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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
JOINT COMMITTEES ON THE ENVIRONMENT
AND TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC UTILITIES

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Thursday, June 1, 2023
1:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILWOMAN KENDRA BROOKS
COUNCILMAN MICHAEL DRISCOLL
COUNCILMAN JIM HARRITY
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN ANTHONY PHILLIPS
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA
COUNCILWOMAN SHARON VAUGHN

RESOLUTION: 230278

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2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good
3 afternoon. This is the Joint
4 Committee on the Environment and
5 Transportation and Public Utilities.
6 Today is Thursday, June 1, 2023.

7 I understand that the state
8 law currently requires that the
9 following announcement be made at the
10 beginning of every remote public
11 hearing as follows: Due to the
12 current public health emergency, City
13 Council Committees are currently
14 meeting remotely. We are using
15 Microsoft Teams to make these remote
16 hearings possible.

17 Instructions for how the
18 public may view and offer public
19 testimony at public hearings of
20 Council Committees are included in
21 the public hearing notices that are
22 published in the Daily News, Inquirer
23 and Legal Intelligencer prior to the
24 hearings and then also are available
25 on PHLCouncil.com.

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1 Will the Clerk please call
2 the roll to take attendance. Members
3 that are in attendance will please
4 indicate that they are present when
5 their names are called. Also, please
6 say a few brief words when you are
7 responding so that your image will be
8 displayed on screen when you speak.

9 THE CLERK: Councilmember
10 Gilmore Richardson.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

12 RICHARDSON: Good afternoon,
13 Mr. Chair and colleagues. I am
14 present.

15 THE CLERK: Councilmember
16 Anthony Phillips.

17 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Good
18 afternoon, colleagues. Good
19 afternoon, Chairman Johnson and the
20 viewing public.

21 THE CLERK: Councilmember
22 Sharon Vaughn.

23 COUNCILWOMAN VAUGHN: Good
24 afternoon, everyone. I am here.

25 THE CLERK: Councilmember

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1 Kendra Brooks.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Good
3 afternoon. I am present.

4 THE CLERK: Councilmember
5 Mike Driscoll.

6 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: Good
7 afternoon, Chairman. I am present.

8 THE CLERK: Councilmember
9 Mark Squilla.

10 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Good
11 afternoon, Chairs and colleagues.
12 I'm present.

13 THE CLERK: Councilmember
14 Cindy Bass.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
16 afternoon to everyone. I am present.

17 THE CLERK: Councilmember
18 Curtis Jones, Jr.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
20 afternoon, Chairs, colleagues,
21 viewing public. I am present.

22 THE CLERK: And,
23 Councilmember Harrity.

24 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: If that
25 was me, I am present. Here.

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1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
2 you. A quorum of the Joint
3 Committees is present and this
4 hearing is now called to order. This
5 is the public hearing of the Joint
6 Committee on the Environment and
7 Transportation of Public Utilities
8 regarding Resolution No. 230278.

9 Will the Clerk please read
10 the title of the resolution.

11 THE CLERK: Resolution
12 230278, a resolution authorizing City
13 Council to hold hearings to
14 investigate Philadelphia's emergency
15 management practices and the City's
16 overall preparedness when facing
17 credible threats to our drinking
18 water.

19 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Before
20 we begin to hear testimony from the
21 witnesses we have for today, everyone
22 who has been invited to the meeting
23 to testify should be aware that this
24 public hearing is being recorded.
25 Because the hearing is public,

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1 participants and viewers have no
2 reasonable expectation of privacy.
3 By continuing to be in the meeting,
4 you are consenting to being recorded.

5 Additionally, prior to
6 recognizing Members for the questions
7 or comments they have for witnesses,
8 I will note for the record at this
9 time that we will use the chat
10 feature available in Microsoft Teams
11 to allow Members to signify that they
12 wish to be recognized. In order to
13 comply with the Sunshine Act, the
14 chat feature must only be used for
15 this purpose.

16 Before I ask for the Clerk to
17 call the panel, I'm going to ask the
18 sponsor of the bill does he have any
19 opening remarks.

20 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Yes.

21 Thank you, Chairman Johnson.

22 Hi. I'm Councilmember
23 Anthony Phillips representing
24 Philadelphia, 9th District and I
25 would like to provide some opening

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1 remarks. I introduced this
2 resolution to address the recent
3 threat to our water supply. As we
4 all remember, the City's response to
5 the chemical spill fostered
6 confusion, panic, chaos and tarnished
7 public trust and safety to our City's
8 water supply.

9 As a result, this public
10 hearing is necessary to investigate
11 the Administration's emergency
12 management practices in the City's
13 overall preparedness for threats to
14 our water supply. Philadelphians
15 must have confidence that the City's
16 public officials are prepared to
17 offer protection from environmental
18 harm. I look forward to this hearing
19 in collaborating with the
20 Administration to ensure that we have
21 best practices and that something of
22 this sort doesn't happen again.

23 Thank you, Chairman Johnson.
24 And looking forward to hearing from
25 the panel.

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1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
2 you.

3 Councilmember Katherine
4 Gilmore Richardson, Chairwoman of the
5 Environmental Committee, would you
6 like to make comments before we get
7 started?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON:
10 Councilman Curtis Jones, I recognize
11 you for your comments, sir.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
13 so much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you,
14 Member Phillips, as well as Katherine
15 Gilmore Richardson for raising this
16 important discussion and important
17 hearing.

18 One of the things that came
19 to mind during that crisis was the
20 panic that set in throughout the
21 City. Water flew off the shelves.
22 Prices went up. And what I
23 remembered about that was that my
24 grandbaby -- Member Phillips always
25 ask how are the children. And so, my

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1 granddaughter had the presence of
2 mind to go on her phone, keep in mind
3 she's only 9, to pull up a map that
4 showed where the water potentially
5 could have been contaminated, but
6 more importantly, where the water
7 could be drank safely.

8 Had that simple information
9 that a 9-year-old been disseminated
10 to elected officials like ourselves,
11 had it been disseminated in public
12 places and spaces like Channel 64, we
13 could have avoided the hysteria that
14 beset our City. That's number one.

15 And the second reason I
16 compliment you, Member Phillips, is
17 it raises the question of whether or
18 not inexpensive fixes can happen
19 through our already plentiful supply
20 of water. We used to, Member
21 Johnson, you remember this, have
22 Philadelphia brand water we used to
23 give out at festivals and things like
24 that.

25 Why isn't it in -- and I

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1 guess this will come out in the
2 hearing, why doesn't South Philly
3 have a warehouse for that type of
4 water for cases of emergency? Why
5 doesn't the 9th District, the 8th
6 District, the 4th District, the 5th
7 District and everywhere in the City
8 have those kinds of stashes so that
9 when it panics and the Walmarts and
10 7-Elevens get run on, that that
11 essential element, at least a 24-hour
12 stash, be in a place that is safely
13 kept. This cannot cost that much
14 money.

15 And I'll end with this,
16 Mr. Chairman -- and Member Phillips,
17 you're too young to remember this
18 but -- well, I guess all of you are
19 too young to remember this, but back
20 during the Missile Crisis and Cold
21 War, in every elementary basement
22 there was a stash of supplies for the
23 big one that never came. And they
24 were able to keep this stuff so that
25 in cases of crisis and instances of

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1 panic, that distribution can happen.

2 I think, Member Phillips, we
3 have an opportunity to not just look
4 at water, but I just left Food Share,
5 for example, that there should be a
6 situation when the worst-case
7 scenario happens that the best-case
8 planning occurs.

9 So I want to thank you again,
10 Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you
11 again, Member Phillips and Katherine
12 Gilmore Richardson, for raising this
13 issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
15 you.

16 Any other members of the
17 Committee who would like to have
18 opening comments?

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
21 Hearing none, will the Clerk please
22 call the first panel for Resolution
23 230278.

24 THE CLERK: Our first panel
25 to testify we have Michael Carroll.

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1 Also here for questions we have Randy
2 Hayman, Cheryl Bettigole and Dominick
3 Mireles.

4 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
5 Ladies first, so Cheryl.

