 63:8,10 67:9 relevant 6:16,20,21 7:17 15:6	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18 reported 17:22 39:23 42:24 43:1 49:4 51:2 57:14 73:21 74:3,10 76:13 79:16 reporter 2:22 45:23 52:15,18 54:7 55:14 60:21 69:20 85:3 94:1,4 94:21 reporting
recognize 56:21 recommendation 88:17 record 7:3 19:10 20:21,24 26:5,16 31:1 39:3,3 41:19 61:24 62:13 63:7 64:24 65:20 69:13 70:3 77:13 78:3 79:6 88:17 91:11,14,15,17 93:5 recorded 5:24 70:24 71:3 73:19	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5 refused 47:21 refuses 48:1 regard 13:10,18 14:11,17,20 15:6 16:11,16,17,24 17:7,10,21 18:7 22:9,16,23 23:2,6,7 23:12 24:9,15 25:3 25:5,8,14,14 26:3 26:11,15,23 27:1,2	relation 66:10 relative 94:16 release 63:12 released 46:18 relevance 7:8 14:15,19 62:2 69:5 relevancy 15:19 63:8,10 67:9 relevant 6:16,20,21 7:17 15:6 15:14 25:6 27:21	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18 reported 17:22 39:23 42:24 43:1 49:4 51:2 57:14 73:21 74:3,10 76:13 79:16 reporter 2:22 45:23 52:15,18 54:7 55:14 60:21 69:20 85:3 94:1,4 94:21 reporting 8:22 17:1 32:13 33:7
recognize 56:21 recommendation 88:17 record 7:3 19:10 20:21,24 26:5,16 31:1 39:3,3 41:19 61:24 62:13 63:7 64:24 65:20 69:13 70:3 77:13 78:3 79:6 88:17 91:11,14,15,17 93:5 recorded 5:24 70:24 71:3	referred 90:12 reflect 57:4 79:7 85:5 refused 47:21 refuses 48:1 regard 13:10,18 14:11,17,20 15:6 16:11,16,17,24 17:7,10,21 18:7 22:9,16,23 23:2,6,7 23:12 24:9,15 25:3 25:5,8,14,14 26:3	relation 66:10 relative 94:16 release 63:12 released 46:18 relevance 7:8 14:15,19 62:2 69:5 relevancy 15:19 63:8,10 67:9 relevant 6:16,20,21 7:17 15:6	49:15,24 50:3,8,14 50:15,17,18 52:5 55:12,17 56:11 76:9 76:13,15 82:18 reported 17:22 39:23 42:24 43:1 49:4 51:2 57:14 73:21 74:3,10 76:13 79:16 reporter 2:22 45:23 52:15,18 54:7 55:14 60:21 69:20 85:3 94:1,4 94:21 reporting



