



# City of Chicago



**R2018-417**

Office of the City Clerk

## Document Tracking Sheet

**Meeting Date:**

4/18/2018

**Sponsor(s):**

Taliaferro (29)  
Foulkes (16)  
Waguespack (32)  
King (4)  
Hairston (5)  
Sawyer (6)  
Sadlowski Garza (10)  
Moore (17)  
Arena (45)  
Dowell (3)

**Type:**

Resolution

**Title:**

Call for hearing(s) on violations to Safe Water Drinking Act, the Clean Water Act, and protocols for lead testing

**Committee(s) Assignment:**

Committee on Committees, Rules and Ethics

**RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the Safe Water Drinking Act, Title XIV of the Public Health Service Act, requires that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) promulgate and administer water regulations for contaminants, including lead, in public water supplies; and

WHEREAS, Section 1413 of the Safe Water Drinking Act grant states primacy, or the authority of oversight and enforcement of the EPA's requirements, provided that the minimum standards and regulations set forth by the EPA are adopted and complied with as required by federal law; and

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois, the City of Chicago and its sister agencies are legally bound by the Safe Water Drinking Act and the EPA standards authorized within as the State of Illinois applied for and received primacy from the EPA, thus placing oversight, regulation and liability for any violation of EPA regulation on the State of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, water use is taxed by the City of Chicago at a rate of \$.64 per 1,000 gallons, which represents an increase of more than 100% from 2017, with further increases scheduled for the next two calendar years ; and

WHEREAS, the budget for the Chicago Water Department for 2018 is more than \$163.8 million dollars; and

WHEREAS, EPA standards for drinking water mandate that maximum allowable levels of lead in drinking water are 15 parts per billion, and;

WHEREAS, it is reported that over the last two years, elevated levels of lead have presented in approximately 70% of the almost 2,800 homes that undertook lead tests<sup>1</sup>; and

WHEREAS, tap water in 3 out of 10 homes tested contained lead concentration above the maximum legally permitted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration<sup>2</sup>; and

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/watchdog/ct-chicago-water-lead-contamination-20180411-1.htmlstory.html>

<sup>2</sup> ibid.

WHEREAS, historically lead poisoning disproportionately impacts low-income neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the EPA and the U.S. Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention states that it is hazardous to consume any amount of lead; and

WHEREAS, the EPA further states that, “[i]n children, low levels of exposure have been linked to damage to the central and peripheral nervous system, learning disabilities, shorter stature, impaired hearing, and impaired formation and function of blood cells...[b]ehavior and learning problems...lower IQ and hyperactivity, slowed growth, anemia...[and]...ingestion of lead can cause seizures, coma and even death”<sup>3</sup>; and

WHEREAS, infants and young children “are particularly vulnerable to lead because the physical and behavioral effects of lead occur at lower exposure levels in children than in adults...dose[s] of lead that would have little effect on an adult can have a significant effect on a child...”<sup>4</sup> and;

WHEREAS, the indirect cost of lead poisoning nationally is documented, with experts estimating that elimination of lead nationally has the potential to save \$200 billion per year<sup>5</sup>; and

WHEREAS, the Annual Budget Ordinance of the City of Chicago states that the Department of Water Management “is responsible for the delivery of fresh, pure water to Chicago residents’,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and the members of City Council call for hearings before the Committee on Health and Environmental Protection to determine:

whether the State of Illinois and City of Chicago is in violation of the Safe Water Drinking Act, the Clean Water Act and any other applicable federal or state laws;

whether the practices and procedures of Chicago’s protocol for lead testing are compliant with the standards set forth by the Environmental Protection Agency; and

the financial, legal, social and health consequences that the taxpayers of Chicago may incur as a result of the emerging crisis of lead contaminants in public water sources;

what protocol and procedures the Water Department and the Department of Public Health are undertaking to effect the decontamination of water sources;

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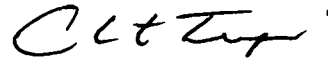
<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water#schools>

<sup>5</sup> <https://dssg.uchicago.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/p2039-potash.pdf>

what protocol and procedures the City of Chicago and the Department of Public Health are undertaking to identify and treat the devastating health consequences of lead exposure; and

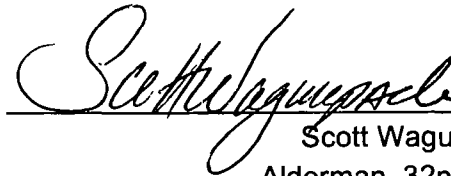
what protocol and procedures Chicago is undertaking to ensure that no future instances of lead contamination occur.