6 MR. CARROLL: I'm going to be
7 delivering the comments. Good
8 morning, Councilmembers --

9 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Sure.

10 MR. CARROLL: -- Gilmore
11 Richardson, Johnson and members of
12 the Joint Committee. I'm Mike
13 Carroll, Deputy Managing Director of
14 the Office of Transportation,
15 Infrastructure and Sustainability.
16 And with me of course in addition to
17 Dr. Bettigole, the Health
18 Commissioner, is Randy Hayman, the
19 Water Commissioner and Dominick
20 Mireles, the Director of Emergency
21 Management. Thank you for the
22 opportunity to testify regarding the
23 resolution. My testimony will focus
24 on events related to the stringent
25 chemical spill this past March and

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1 lessons learned based on our
2 response.

3 So at 12:27 a.m. on Saturday
4 March 25th, the Water Department was
5 notified by the Delaware Valley Early
6 Warning System (EWS) that a synthetic
7 product was spilled in the tributary
8 of the Delaware River in Bucks
9 County, 9 miles north of the Baxter
10 Drinking Water Treatment Plant.

11 From Saturday morning through
12 Tuesday, March 28th, the staff of the
13 Philadelphia Water Department, the
14 Office of Emergency Management and
15 the rest of the Administration worked
16 around the clock to understand,
17 communicate and respond to this
18 event.

19 Ultimately we managed to
20 avoid any potential risk of public
21 health. That achievement should not
22 be minimized even while we learned
23 lessons from a response. On
24 reflection, three areas seemed most
25 germane: First, the level in nature

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1 of communication from Saturday, March
2 25th through Sunday, March 26th.
3 Second, the City's planning and
4 preparedness for sustained emergency
5 water distribution. And third,
6 through requirements for PWD to
7 ensure the resiliency of the drinking
8 water system overall.

9 Most communication concerns
10 related to the issuance of a mobile
11 alert in the early afternoon of
12 Sunday, March 26th. Many residents
13 received a text alert at roughly
14 1:00 p.m. stating the public could
15 consider drinking bottled water after
16 2:00 p.m. that same day. This gave
17 the public only one hour to react.
18 The make sense of the communication
19 approach and this result is necessary
20 to consider the sequence of events
21 from Saturday morning through Sunday
22 afternoon, starting with the EWS
23 notification.

24 The EWS is a web-based
25 emergency communication system that

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1 provides subscribers notification of
2 events that could impact water
3 quality. EWS notifications arrive
4 roughly every two months since we've
5 joined that system. Different events
6 require different responses, and
7 staff's first responsibility is to
8 define the nature of the event.
9 Every event requires balancing
10 caution with the risk of creating
11 panic and making the public
12 completely numb to future alerts.
13 That balance evolves over time as
14 better information becomes available.

15 In the case of the Trinseo
16 spill, the evaluation of the process
17 took all day Saturday to complete as
18 external partners shared information
19 that they were developing. The fact
20 is that the Administration began
21 sharing information with the public
22 on Saturday evening before all the
23 information that was relevant was
24 even in hand.

25 During the initial

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1 assessment, the only thing that was
2 clear was the material could not be
3 physically contained. This means
4 that if the intake at Baxter was left
5 open, the material could enter the
6 water distribution system. As a
7 result, the decision was made to
8 close the water intake at Baxter and
9 adjust pumping into the system based
10 on the first EWS notification. All
11 subsequent decisions and
12 communication and specifically the
13 opening and closing of the intake
14 were based on the EWS modeling of
15 tidal effects, testing and sampling
16 and other factors affecting water
17 flow.

18 On Saturday morning, EWS
19 modeling indicated a chemical plume
20 would reach the Baxter intake around
21 6:00 a.m. and might remain in front
22 of the intake for over 48 hours.
23 These facts presented a dilemma
24 because the water in storage could
25 not easily last 48 hours and allowing

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1 water levels to drop too low would
2 permanently damage treatment
3 facilities and place the Philadelphia
4 Fire Department to have inadequate
5 water supplies.

6 To address this dilemma, PWD
7 opted to open the intake until
8 roughly 5:00 a.m., an hour before we
9 saw any risk and then to take that
10 time to develop a testing plan to
11 ensure water safety. Unfortunately,
12 it took until 2:30 p.m. on Saturday
13 for the Pennsylvania Department of
14 Environmental Protection to fully
15 identify the contaminants for our
16 regional partners to fully identify
17 the process that only tap water could
18 be ruled out for the simple means of
19 boiling water.

20 Ultimately, the first tests
21 were not available until 7:30 p.m. on
22 Saturday. Meanwhile at 6:00 p.m. the
23 City was able to post to the PWD
24 website public information amplifying
25 press announcements made earlier by

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1 PWD. Unfortunately at that time,
2 clear facts did not exist on what to
3 tell the public to do.

4 Specifically as of 6:00 p.m.
5 on Saturday, there was no information
6 to use based on the concentration of
7 the contamination, the results of
8 samples taken in the morning, the
9 actual risk to public health, the
10 effectiveness of normal water
11 treatment, the supply of water in
12 storage and any risks of the
13 facilities due to the modified
14 operation and the low level of water.

15 Nonetheless, a press briefing
16 was scheduled for 9:30 p.m. Saturday
17 to further inform the public of a
18 threat. At that briefing it was
19 possible to tell the public that the
20 water in their taps was currently
21 safe and asked the public to take
22 measures to conserve water, which
23 would help buy time to develop more
24 information and further options.

25 At this point, a key fact was

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1 that normal opening of the intake for
2 Saturday afternoon had been skipped.
3 That decision was based on the data
4 provided by the EWS model on the
5 expected migration of this spill. As
6 a result, Baxter was operating at
7 critically low levels. By
8 11:00 p.m., PWD had enough
9 information to determine that opening
10 the water intake at the next high
11 tide was necessary to assure supply.

12 A key lesson to note is that
13 was the first point in time when it
14 should have been clear our
15 conservation estimates, although
16 conservative, meant that the water
17 would again reach critically low
18 levels by 2:00 p.m. on Saturday.
19 11:00 p.m. on Saturday evening was
20 our first opportunity to intensify
21 public communication and to advise
22 the public of the options to
23 communicate how to consume water,
24 whereas, one, we had hoped that our
25 recommendation to conserve would be

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1 picked up and would be effective;
2 two, we did not know how widely our
3 web-based outreach and press briefing
4 would be covered by the nightly news;
5 and three, we did not know if a text
6 alert would simply cause panic
7 overnight when stores were closing.
8 We nonetheless recognize a more
9 thorough approach may have minimized
10 public alarm.

11 Late on Sunday morning an
12 evaluation of the public awareness
13 indicated that social media, the
14 press briefing and our web-based
15 contact were still not registering
16 with the public. As a result, OEM
17 initiated a mobile alert. This took
18 roughly an hour to implement and
19 although we had had a press briefing
20 again on Sunday morning, we felt it
21 necessary to move forward with the
22 web alert. Around 12:55 on Sunday,
23 this message was sent and
24 unfortunately it only gave the public
25 until 2:00 p.m. that same day in

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1 order to respond.

2 I'd like to turn my attention
3 to the planning and implementation of
4 the water distribution strategy. The
5 main actor in this work would be the
6 City of Philadelphia's Office of
7 Emergency Management. OEM has had an
8 emergency water distribution strategy
9 for several years. The model for
10 this type of activity includes the
11 responses developed during the COVID
12 shutdown to ensure access to food and
13 support citywide vaccinations.

14 During the chemical spill,
15 OEM put that strategy into effect.
16 This consisted of activating the
17 City's Executive Policy Group,
18 sharing and coordinating with key
19 stakeholders like health care
20 facilities, readying our own stocks
21 of bottled water, placing our vendors
22 on standby to deliver more water,
23 engaging mutual aid jurisdictions and
24 the state for assistance, securing
25 the facilities and locations and

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1 workforce necessary for distribution
2 and communicating updates to the
3 public as available.

4 I should note that a water
5 utility by itself like PWD does not
6 have capacity or the mission to
7 independently coordinate the delivery
8 of alternative potable water sources
9 for a large population in the event
10 of a mass scale water quality
11 incident. It's standard to
12 coordinate among agencies and
13 organizations that combine capacity
14 to meet drinking water needs for many
15 types of emergencies.