resolutions reviewed 87:4,15 89:13,19 43:14 50:6 56:21 90:5,7,24 67:17 50:13 reports 8:12,19,21,24 9:4 resolve right saying 7:16 11:20 23:10 47:5 55:11 56:6,10 11:1,15 17:4,8,12 6:4 16:7 19:22 27:20 17:23 35:6,8,9,21 resolved 31:24 36:22 39:7,12 56:20 62:16 81:17 37:23 38:4,10,22 9:11 62:11 39:13 49:14 55:19 83:17 40:8 41:4,9,10,24 respect 57:11 62:9 66:7,17 says 42:4,14 47:2 48:19 12:16 16:5,6,10 66:20 67:6 68:6 55:17 57:8 58:9 48:22 49:2 50:23 respected 70:14 71:3 75:17,23 59:20 61:9 71:17 62:19 55:22 56:23 63:18 76:18 83:3 87:1 81:8 **SAYWER** 64:4 72:10 73:24 respectfully 88:19 89:18 91:10 74:1 80:18 83:19 79:22 92:23 65:11 66:21 67:14 84:1,5,9,16,23 85:7 respects river 68:23 69:1 75:20 92:17 18:17 8:2 14:12,14,22,23 82:10 87:2,10,22 90:1 representative respondent 15:7 22:19 29:3,11 14:7 77:18 84:1 1:9 3:23 4:7 5:7 29:15,17 30:5,20 schedule 32:18 43:22 55:6 8:22 34:1 45:20 representatives 31:14 32:11 43:16 14:8 15:2,9 18:12 59:9,14,17 74:17,22 **SCHNEICER** Respondents 11:11 request rules 85:17 5:12 7:9 13:8,20 15:22 Schneider Respondent's requesting 54:15 56:1 66:19 16:1,9 2:9 12:14 19:13 79:23 responding 52:16,19,19,22 53:9 S requests 56:3,4 53:12 85:16,20 91:6 S 51:16 response 91:7 2:15 3:1 4:1 require 23:7 27:16 Science Sam 29:21 responsibilities 21:10.12 22:12 54:15 55:6 56:1 57:8 scientist required sample 8:7.12.23 9:5 33:16 responsibility 31:2 60:1 38:11 40:4 49:3 15:24 scope responsive sanitary 59:24 91:2 33:12 36:14 requirement 48:6 seated Sanitation 35:19 50:16 74:19 5:15 rest 21:14 requirements 31:3 second save 17:1 33:23 40:2 8:10,16 66:24 restate 80:1 requires Section 55:2 Sawyer 10:6 42:17 result 6:20 10:15 18:22 3:15 6:7,8,10 7:7 requiring sections 75:1,4 12:6,9,11 15:11 10:5 resulted 67:4 25:18 44:15,22,23 research 28:18 see 45:5,9 64:22 65:3 13:1 73:3 19:19 27:4 32:1 results 65:14 66:12,17 67:8 reserve 75:13 81:2,14,18,21 36:15 38:7 45:24 67:21 68:5,15 69:3 45:18 52:13 59:10 67:7 83:15 69:8 71:8,13,17,19 68:2 72:12 73:4 resident returning 71:22 72:6,13,19,22 60:18 10:22 77:4 73:1 75:15 81:10,17 seeing residents review 82:3,5,12 86:19,21 14:1 47:11 83:22 7:24 24:5,7 71:14 86:23 88:3



			1 496 17
coon	47:15	sir	7:21 10:16 47:13
seen 86:24		15:20 19:7 20:7 21:4	53:5 66:9
	sewer		
send	35:3 36:13,14 37:4,6	25:8 46:2,21 48:4	specifically
40:5,6 41:18 43:8	sewers	48:17 53:8 55:13,16	7:13 22:18 32:15
50:16	34:18,20 36:1	56:17 57:6,12 85:24	81:10 84:9
sending	share	86:5 92:24	spell
35:8 74:8	6:16 7:2	sit	45:23 52:15,18 54:6
sensitive	Shawna	5:20 69:20 75:2	68:11
13:15 92:20	2:11 60:17,24	site	spend
sent	sheet	91:21,23	34:2 37:10
6:23 18:3 25:21 35:6	19:18	six	spending
35:21 36:18 37:15	short	10:20 26:17 43:21	17:6 88:8
37:18 38:11,22,24	18:3	65:19 66:7 67:9,12	spent
39:2,5,9,12 40:9	Shorthand	67:14,15 68:14,15	55:18
41:4,24 48:14 49:18	94:21	75:3	stage
50:18 56:23 82:19	shortly	slightly	29:11
separately	38:16	28:19	stand
44:12	show	small	5:19 45:22 46:2
separating	23:19 29:18 30:1	21:18	52:14 54:5 55:14
34:18	59:6 66:1	social	69:18,19
separation	showing	77:4	standard
36:13 37:4,6	77:12	solids	61:20
series	shown	8:7 31:11,12	standards
38:6	29:5,6	somebody	81:5,6,12,13,19,22
seriously	shows	66:15	83:12
83:13,15	40:20 56:14	soon	standpoint
serve	shuffle	23:8	13:12 35:20 39:14
11:8	35:13	sorry	stands
serves	shut	20:6 45:13 51:11,21	31:8,11
10:13	75:18	55:23 56:18 60:13	start
set	sic	61:1 80:9 85:19	5:1 22:13 47:9 69:17
85:8	39:17 45:12	87:21	started
sets	side	south	22:11 33:22
10:15	86:10 87:5,7 90:20	14:11 22:20 26:8	starting
setting	signed	Southern	38:12
92:11	24:18,24 41:19	7:22	state
settlement	significant	speak	1:3,18 3:8,14 5:6
5:11 6:22 9:13 11:19	28:15 37:13 88:18	19:21 60:20 65:16	6:11 7:7,17 14:3
12:4 18:20 19:2	sign-up	71:12 84:6,12	16:15 18:4 20:20,23
23:23 24:10 67:2	19:18	speaking	21:1,19,22 23:4
89:5	similar	80:14	30:2,23 31:19 33:17
seven	11:10	speaks	42:21 43:19 44:5,14
65:19 66:7 67:15	simply	57:17,20	44:18 45:22 50:19
68:14,15,21 75:3	50:15	species	51:23 52:3,14,17
sewage	simultaneously	8:24	54:6 59:2 60:19
8:18 33:11,12,18	7:18	specific	62:17 63:5 69:6
5.10 55.11,1 2 ,10	/.10	*F******	32.17 33.3 07.3