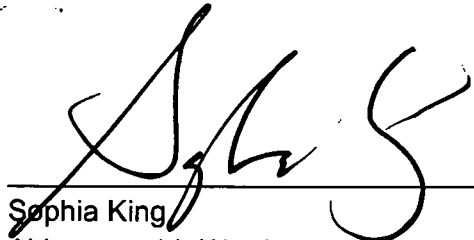
Chris Taliaferro  
Alderman, 29th Ward



Toni Foulkes  
Alderman, 16th Ward

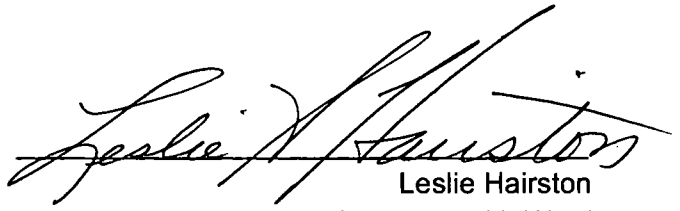


Scott Waguespack  
Alderman, 32nd Ward



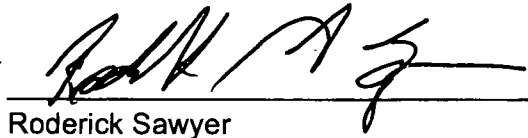
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Sophia King  
Alderman, 4th Ward



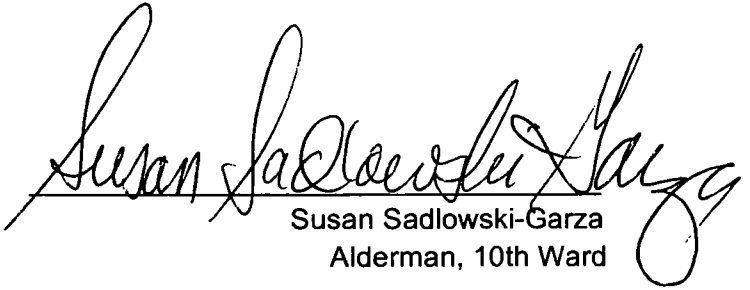
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Leslie Hairston  
Alderman, 5th Ward



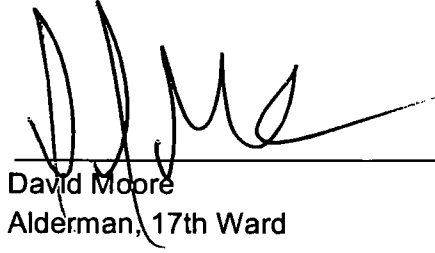
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Roderick Sawyer  
Alderman, 6th Ward



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Susan Sadlowski-Garza  
Alderman, 10th Ward



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David Moore  
Alderman, 17th Ward

Pat Donnell, 3<sup>rd</sup>

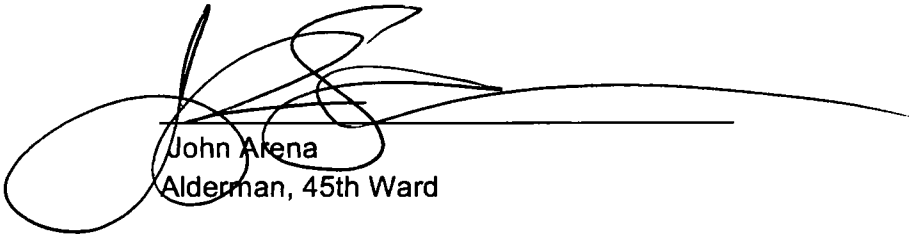


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Ricardo Muñoz  
Alderman, 22nd Ward

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Carlos Ramirez-Rosa  
Alderman, 35th Ward



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John Arena  
Alderman, 45th Ward

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