16 Should there be a water
17 quality incident, it is established
18 that PWD will cooperate with the
19 City, state and federal partners, but
20 its goal will be focused on restoring
21 reliable safe tap water. OEM already
22 has experience with public
23 distribution of water and other
24 critical goods during days-long
25 events, including the 2015 World

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1 Meeting of Families, the 2016
2 Democratic National Convention and
3 similar during COVID-19 for
4 distribution of vaccination efforts
5 as mentioned.

6 Overall the water
7 distribution plan has two dozen
8 stakeholders, including
9 nongovernmental, state and federal
10 partners. The plan calls for four
11 main strategies for providing
12 equitable access for water: Standing
13 up commodity distribution sites to
14 directly provide commodities -- the
15 strategies include standing temporary
16 commodity distribution sites to
17 directly provide commodities to
18 vehicle or foot traffic at sites that
19 are impacted; starting a mobile
20 delivery program focusing on bringing
21 commodities directly to individuals
22 who cannot retrieve water themselves;
23 deploying water to vulnerable
24 congregate settings through
25 connections to an external water

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1 source and identifying unimpactful
2 water sources in the City's
3 infrastructure that can service
4 24-hour fill locations. These
5 strategies are informed by
6 operational experience on what was
7 feasible as well as by Disability
8 Access and Functional Needs
9 Coordination Group that met several
10 times during the Trinseo response.

11 A few takeaways from
12 (inaudible). The magnitude of this
13 potential emergency cannot be
14 overstated. Providing drinking water
15 for every potentially affected
16 resident will require over 500,000
17 cases which is not feasible. With
18 City stockpiles, mutual aid and
19 industry partners, the City assesses
20 that roughly 20,000 cases of water
21 could be made available within 24
22 hours. This is enough water for a
23 one-day supply for approximately
24 60,000 people.

25 Activating distribution for

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1 an emergency scale event also should
2 be noted that it takes a lot of time
3 to stand this up. These facts make it
4 critical for residents and managers
5 of essential facilitates to have
6 their own plan to be self-sufficient
7 for three days. That is why this is
8 the recommendation issued by all
9 relevant federal agencies and echoed
10 by the City.

11 The Administration continues
12 to provide its plans and as we do so,
13 we will take the opportunity to
14 evaluate ways to improve our capacity
15 but also to amplify the message that
16 everyone needs a plan for a three-day
17 supply of potable water. We will
18 seek to continue including strategies
19 for the public to inquire and sustain
20 that supply by improving our
21 information and identifying resources
22 for the public to use as well as how
23 members of the public can assist
24 their neighbors as well.

25 As a final set of takeaways,

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1 I want to talk about how we must
2 invest in the infrastructure that
3 increases our redundancy of our water
4 system. We're lucky to have two
5 separate watersheds to draw drinking
6 water from. The main constraint in
7 our response to the Trinseo chemical
8 spill resulted from the fact that
9 most of the City east of the
10 Schuylkill River relies on the Baxter
11 Water Treatment Plant for some or all
12 of its water.

13 With already-planned
14 investments, it will be possible to
15 distribute water across the whole
16 city from any one of our three
17 plants. This will make it possible
18 to fully isolate any plant that's put
19 at risk by any event while ensuring
20 that every tap in the City will have
21 access to water from the unaffected
22 parts of our system.

23 Second, the success that we
24 did have in addressing this event
25 resulted from dedicated staff and the

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1 resources available to manage water
2 treatment operations. So ensuring
3 that PWD have adequate operating
4 resources and the rates necessary to
5 fund these could not be clearer than
6 it is now. While grants, loans and
7 other one-time measures can have a
8 benefit for capital investments,
9 stable operating funding is essential
10 to protect the public.

11 In conclusion, the overall
12 response of the Trinseo spill was
13 successful in protecting the public
14 from any risk of contamination from
15 their drinking water. The experience
16 gained will be useful to improve our
17 efforts and that work is ongoing and
18 to also set public expectations about
19 how the City will react in the
20 future.

21 Nonetheless, we recognize
22 more effort will be needed to
23 coordinate operational decisions with
24 public messaging, to ensure timely
25 translation and consideration of ADA

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1 compliance, to refine our water
2 distribution planning and to educate
3 the public about everyone's
4 responsibility to maintain a supply
5 for three days of potable water. We
6 are committed to do that work and to
7 continue working with Council in
8 doing so.

9 Thank you, and we are
10 available for any questions that you
11 may have. And I'll mention that we
12 do have a slide deck. And so, as
13 we're answering questions we'll
14 perhaps pull up some videos and talk
15 through that as well.

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
17 you, Michael. So you're giving the
18 overall testimony for the rest of the
19 City agencies, correct?

20 MR. CARROLL: Yes, that's
21 correct.

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: The
23 Chair recognizes Councilman Anthony
24 Phillips. Any questions, the sponsor
25 of the bill?

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1 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: yes.

2 Thank you so much, Councilman
3 Johnson.

4 One of my first questions
5 that I wanted to raise is around the
6 large -- what's noted in the
7 testimony is that currently there is
8 no capacity to handle a large scale
9 of a water supply incident in the
10 event that there is a need of
11 additional water for residents in the
12 City of Philadelphia.

13 I wanted to hear on record as
14 what's being done to assure how we
15 quickly get water supply in our area
16 in the event that it is more than
17 three days as you mentioned? What
18 things can we do beyond FEMA support,
19 but also what are some things that we
20 have already in the plans in the
21 event that we do have to get FEMA
22 support in that matter, but what can
23 we do now just for our own self-
24 sufficiency, right?

25 So that's the question that I

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1 have. So if you can just kind of
2 provide some remarks on how we can be
3 prepared for our own self-sufficiency
4 without having to immediately go to
5 the state and federal support if that
6 comes a little late?

7 MR. CARROLL: I'm going to
8 ask OEM Director Dominick Mireles to
9 start off a response to that.

10 MR. MIRELES: I think the
11 question -- good afternoon. I'm
12 Dominick Mireles, the Director with
13 the City's Office of Emergency
14 Management. So the question I think
15 touches on a couple opportunities
16 and, Councilmember, you highlighted
17 one of the big pieces, which is when
18 there are needs using a formalized
19 mechanism, which is a resource
20 request to the state and if the state
21 were to determine and local
22 emergencies were declared, et cetera,
23 they may determine to submit a
24 resource request to FEMA and the
25 federal government.

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1 But things that we can do
2 outside of that I would say are kind
3 of two-pronged. I heard the
4 Councilmember mentioned warehousing
5 and storage of bottled water, and
6 that's certainly a strategy and
7 certainly a strategy that's already
8 employed consistently by our office
9 on a small scale.

10 I do think that there are
11 some very real constraints as far as
12 resources to be able to do that. We
13 did run the numbers of cost alone.
14 What it would cost worst-case
15 scenario to have a three-day supply
16 for every resident of Philadelphia
17 would be about \$10 million worth of
18 bottled water, and that stock would
19 need to be rotated about every two
20 years, and it doesn't include lease,
21 it doesn't include the warehousing
22 staff, whatever.

23 So there is cost-benefit
24 analysis of how much do you keep
25 versus how much does it cost to keep.

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1 But I think as one of the strategies
2 everyone thinks why isn't there just
3 a warehouse of these things, it truly
4 comes down to a resource
5 consideration.

6 And so, where we lack perhaps
7 the capacity today to warehouse
8 enough water for every Philadelphian
9 that might need it, we look at
10 strategic partnerships, so of course
11 we keep contracts to be able to
12 purchase water, you know, leverage
13 that regularly when we get into the
14 summer season and get ready for heat
15 health emergencies, get ready for
16 events where we're going to have
17 first responders working festivals
18 and things like that, but we also
19 have in addition to our contractors
20 strategic partnerships.