80:7,12,22,24 82:17 26:13,15,19,21 27:1 submitted suspended 94:4 32:2.8.15.17 33:4 9:6 11:1,15 17:9,15 8:6 31:11,12 stated 36:7,8 37:16 40:15 39:4,21 42:21 43:10 suspicion 43:20 44:11 48:15 6:9,19 31:18 46:12 73:20 75:13 17:24 55:8 57:6 69:17 54:13 55:4 56:23 subsequent sustained 57:17,19 58:10 71:5 32:18 53:20 54:1 62:10,12 67:1,24 substance statement sworn 54:12 62:13 76:23 71:4 73:9 75:16,22 40:16 20:11,13,16 94:7 75:24 78:17.21 77:19 substantive synopsis 82:24 83:21 84:19 statements 35:23 21:7 85:1 86:4,10,23,24 7:12 suggest system states 87:11 39:14 64:14 33:11,13 35:3 36:14 17:19 21:19 38:3 stipulations suggested S-c-h-n-e-i-d-e-r 51:8 55:24 81:10 11:17 12:1 19:6 52:20 State's storm suggesting S-h-a-w-n-a 16:23 63:8 65:23 16:22 37:16 60:24 station storms suggestion T 36:12,20,23 46:8 40:18.22 Т statistical Suite stormwater 2:15 33:12 36:14 38:18 3:5.10.16 take statutory stream summarize 44:11 58:18 67:7 30:16,19 38:9,20 18:21 28:6 69:11,21 73:17 stay 41:14 43:16 59:4 summarized 83:12 91:22 5:15 26:12,24 27:15 streams taken stenographic 33:19 summarizes 1:16 63:17 64:3 94:9 94:9 Street 12:3 94:15 step 1:20 3:4,9,15 14:12 summarizing takes 5:15 20:3 64:11 91:9 22:19 27:24 74:24 83:14 summary steps strength talk 47:18 31:9 5:16 27:17 33:6 53:14 stifling strong summation talked 7:11 18:14 6:7 14:2 31:1 33:7 43:19 student stipulate superintendent 44:18 78:7 31:4 24:20 18:18 64:18 65:7,10 talking 66:12 studies support 25:20 26:7 28:4 31:6 stipulated 73:3 49:12 33:22 36:21 53:4 9:24 26:18 44:5 stuff supported 63:21,22 70:15 77:6 66:14 22:12 31:2 47:21 50:24 78:13,23 79:8,10 48:2 65:20 69:11 stipulation supposed 80:7,12 90:24 91:1 5:10,16,17 6:21 7:4 89:22 59:16 taxpayer 7:14,15,19 8:15 9:7 subject sure 11:21 9:13 15:8 22:4 33:1 9:11,12,16,24 10:1 18:15 19:8,12,14 69:2,4 72:17 83:6 team 10:3,20 11:3,13 21:9 25:18 28:6 24:8 13:19 15:15 16:11 submit 31:7 34:10 65:2 tell 16:13 18:11 23:22 8:12 35:19 84:16 69:4 80:5 81:3 82:9 77:10 24:9 25:6,15 26:3 85:6 91:19 82:12 85:22