21 We're very fortunate that we
22 have a lot of really good brands in
23 the City. Hardware brands, grocery
24 chains, the big box stores, et
25 cetera, and do have though modest but

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1 a supply-chain planning capacity in
2 our office, do have points of contact
3 with some of those national brands to
4 be able to talk about purchasing out
5 of the norm, right, to be able to
6 purchase in bulk, but also to really
7 relay directly what we anticipate and
8 forecast our needs might be in an
9 emergency so that those brands if
10 they so determine, of course they're
11 private sector, but if they so
12 determine to make their own decisions
13 like turning over soda manufacturing
14 alliance, for instance, to purely
15 bottle the water to increase their
16 capacity.

17 And so, those -- to answer
18 your question briefly, it's two
19 strategies. It's the strategic
20 partnerships and our own contracts
21 and then there is some level of
22 warehousing, although I think
23 striking that balance is a
24 conversation we definitely will be
25 interested in hearing.

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1 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Yeah.
2 One of the things I want to ask is,
3 is there a way that we can -- for
4 resources we may not be able to do it
5 ourselves as in our own warehouse,
6 but we can outsource just like
7 there's assurance of some sort,
8 right. Like, if there's maybe a
9 company that's somewhere in another
10 part of Pennsylvania that may be
11 really good at always having a water
12 supply together, right, and they
13 could just do that for a number of
14 other cities that might have this
15 issue, and that way it's just like an
16 assurance thing in the event that
17 this happens we can actually have
18 someone that we can just go to.

19 Has that been supported or
20 are there any other companies or
21 entities in the nation or in
22 Pennsylvania that we can go and look
23 at when these events happen beyond
24 our federal support?

25 MR. MIRELES: Yes, sir. So

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1 going back three years ago, we were
2 awarded a FEMA regional catastrophic
3 preparedness grant. And with that
4 grant, we did hire 18 members for the
5 lifespan of that grant who is doing
6 supply chain planning. And with that
7 we've made strategic partnerships
8 both with our counterparts in New
9 Jersey and with folks in the national
10 capital region down near Baltimore,
11 D.C.

12 And one of the efforts, one
13 of the focuses of that supply chain
14 worked with the entire Mid-Atlantic
15 area, is working with the grocery
16 sector and we've talked about those
17 things. We've visited the
18 distribution centers in Carlisle,
19 Pennsylvania and outside of
20 Baltimore, et cetera.

21 And I can't speak on behalf
22 of the industry too much, but what
23 I've heard in those conversations is
24 a lot of things are just-in-time
25 production and just-in-time delivery

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1 now. And so, even for the very large
2 chains their distribution centers
3 product's not sitting and waiting.
4 Product is very much what are the
5 demand signals, what is being
6 purchased at the individual grocery
7 stores, for instance, and what do we
8 need to be able to refill that
9 sometimes on a daily but at least
10 several time per week basis. So it's
11 definitely an avenue that we're
12 continuing to look into and
13 understand.

14 We do know there's some
15 jurisdictions that have actually
16 brought on third-party logistics
17 managers to keep a certain stock of
18 supplies, but the City outright owns
19 that and it sits for that
20 jurisdiction's direction. But again,
21 we are and continue to look at this
22 creatively because really all the
23 disasters and not just this potential
24 emergency with the chemical spill
25 have shown us a lot of out-supply

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1 chain and the importance of it.

2 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Yeah,
3 absolutely. One of the things that
4 I'm thinking about -- listen, I want
5 to reserve the rest of the time for
6 other Members to ask questions, but I
7 want to circle back, I just have two
8 questions that I want to get out
9 quickly.

10 But one of the things I'm
11 thinking about is have you considered
12 the idea of partnering with other
13 cities in Pennsylvania whereas we can
14 split the cost for these emergency
15 management situations because
16 obviously this may not happen to all
17 of us at the same time, right, and
18 there could be an opportunity there
19 where we have a system, a department
20 that's always ready to go in
21 Pennsylvania, you know, for these
22 matters.

23 One of the things I was
24 greatly concerned about is the fact
25 that I was pulling money out of my

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1 own pocket and my own expenses to
2 give water to residents in our
3 District. And I'm like immediately
4 why doesn't the City of Philadelphia
5 already have water ready just for at
6 least a day. So that's something we
7 certainly just can't be like, okay,
8 with -- so that's the first question.

9 And then my second question
10 has to do with just the notice, but
11 I'm going to let you get to the first
12 question about partnering with other
13 spaces.

14 MR. MIRELES: Sure,
15 absolutely. And so, one of the great
16 things about emergency management but
17 also like all of my colleagues here
18 is we really do work with our peer
19 cities and also our neighboring
20 jurisdictions. And I do have to give
21 a shout-out to the city of Baltimore
22 who within the first few hours of
23 this incident had made some of the
24 phone calls to the established
25 contacts that we have, of course

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1 through that regional catastrophic
2 planning. And they said, our
3 warehouse has 45 pallets of bottled
4 water. You figure out how to get the
5 trucks down here and they're yours
6 and we'll figure out on the back-end.

7 And so, I think there are
8 probably more opportunity and again
9 striking a balance of how much are we
10 going to put into preparedness and
11 who owns that, so to speak, at the
12 end of the day, but it absolutely is
13 a part of the strategy. We call it
14 mutual aid, and it's one of the
15 things that we're really proud of in
16 our industry, to be able to call upon
17 one another and support one another
18 for all types of things.

19 But absolutely, I will take
20 the point that there's probably
21 opportunity to do more and I
22 appreciate the suggestion.

23 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Yes, I
24 would love to at some point get a
25 plan around that mutually. I think

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1 that will be really helpful for our
2 residents. So the last question I
3 have before I turn it over, I can
4 circle back later, we can turn it
5 over to other Members, is what is the
6 Administration's plan to begin the
7 process of restoring faith in our
8 water supply following this toxic
9 spill? Particularly, I'm more
10 concerned as well about the
11 notification process that we
12 received, because in hindsight I'm
13 looking at this and I'm saying we
14 just kind of notified the residents
15 that this spill has taken place,
16 we're running tests, you know, let's
17 look, you know, we're still running
18 tests to see if the water is
19 contaminated just letting the public
20 know. But the immediate response was
21 of panic, right, get some water, get
22 your water now, consider getting
23 water.

24 And I think it's just sort of
25 how do we, I think, going forward

6/1/2023

1 there needs to be stronger ways to
2 communicate when these things happen
3 and has that been thought of. But
4 again, the question is what is your
5 plan to begin the process of
6 restoring faith in the water supply
7 following a toxic spill, how can you
8 begin to make residents feel good now
9 about the water but also feel good
10 about the next time something like
11 this happens?

12 MR. CARROLL: Well, the
13 process began during the event and we
14 were abundantly communicative from
15 that moment forward, very clear in
16 our message, very transparent. Some
17 actors thought we were too
18 transparent. We got feedback we were
19 too transparent. We rejected that
20 feedback.

21 How do you measure people's
22 confidence, so personally I got a lot
23 of good feedback. I got maybe 20
24 responses. There was one person who
25 was continuing to be upset, you know,

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1 despite information we provided them.
2 Most people felt like, yeah, there
3 was panic but after we got through
4 the panic, things seemed to make
5 sense. They made sense more over
6 time.

7 And so, we want to jump past
8 the panic but we have to be
9 realistic. You cannot talk about
10 people's drinking water and guarantee
11 there's never going to be any panic.
12 It's a very personal, it's a very
13 emotional issue. We all depend on
14 water. We all take water for
15 granted, so there's really not a
16 realistic scenario where there's no
17 panic. And what we're talking about
18 is minimizing the panic as much as
19 possible.

20 And there's a lot of dilemmas
21 that are worked into that. And so,
22 what we want to make sure we're doing
23 moving forward is reflecting on what
24 happened and anything that happened
25 in the future, and just make it clear

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1 the City of Philadelphia's brand, the
2 Philadelphia Water Department's brand
3 is going to maximize transparency.

4 And like I said in my
5 testimony, we may have been able to
6 get that message out on Saturday
7 night. There were some unknowns, but
8 we're not going to take a mulligan on
9 that. We're going to figure out how
10 to get the message out as soon as we
11 understand, and that requires
12 coordination between the operating
13 groups and the communication groups
14 so that the implications of decisions
15 that are being made in realtime can
16 be reflected immediately on how we
17 message that, what we're telling the
18 public to do, how we translate that
19 in the different messages for folks
20 that don't speak English and the
21 level of intensity with respect to
22 whether we're putting mobile alerts
23 out, whether we're on television,
24 whether we're on the radio, whether
25 we're calling Councilmembers.