[
tender	9:9,10 11:20 13:19	34:8 35:12,15 37:9	35:14
44:16	13:24 19:5 21:8	38:23 39:16 40:3,21	transparency
term	31:4 34:9,19,20	42:2,15,24 44:9	77:23
75:17	36:6 43:21 49:7	45:3 47:13 48:18,22	transparent
terms	65:24 70:3 87:20	49:2,18 55:18 56:17	52:10 84:10
42:22 89:5	89:15,23	57:9 65:16 71:12,14	treated
Terrence	think	74:22 75:22 78:11	31:10,13 38:8,19
2:4 20:14,22	7:3 12:3 13:3 19:9,17	85:7 87:16 90:2	41:13
Terry	19:23 22:13 28:14	93:7	treatment
20:9	29:8 30:23 31:5	timely	7:22 8:13 9:19 11:4
test	35:9,12,19 36:7	5:11 35:22 39:16	11:14 14:12 21:20
38:18 74:24	41:7,15 56:19 57:3	40:8,20 41:24 42:10	22:3,18,19 26:6,9
tested	57:16 60:1 61:17,18	49:1,4 50:22 56:11	28:11 38:5 41:21
80:18	62:1,21 63:3,7	56:21,24 57:14 64:3	47:15 50:9 59:17
testified	64:15 65:3,5,9,18	76:10	77:3,6,18,20 83:2
20:17 57:5	66:5 67:12 68:7	times	86:7,13,15 87:13
testify	69:3,16,17 72:17	38:15,17 61:10 79:18	tried
17:19 74:20 94:7	74:7 78:22,22 82:17	79:19,20,20 81:24	80:21
testimony	84:22 85:8 88:11,22	today	triggers
16:12 63:4 94:5,8	92:12	5:9,13 6:14 7:13	89:20
testing	third	13:18 17:13 19:8,9	trouble
81:15,18,21	8:10 9:1	70:2 91:10 92:21	55:1
tests	thorough	told	true
40:3	25:4	84:2	90:3
thank	thought	tomorrow	trusted
6:6,8,13 12:5,6,8,9	5:23 17:12 92:11	83:9	49:20
12:18,18 19:7 20:2	thousands	top	truth
20:8 45:10,11 46:19	17:6 37:10	59:5,16	94:7,8
48:3,4 57:12 60:10	threat	topics	try
60:23 61:22 63:11	54:19	14:6	13:17 92:8
64:10,10,12 65:17	threatening	torrential	trying
69:16,21 72:2 75:9	54:16	76:11	47:2,4 48:10 55:20
76:4,16,17 79:14	three	total	55:20 59:1 69:3,12
80:2 82:12,13 85:11	7:1,18,20 8:16 9:3	8:6 18:6 31:11 44:6	75:18
85:13 91:3,4,14	10:1 21:17 26:13,17	town	TSS
92:2,23,24 93:4	27:18 36:13,23	80:16,17,19	28:9,18,24 29:16,20
Thanks	46:14 60:4,4,5 61:5	track	31:1,11 59:8,8
6:15 37:1	61:13 67:15 83:1	41:14	62:24 71:5,14,15
theoretically	three-year	training	74:6
57:14	7:21	21:8	turn
thereof	ticked	transcript	73:24
43:22	19:19	57:4 66:9 67:7 68:2	turnaround
thing	time	85:4 91:12,18	75:2
15:14 38:1 47:18	5:1 13:6 22:15 24:8	transition	turned
48:17 92:17	29:2,10,12,16 30:14	17:2 35:12	47:4
things	30:17 33:22 34:4,5	transitioning	two
	I	I	I