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1 We learned a lot and I think
2 there's some changes. Especially as
3 Council pointed out, we could have
4 certainly made sure you guys had
5 awareness Saturday night so that you
6 could both push out messages and
7 answer questions from your own
8 constituents. But, you know, we do
9 have a centralized communication
10 apparatus for a reason, because the
11 message always has to be consistent.

12 And so, there might be some
13 training we would want Council staff
14 to go through. A playbook, we would
15 want you guys to respond to. So
16 these are some things to think
17 through a little bit more as we're
18 continuing to develop the tools that
19 we have at our disposal.

20 If I can just make one more
21 point. This goes back to some of
22 your previous questions. I just want
23 to reiterate this. I'll do it again
24 and again. I don't think anything
25 like this has happened in the past 20

6/1/2023

1 years, right, where we had to kind of
2 get the message out, the water is at
3 risk, don't turn your tap on.

4 It's not uncommon that we
5 encounter situations where there may
6 be a decision to boil the water, but
7 this is different. If we look 20
8 years in the future, I do want to
9 make sure we're doing the best we can
10 to stand up and communicate a good
11 water distribution plan, but the best
12 water distribution plan is always
13 going to be treatment facilities, the
14 infrastructure and your tap.

15 And we are blessed. I can
16 only -- maybe New York City. We're
17 one of the few cities that have two
18 completely separate watersheds to
19 draw water from. They're completely
20 separate. So the type of event that
21 would both affect the Delaware River
22 and Schuylkill River, if that's
23 happened, we all have much bigger
24 problems to worry about. So we have
25 the very rare opportunity with

6/1/2023

1 feasible levels of investment over
2 the next 20 years to completely
3 address this type of situation with
4 no need to implement a water
5 distribution plan at all, really just
6 we'll switch over as a utility, PWD
7 will switch over from the Baxter
8 Plant to one of the other two plants
9 or a combination and people can sleep
10 easy. And rest assured we will let
11 people know what's going on, but
12 there's really no need for us to
13 implement an extraordinary water
14 distribution plan.

15 I'll turn it over to
16 Commissioner Hayman for some thoughts
17 on that.

18 COMMISSIONER HAYMAN:

19 (Muted).

20 MR. CARROLL: You're muted,
21 Commissioner.

22 COMMISSIONER HAYMAN: I
23 apologize. If I can say briefly that
24 Mr. Carroll is correct, that we have
25 the water revitalization plan, our

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1 engineers have been working
2 diligently on this plan. And what
3 will happen is it will allow us to
4 switch as he said between the two
5 rivers.

6 There's a multitude of
7 projects that we'll be going to
8 place. And once that plan is
9 completed, we'll be in a situation
10 where we can avoid this type of
11 situation, this type of crisis. When
12 it comes to communications, I think
13 it's important that we kind of find
14 ways to better communication during
15 the crisis, but also share with you
16 that there's communications that we
17 can do before the crisis, and that's
18 tied to education.

19 The more we educate the
20 community about how our water system
21 works, how water comes in from the
22 river that goes into the water basin,
23 is held there for several hours and
24 goes into the system, how many hours
25 it takes to go through the system, I

6/1/2023

1 think that will help us in being able
2 to quell some of the frustration that
3 took place. And also, two, we have
4 opportunities to educate people about
5 the testing process.

6 Often now with Apple phones
7 people think you can just push a
8 button and you have the answer to
9 your question. What actually happens
10 is testing takes hours to take place.
11 And so, I think the more the public
12 understands and they can get, as
13 Mr. Carroll said, the earlier we're
14 able to give information out to the
15 Councilmembers and to the public, I
16 think the better we will be as far as
17 people feeling more comfortable and
18 feeling more confident in the process
19 we're following.

20 MR. CARROLL: I might ask
21 Glen Abrams, can you show the
22 communication slide, just put that on
23 the screen and that also helps the
24 Councilmember's question. Slide 11.

25 MR. ABRAMS: I'm pulling it

6/1/2023

1 up. Just a moment.

2 MR. CARROLL: Okay.

3 MR. ABRAMS: Okay. Is it
4 showing?

5 MR. CARROLL: Yeah. So this
6 sort of shows you that hierarchy
7 we're talking about. I think the
8 takeaway is we kind of jumped from
9 the blue, maybe the press briefing is
10 that beige right up to the red in two
11 hours. And certainly a lesson
12 learned is not to make that jump all
13 in one go in a short period of time.
14 But this shows you the intensity of
15 communication that we want to work
16 around.

17 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Okay.
18 I see here. Yep, thank you. And I
19 appreciate the part about -- I give
20 too many comments because I don't
21 want to (inaudible), but I do
22 appreciate the part about the
23 translation part, which is going to
24 be really key in future
25 communications for folks.

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1 MR. CARROLL: Thank you.

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.

3 Councilman Curtis Jones.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
5 Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Member
6 Phillips, for those great inquiries.

7 Just briefly, on the topic
8 about \$10 million to implement a
9 water rotation storage process, I
10 don't think we have to bear that
11 burden alone. I think that if we
12 work with our partners in the state
13 and our boots on the ground such as
14 Philabundance and Share, that we
15 could come up with an RFP that we
16 floated to the state to say to,
17 Share, we want you to keep X amount
18 of dollars in that huge warehouse
19 that you're renovating and every two
20 years on the rotation or year and a
21 half, give it away, put it as a part
22 of a rotation package that re-up that
23 amount of water for safe storage for
24 the next year and a half.

25 So I'd love for you to reach

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1 out to the Chairman and to Member
2 Phillips to kind of brainstorm around
3 how we can tap into the \$6 billion
4 surplus that the Commonwealth has to
5 safeguard Philadelphians who are part
6 of that Commonwealth, so that's
7 number one. Number two, when you
8 talk about infrastructure repairs,
9 and maybe I'm setting myself up, but
10 is that a part of that project that
11 would go from a City Avenue treatment
12 plant down one mile across the river
13 into --

14 MR. CARROLL: Yes, sir.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: I knew it.

16 MR. CARROLL: Yes, sir.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES:

18 Mr. Chairman, I'm setting myself up.

19 MR. CARROLL: We received
20 your support.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: So in that
22 scenario we would be able to shift
23 water from the Schuylkill to the
24 eastern side in Phillips' District
25 hypothetically?

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1 MR. CARROLL: Precisely, yes.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: All

3 right --

4 COMMISSIONER HAYMAN: I want
5 to stress that it will also take a
6 combination of projects, it's not
7 just one project, a combination of
8 projects of the water revitalization
9 plan to make that happen, but it will
10 happen once we complete it.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: Now, I'm
12 going to have to pay a little more
13 attention to that. So we'll take our
14 share or my share of the blame and
15 share it with my colleagues. So
16 we're going to take a hard look at
17 that project, which is an ambitious
18 undertaking, but in a practical sense
19 could have safeguarded some of our
20 concerns. So put that in the parking
21 lot.

22 Second thing that I would
23 want to talk about is a while back,
24 Mr. Chairman, it was required post-
25 911 for us to increase our

6/1/2023

1 preparedness against terrorist
2 attacks around water infrastructure.
3 And I'm hoping that this is the kind
4 of scare that allows us to leap from
5 ahead based on Member Phillips'
6 inquiries to better make us prepared,
7 because this could have happened on
8 purpose in a lot of ways, and it only
9 goes to show that we need to have
10 redundancy around not only sources of
11 water because we are blessed to have
12 the Delaware and the Schuylkill, but
13 we ought to be prepared for
14 shenanigans --

15 MR. CARROLL: Yeah.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: -- that we
17 can take this opportunity to tighten
18 up our security, our shut-offs and
19 things like that. So I wanted to get
20 your response to that.

21 MR. CARROLL: So,
22 Commissioner Hayman, you want to
23 reference some of the projects that
24 are in the queue from that
25 perspective and maybe, Dom, if you

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1 want to add anything on the homeland
2 security aspects of the question once
3 Commissioner is finished?