6:3 7:21,24 8:6,8,9 9:14 11:22 13:12 16:14,17,19 17:17 19:15 21:17 23:21 24:15 25:15,24 26:4 26:12,13 27:13,17 27:18 28:7,14 29:7 29:7,8,18 30:6,11 31:19 33:6 36:8 40:13 42:7 43:21 44:2.17 45:1 47:17 49:11 58:8,8 63:19 63:20 64:5 67:3.15 74:22 type

U

uncommon 11:12 underline 15:14 understand

9:2,3 11:12

8:17,18 38:10

types

24:19 65:23 69:14 74:2.3 82:17 84:4 87:23 understanding

25:12 35:7 37:12

55:1 62:14 understood

25:13 53:21 81:21,23 82:1

unfortunately 13:20

unique 12:23 units 58:11

University 21:9

unusual 11:19

unusually

30:7

updates 35:10 86:11 upgrade 36:12 upgrading 34:18 36:20 use

19:24 92:3

\mathbf{V}

 \mathbf{V} 3:15 Van 3:4 verification 49:18 verifying 51:7 Vermilion

14:22 Vermillion

15:7 32:11 versus 5:7 Victor

46:6 view 11:20

violated 62:7

violation 8:11,11,16 10:24 23:9,11 40:10,11,22 44:1 62:3 71:10,13 71:24 72:23 73:23 74:9 88:2,4,18

89:21

violations 7:21,23 8:1 9:7,21 10:4,6,7 11:4,9 23:3 23:5 27:8,22 28:8 28:19 32:14,19 33:6 47:7 51:18,24 54:16 55:7 56:2 62:4

71:23 83:1 86:9

Viserine

77:17,18 voice 47:23 65:17 voluntarily 74:4,10 voluntary 11:10 VS

1:6

W

 \mathbf{W} 1:20 3:9,15 wait 33:5 65:15 78:8,8,8 waiving 93:2 Walnut 37:6 want 13:17 15:13 33:21

35:20 45:18 50:22 52:7,23 57:19 62:12 69:18 70:2 73:17 75:16 84:7.9.14

85:3 88:2 90:8 92:2

wanted 54:13

wanting 6:15 84:19

wants

7:1 83:18,23 84:8,21 92:18,22

Washington

3:9,15 wasn't

17:21,22 37:18 47:12 48:11 49:6 71:7,8,9 71:10,13,19 83:21 85:22 87:5

wastewater

7:22 8:1,13 9:19 11:4 11:14 14:11 21:15 21:20 22:3,6,17,18 26:6,9 28:12,17 30:12 31:10,13 38:5

38:8 41:21 59:17 75:11 78:13.14.23 83:1

water

1:6 5:9 14:17 15:4,5 21:20 22:5,6 30:5 30:15 32:3,4 59:13 73:4 75:11 77:3,3,5 77:6,11,15,17,20,24 78:4,6,15,16 79:2 79:16,24 80:18 81:15 83:5,12,19 85:2,6 86:15,16 90:14 92:17