4 COMMISSIONER HAYMAN: Okay.
5 Actually I want Ben Jewell who's our
6 Deputy Commissioner of Operations to
7 talk about some of the projects that
8 we have, especially within the water
9 revitalization program.

10 MR. JEWELL: Good afternoon.
11 Thank you. Yes, there's been some
12 discussion of the water
13 revitalization --

14 MR. CARROLL: Would you
15 identify yourself.

16 MR. JEWELL: Excuse me. Ben
17 Jewell, Deputy Commissioner of
18 Operations, Philadelphia Water
19 Department. Yes, there's been a lot
20 of discussion about the water
21 revitalization plan. We look at it
22 as like a path forward towards
23 safeguarding the water resources,
24 continuing our dedication to public
25 health and safety and being able to

6/1/2023

1 deliver safe and continuous drinking
2 water to the residents of the City,
3 all of whom are our employees as
4 well.

5 We are undertaking a number
6 of large projects. The tunnels
7 underneath the Schuylkill River will
8 interconnect to our treatment plants,
9 both of which withdraw water from the
10 Schuylkill River. There will be a
11 project to upgrade one of our
12 treatment plants, the Belmont
13 Treatment Plant, which is on City
14 Avenue. It will expand capacity
15 which will provide us the opportunity
16 to renew the Queen Lane Treatment
17 Plant which will be replaced with a
18 new facility.

19 Those are some major projects
20 that will allow us to produce the
21 drinking water and create some
22 distribution redundancy, and there's
23 another whole host of upgrades to
24 system storage and transmission that
25 all together sum up to our ability to

6/1/2023

1 deliver drinking water to the
2 residents of the City from either the
3 Delaware River or the Schuylkill
4 River.

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: So could I
6 ask you to share the outline of that
7 plan with our Chairman and with
8 Member Phillips because it is a
9 safety valve, if you would, for cases
10 just like this?

11 MR. JEWELL: Yes, it will be
12 our pleasure to share that
13 information.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
15 Mr. Chairman.

16 MR. CARROLL: Dominick, could
17 you speak a little bit to some of the
18 homeland security issues?

19 MR. MIRELES: Yes,
20 absolutely. I actually -- that's a
21 very real threat to any water system,
22 but of course here in a major city
23 like the City of Philadelphia. So,
24 Councilmember, I appreciate you
25 picked up on that. We've actually

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1 taken an all-hazards approach though
2 because while it very well could be a
3 human-caused event, we also know a
4 technological event or a natural
5 event could be a part of this as
6 well.

7 As a matter of fact, we
8 suffered some water facility damage
9 during Hurricane Ida several years
10 ago. And thankfully, it didn't take
11 the system offline in any kind of
12 noticeable way, at least to the
13 customer, but still impactful, and
14 we're in fact still recovering from
15 that as a city today, at the very
16 least financially.

17 And so, when we talk about
18 preparedness, we think about a
19 preparedness cycle. And what that
20 really means is a way to methodically
21 identify the risks that we think are
22 realistic for us here, which
23 terrorism is absolutely one of them.
24 Estimating what our capabilities are
25 to deal with that, figuring what the

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1 gaps are in those capabilities and
2 coming up with strategies to either
3 build capacity or sustain quite
4 honestly capacity that we have today,
5 and then building a joint plan with
6 our key stakeholders so everything we
7 do is inner agency, but then
8 validating those capabilities through
9 things like training and exercises
10 and revisiting those plans
11 periodically, so we just don't put it
12 on the shelf and say this is going to
13 carry us through.

14 And the reason that I
15 highlight that in a little bit of
16 detail is it has to be labor-
17 intensive, and I'll be honest, we at
18 OEM look at a portfolio of about 100
19 different either functional or
20 hazard-specific plans as far as
21 things that we should be prepared for
22 or capabilities we should be prepared
23 to deliver. And one of the ways that
24 I think to measure how much we're
25 putting into that, we have some

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1 figures we would be glad to share as
2 far as a per capita cost of what
3 we're putting into our emergency
4 preparedness program, how much we're
5 paying per resident, for instance.

6 We have some comparison with
7 other major cities. And so, that's a
8 detail that we would be glad to share
9 or follow up with you offline. But I
10 think to your point there's always
11 room for my office, great interest in
12 having that preparedness at the very
13 top level, but it is a process and it
14 is iterative and it is ongoing. So I
15 hope that answered your question.

16 But other than to say, yes,
17 absolutely terrorism is a concern in
18 this space.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: It was
20 cryptic enough, but it was specific
21 enough that I know you're on it.

22 So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're
24 welcome.

25 Councilwoman Kendra Brooks.

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1 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Thank
2 you so much, Mr. Chairman.

3 So I'm going to go back, and
4 I want to thank Councilmember Jones
5 for having you kind of spell out some
6 of the next steps in terms of in the
7 event this happens again. But I'm
8 concerned about the process for
9 notifying elected officials. I know
10 you say you saw it as a problem. And
11 if something was to happen tomorrow,
12 what is the process for Council to be
13 notified? That's my first question.

14 And also, based on the
15 pyramid that you just showed us, when
16 does communication with Council come
17 in with that as well because being
18 prepared means that we are all
19 prepared as a system? And Council
20 was part of the system because we
21 have constituent services folks and
22 another vehicle for us to be able to
23 share throughout the City.

24 So I'm just really concerned
25 about what is the process of

6/1/2023

1 notifying elected officials currently
2 as of today and where do we fall in
3 that pyramid that you showed online
4 in terms of communications?

5 MR. CARROLL: So that pyramid
6 is all public communication.

7 Currently what we do today is we
8 inform Council as we're informing the
9 public. So what we're contemplating
10 and we need to work with Council
11 around is a cycled communication
12 that's appropriate outside of public
13 communication. I think that's what
14 you guys have an appetite for.

15 So there's a few
16 sensitivities as you can imagine, and
17 maybe it's the old phrase loose lips
18 sink ships, we just need to make sure
19 that when we're sharing with you
20 privileged information and when we're
21 giving information the public does
22 not have access to, that we have a
23 common understanding about what you
24 do with that information and how we
25 coordinate making it available to the

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1 public.

2 So that's something that we
3 need to work on specifically because
4 you can imagine as departments we all
5 have sort of a stake in things.

6 There's a lot of sausage-making that
7 went on and goes on when we're
8 bantering back and forth, we're
9 disagreeing about stuff, somebody
10 says something in the Water
11 Department and OEM says, no, that's
12 not quite true, here's what the real
13 facts are.

14 And in the interest of making
15 sure that we're not losing the public
16 trust, that kind of work cannot end
17 up out on social media. That can't
18 be the message that we put out there.
19 There's this iteration that takes
20 place in realtime as information is
21 coming through. And so, for example
22 when we talk about the Trinseo spill,
23 we didn't know what the chemicals
24 were. We didn't know exactly what
25 the chemicals were and it took us a

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1 lot of time to develop an
2 understanding about what the
3 potential concentrations were, and
4 that's important because in certain
5 dilutions it's really not a problem.

6 It's not another data that
7 ends in why (inaudible), but in
8 higher concentrations that's where
9 people started making references to
10 what happened in East Palestine. And
11 one of the chemicals was the butyl
12 acrylate. That is the chemical that
13 people were kind of panicked about in
14 East Palestine.

15 And I will tell you I think
16 to this day there is not agreement
17 among the U.S. Coast Guard, EPA,
18 Bucks County, Emergency Management
19 Authority and the City of
20 Philadelphia about what the right
21 thing to do was and what we ended up
22 doing. And I wanted to emphasize the
23 point we decided to be very
24 transparent. I think we will always
25 decide to be transparent. That's

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1 going to be our brand. But we got
2 feedback anecdotally that we should
3 not have done that.

4 We should not have been that
5 transparent with the public because
6 some people, and I will say people
7 who were north of the spill and
8 therefore not affected in the same
9 way we were, took the position that
10 this was too much information for the
11 public to have.

12 And so, if we're working with
13 City Council, your staff and we're
14 trying to share with you guys these
15 understandings that are evolving over
16 time, we really need to make sure
17 that that kind of I'll just use the
18 term sausage-making doesn't become
19 the cause for more confusion that
20 lasts longer. And as we're very
21 deliberate and became very
22 deliberate, it took us time to make
23 it through the messages solid that
24 we're all kind of seeing from the
25 same book and --

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1 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Listen,
2 I understand all that you said. I
3 just want to push back a little bit
4 because when the public looks at us,
5 they see us all as government.

6 MR. CARROLL: Yeah.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: So when
8 you guys mess up, we mess up. We
9 were still out -- I didn't want to go
10 back to what happened, but based on
11 what you said, we were all out in the
12 public managing the crisis with no
13 information. So when the public
14 looks at government, they look at all
15 of us as --

16 MR. CARROLL: Absolutely.
17 Absolutely.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: And I
19 also want to say for my 16 other
20 colleagues even if it's just
21 Councilmembers, if we have a closed-
22 door discussion --

23 MR. CARROLL: Yeah.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: --
25 about the emergency management of

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1 this City and it is not in our best
2 interest to spread false information
3 to cause a greater uproar because we
4 are the ones who are going to feel
5 the impact the greatest, and I'm not
6 just talking about City Council. I'm
7 talking about government, our state
8 reps and our senators and stuff,
9 everyone was caught offguard.

10 So I would just like moving
11 forward that we have a solid plan on
12 how communication happens. We have
13 our own sausage-making to get
14 involved. We don't want to get
15 involved in the technicalities of
16 that, but also want to be trusted
17 messengers to help you move this
18 forward, because just right now I
19 think you guys are having a water bar
20 test of Philly's water.

21 That's something that we as
22 Council could have shared out as
23 well. I don't know about my
24 colleagues, but I read it in the
25 paper. I didn't know it was a thing

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1 that was happening. So I think we
2 need to be more communicative as
3 government in general because the
4 public looks at us as one.

5 MR. CARROLL: So there's two
6 things there. One is making sure
7 that Council knows what we know. I
8 think that's the easier part, and we
9 did that. We did that during the day
10 on sort of Sunday with folks who
11 checked in and we did it again more
12 formally on Monday.

13 But the part and the thing I
14 think that's really tricky is what to
15 do with what we know, what we do, and
16 that idea has to be centralized. It
17 has to come from what's currently the
18 Mayor's Office of Communications and
19 they need to tell you based on the
20 specific facts of this event what we
21 know and don't know, here's the plan
22 the whole city is going to implement.

23 And I think what we can do
24 better next time is we can make sure
25 you guys see that plan, what to do

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1 with this information at the same
2 time pretty much we do, at least
3 Councilmembers like you said. And
4 then if there's assignments for
5 Council offices, we can be giving
6 those assignments once that's
7 available. So that's clearly a
8 lesson from this.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Thank
10 you so much. That's all I have.
11 Thank you guys for the good work that
12 you do.

13 MR. CARROLL: Thank you.

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Any
15 other questions or comments from
16 members of the Committee for this
17 panel?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: All
20 right. Hearing none, will the Clerk
21 please call the next panel please.

22 MR. CARROLL: Thank you.

23 THE CLERK: On the next panel
24 we have Adam Nagel and Maurice
25 Sampson.

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1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Adam,
2 just state your name officially for
3 the record and begin your testimony.

4 MR. NAGEL: Thank you,
5 Mr. Chairman. My name is Adam Nagel.
6 I serve as Campaign Manager for
7 PennFuture. Good afternoon, Chairs
8 Johnson and Gilmore Richardson as
9 well as members of the Joint
10 Committee. PennFuture is a statewide
11 environmental advocacy nonprofit and
12 our main focus of our work is to
13 improve and protect water resources
14 and water quality across
15 Pennsylvania, with particular
16 (inaudible) from the Delaware River
17 Basin and Philadelphia through public
18 outreach and education, advocacy and
19 litigation.

20 Philadelphia's drinking water
21 supply faced a credible threat on the
22 night of March 24, 2023. More than
23 8,000 gallons of toxic chemicals were
24 spilled into Otter Creek, which
25 endangered the drinking water

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1 provided to Philadelphia by the
2 Delaware River. This was not the
3 first time that this chemical plant
4 had contaminated the land or water
5 around which it operated, but this
6 incident represented the greatest
7 threat to one of our most precious
8 national resources and the residents
9 of Philadelphia.

10 This hearing is already
11 critical to examine what went right
12 and what went terribly wrong. And
13 I'd like to thank Councilmember
14 Phillips for introducing the
15 resolution and ensuring that this
16 hearing took place. Based on
17 reporting surrounding the incident
18 and the immediate aftermath, it
19 appears that the systems put in place
20 to handle these emergencies worked as
21 they should.

22 Notification was provided to
23 the proper authorities and to impact
24 water utility systems so that all
25 parties can begin to assess and

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1 manage the danger presented by the
2 toxic chemical spill. We know that
3 staff at the Philadelphia Water
4 Department worked quickly to do just
5 that.

6 However, as we all know from
7 our experience in the days that
8 followed, residents were ultimately
9 failed by members at the highest
10 level of City government and were not
11 adequately prepared for this credible
12 threat due to delayed notice,
13 confusing directives and a failure to
14 communicate properly or at all with
15 Philadelphians who speak languages
16 other than English.

17 In the two short days, the
18 trust that remained in our drinking
19 water system collapsed. It is an
20 unfortunate reality that many
21 Philadelphians already did not drink
22 their tap water and many have not
23 done so for years. According to an
24 annual survey conducted by the Water
25 Department and the University of

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1 Pennsylvania's ImpactedED Center, 42
2 percent of Philadelphians opted for
3 bottled water last year.

4 Despite the tireless work of
5 staff within the Water Department,
6 academic institutions, nonprofit
7 organizations and community members,
8 too many of us still do not trust if
9 the water we are drinking is clean.

10 The Administration's response to the
11 toxic chemical spill made it that
12 much more difficult for residents to
13 trust their tap water and undid the
14 work that has been done through
15 initiatives like Drink Philly Tap.

16 To better understand the
17 manmade threat to our water supply
18 and better inform its own crisis
19 protocols, the Water Department
20 should procure an independent risk
21 assessment of industrial activity
22 upstream of its water intake to
23 inform and develop meaningful state
24 and City monitoring and watchdog
25 efforts so that these environmental

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1 disasters don't catch the City
2 flatfooted again.

3 The risk assessment should of
4 course be shared with City Council
5 and the public to begin the restored
6 trust in the Department by extension
7 our (inaudible) water. Going
8 further, investment, innovation and
9 urgency are required to adequately
10 address the damage done by the
11 response to the emergency and instill
12 public confidence in the City's
13 drinking water supply is an enormous
14 challenge that can only be overcome
15 through aggressive efforts to update
16 our infrastructure and improve water
17 quality.

18 Luckily, the City has already
19 set an effort to do just that through
20 its Green City, Clean Waters program
21 and the water revitalization plan
22 which we are gratefully hearing more
23 about today. If leveraged to their
24 full potential, these initiatives
25 will provide much needed improvement

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1 to our water infrastructure and
2 significantly reduce water pollution.

3 PennFuture also acknowledges
4 that the Water Department has
5 successfully obtained a substantial
6 amount of funding through
7 low-interest loans made available via
8 the Bipartisan Infrastructure law and
9 other sources from the federal
10 government to address lead pipe
11 removal and other necessary upgrades
12 to our water infrastructure.

13 That said, the threat to our
14 water supply will only increase in
15 the years to come. As a result of
16 the combined impact of short-sighted
17 environmental policies at the federal
18 level, including the United States
19 Supreme Court's recent ruling in
20 Sackett v. EPA, the existential
21 threat of climate change.

22 Climate change and sea level
23 rise pose an enormous threat to the
24 water supply. According to the
25 regionally released Climate

6/1/2023

1 Resilience Research Agenda for the
2 Greater Philadelphia area, river and
3 sea levels are rising. Observations
4 indicate that the tidal Delaware
5 River rose at the rate of about 1.2
6 inches per decade over the last
7 century.