Watson 24:19,24 wav

34:6,16 37:14 40:11 48:10 76:24 81:20

wavs 11:20 53:16 weather 28:11

website 80:15,22 81:6,11 83:16

week 60:1,6 61:5,13 weekly

8:5 70:10 weeks 77:4

welcome 46:20 60:11 welcomes

12:19 went

21:11 28:22 weren't

38:22 40:8 56:3,23

wet 28:10 we'll

6:3 16:19 57:13 65:7 66:5 68:19

we're



15th 13:7,15 16:12 19:4 worked 11:8 25:20 26:7 28:4 \$60,000 41:16 21:13,16 22:8 34:3 31:6 34:10 36:21 34:10 68:12 88:20 17 45:9 46:10 47:2.3 working 79:16 0 48:5,12 53:4 59:11 17:7 22:7,14,14 18 001 62:1,1,2,3,9,21 63:4 37:10 46:10,11 38:12,12 14:13 26:10 28:9,21 65:12,16 66:1 69:3 1800 works 43:15 70:16,16,21 69:10,17 70:15 24:20 47:16 87:7 3:10,16 71:11 78:13 83:10 wouldn't 19 1 84:19 86:22 87:16 52:7 27:23 42:1 1 87:24 88:7.8.9.20 wrong 1920 2:16 90:24 91:1,11,14,16 90:18 39:17 1st 92:20 93:5 1992 wrote 70:12 we've 76:22 21:5 10 31:18 46:16 48:2 W-i-l-c-o-x 40:13 44:1 2 88:23 91:17 61:1 10th whoever's \mathbf{X} 41:16 2:17 20:3,3 10:00 X 20 Wilcox 1:19 5:1 2:1,15 2:5 19:11 42:1 2:11 60:17,24 61:1,3 10:28 200 wildlife Y 78:24 59:11 54:20 73:5 100 veah 2000 willing 15:13 22:11 23:8 34:21 36:1 21:16 22:1 58:18 84:15 27:12 37:12 39:10 1000 2008 wish 47:19 49:19 53:9 59:8 22:12 51:5 54:2,24 57:3 60:7 101-3 2009 wished 60:21 63:24 65:9,11 6:20 33:14 51:6 68:23 73:8 81:14 11 2011 withheld 85:17 89:3 90:5,7 21:15 33:20 52:3 92:6 11:26 2012 witness 91:10 vear 22:13 19:24 20:13 24:1 29:14 46:9,12 50:8 11:30 2013 45:4 46:20 52:12 59:12 74:9 76:24 91:17 93:7 33:22 53:21 60:2,5,7,11 77:20 119 2015 64:12 1:20 years 72:12 witnesses 12:2,21 21:15 22:9 **12** 2019 2:3 6:3 94:6.8 34:21 36:1 46:14 21:15 38:14 79:17 8:13,20 9:1,4 word 83:1 1200 2020 38:7 3:21 4:5 9:1 words \mathbf{Z} 13th 2021 79:2 zero 7:15 8:3.20 9:4 16:18 23:5 work 46:10 14th 17:5 22:3,17 35:22 27:9 29:14 42:7 91:19,23 59:12,19 70:5,8,9 35:23 36:5,19,20 \$ 15 74:13 78:1,1 79:15 37:18,20 47:3 65:18 \$5470 38:14 79:19 79:15 81:16,16 83:4 66:5 92:9



			Page 22
		1	
2022	363	61354	
11:1 41:5 44:18	79:18 81:24	3:21 4:5	
2023	365	63	
7:15 15:16	60:8	2:12	
2024	38.9	630	
1:18 19:9	29:1	3:5	
21		— 630-576-9696	
39:17 42:1	4	4:6	
21st	4	69	
70:9,12	2:18	2:13 3:9,15	
22	4th	2.13 3.9,13	
27:23 39:20 43:11	91:24	7	
27.23 39.20 43.11 22nd	42(h)	7	
	10:15 18:22	2:19	
11:1	43	7th	
23	59:8	70:8	
27:24 29:5,9			
23rd	46	7.2	
15:16	2:6,7	79:19	
24	48	73	
27:24	2:8	63:19	
24-33	5	74	
1:5 5:8		24:21 43:9 79:20	
25	5	8	
19:11	2:18		
25th	50	8.345	
92:1	12:1 34:21	58:21	
29th	52	801	
1:18 19:9	2:9	70:18,22	
	54	815-223-0230	
3	2:10	3:22	
3	550	834	
2:17	60:9	59:7	
30		_	
12:21 28:22 36:8,9	6	9	
31st	6	94	
50:7	2:19	2:22	
312-814-5388	60		
3:11,17	3:4		
312-814-8917	60602		
3:6	3:10,16		
32.5	60605		
	3:5		
28:24	61		
33	2:11		
63:19	61350		
33.1	1:21		
28:23	1.21		
	1	<u> </u>	