8 Sea level is projected to
9 rise in Philadelphia by 7 to 11
10 inches by the 2030s, 14 to 19 inches
11 by the 2050s, and 24 to 38 inches by
12 the 2080s. The high-end estimate for
13 sea level rise by the 2080s is 45
14 inches. By 2100, sea levels are
15 projected to rise by as much as 64
16 inches. What does this mean for
17 Philadelphians? The report
18 continues. Sea level rise alone is
19 increasing the number of days that
20 Philadelphians experience high tide
21 or sunny day flooding, flooding due
22 to tide levels in the absence of the
23 storm.

24 Coupled with storm surges,
25 sea level rising causing an increase

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1 frequency of coastal flooding, which
2 is exacerbated per the (inaudible) by
3 heavy precipitation events. As the
4 sea level in the Delaware River
5 (inaudible) continues to rise, it
6 will also push salty and brackish
7 water up river, causing impacts to
8 ecosystems and water treatment
9 facilities designed to only
10 accommodate fresh water.

11 In addition, the more
12 frequent and more severe weather
13 events associated with climate change
14 will put increasing pressure on all
15 facilities, which may result in an
16 increase in accidents, spills or
17 other emergencies requiring a
18 response from government including
19 the Water Department.

20 We must move quickly to
21 improve confidence in our water
22 supply for all Philadelphians and for
23 the generations to come. Although
24 this will require substantial
25 investment from the federal

6/1/2023

1 government, City Council and Mayor
2 Kenney's Administration should
3 utilize remaining American Rescue
4 Plan Act funds to expedite execution
5 of the Green City, Clean Waters
6 program and the water revitalization
7 plan.

8 Using this historic funding
9 to invest in our water infrastructure
10 will mean cleaning water for
11 residents at a cheaper rate over time
12 since the Water Department was not
13 able to rely on debt service to fund
14 these capital improvements. As much
15 as the City's response to toxic
16 chemical spill highlighted
17 significant gaps in their emergency
18 management practices, it also further
19 underscores the myriad threats to our
20 drinking water.

21 For many in the City, this
22 crisis was the latest injustice in an
23 ongoing series, and complacency here
24 will only multiply that ongoing harm.
25 Mistrust in our drinking water is a

6/1/2023

1 deep cut to many residents who are
2 already beset by anxiety because of
3 ongoing environmental problems such
4 as asbestos in our schools, lead in
5 our water pipes and pollution in our
6 air.

7 We applaud City Council for
8 authorizing this hearing so that we
9 can learn from this recent emergency
10 and better prepare ourselves for the
11 environmental crises to come.

12 Philadelphia needs its leaders to
13 step up and take on its growing list
14 of environmental problems.

15 We hope that this hearing
16 will serve as an example for all of
17 the years to come. Thank you again
18 for this opportunity and I look
19 forward to answering any questions
20 you may have.

21 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
22 you.

23 Could the next panelist state
24 your title and begin your testimony.

25 MR. SAMPSON: Yes. My name

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1 is Maurice Sampson and I am the
2 Eastern Pennsylvania Director for
3 Clean Water Action. I too want to
4 thank Councilman Phillips for calling
5 this hearing immediately for the
6 explanation that has proceeded these
7 comments. I have learned more in
8 this short amount of time that I knew
9 prior to coming here today.

10 And I also want to talk
11 about we have a level of expertise in
12 our Water Department that's really
13 not matched by many places in the
14 whole country. And I think that's
15 one of the things that I really
16 appreciate and feel like we should
17 have had earlier, was to hear them
18 speak and put them up front. I
19 appreciate the role of elected
20 officials as the people who come to
21 speak to us about what's going on.

22 But I feel that we do not
23 take advantage of the experts that we
24 have to talk to us about what's going
25 on that too often we are more

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1 concerned about how it appears, what
2 we are going to say, and the
3 information that will actually help
4 us take care of ourselves. And
5 that's a message that I particularly
6 want to talk about.

7 I'm a little distressed in
8 what I'm hearing today because we
9 spent so much time talking about
10 taking bottled water that we want to
11 get from other people to store when
12 we have some of the best water in the
13 country right here in our Department.
14 What I need is how can I take care of
15 myself. I don't need storage
16 capacity all over the City.

17 If I put four of these in my
18 basement that I filled from the tap
19 with a filter for the water, I have
20 all the water that I need to get
21 through three days. Give me five of
22 these and I'd get through a week.
23 Give me 10, I can get through a month
24 in my house. Storage facilities that
25 we create by giving people the

6/1/2023

1 information that they need to know so
2 they can figure out what do we need
3 to do to take care of ourselves is
4 going to be a whole lot cheaper than
5 a lot of this.

6 And I'm going to feel very
7 confident because it's water that I
8 put in that container. I know what's
9 there. I trust it. And I think that
10 as we talk about these solutions,
11 instead of just looking at what can
12 everybody do to help us, please tell
13 us what we can do to help ourselves
14 based on the resources that are
15 already in place. It's already in
16 place.

17 I mean, when I heard the
18 first announcement, I was having
19 lunch at the (inaudible) center. And
20 I had just talked to people about how
21 the water comes into our water system
22 down the Wissahickon. And I said
23 let's do this, and I said why am I
24 being told to go out and buy water
25 instead of filling my containers with

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1 water. In 20 minutes I could have
2 had all the water I needed to get
3 through this crisis. All I needed
4 was the information.

5 There didn't need to be a
6 panic. And mind you -- I don't think
7 there was a panic. I think people
8 did what they were told. They were
9 told to go out and buy water. So
10 what did they do? They went out and
11 they bought water. That's not a
12 panic. That's following directions.
13 And if their instructions said,
14 listen, we have a problem, you need
15 to go and store 10 gallons of water,
16 here is where you can get that
17 container. Turn on your tap and fill
18 it, and everything else could have
19 evolved. A whole lot of angst that
20 got created for the next couple of
21 days of different messaging coming
22 across all could have been avoided.

23 I really think that we need
24 to stop and look at what our problem
25 is and look at it from the bottom up

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1 and not the top down, because that's
2 who I am and that's where I live.
3 There's where my neighbors live. If
4 I've done anything over the last five
5 years where I spent most of my time
6 and my work working with the lowest-
7 income people in the City, except
8 poor people are not stupid.

9 Poor people are not stupid
10 and if they're given the information
11 that they need, they will take care
12 of themselves. A lot of them will
13 tell you they got to take care of
14 themselves anyway because nobody else
15 is there to do it. I want to thank
16 my colleague Adam Nagel for his
17 comments because he really covered
18 the bases.

19 What we have coming forward
20 of this is we're going to see more
21 crises like this. We're going to see
22 with the salt line moving out as the
23 sea level dries, the bigger danger is
24 going to be that salt line coming up
25 and beyond our plants. I know we're

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1 not being able to draw from the
2 river. We really do need to look at
3 what's going forward.

4 If you want to create an
5 emergency water stored system, why
6 don't you give us containers, tell us
7 to fill them and put them in the
8 basement. And every so often tell us
9 we need to refill them. And mind
10 you, plastic bottles leach phthalates
11 from the lead into the water and will
12 cause other health problems. So the
13 idea of storing bottled water in a
14 warehouse for 10 months is not a good
15 idea.

16 I'm going to leave my
17 comments there because quite frankly
18 Adam really covered all the main
19 points. I just want to look at --
20 let's look at commonsense and let's
21 look at what we can do to address
22 these problems without looking at
23 outside, other companies. For
24 goodness sake, it was insinuated to
25 have a contract and have a company

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1 right here in Philly create those
2 containers of water so people can put
3 it in their basements today. You
4 want it to go easier, just give them
5 the containers, tell us where we can
6 get the containers -- me where I can
7 buy the containers and I'll do it
8 myself. That's the cheapest way we
9 can go. I already spend \$74 a month
10 on my water. That's where I would
11 like to get it from. Thank you.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
13 you.

14 Councilman Anthony Phillips.

15 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: See
16 this is -- so thank you, Chairman
17 Johnson.

18 One of the reasons why I have
19 always made it a priority to listen,
20 to listen to not only residents in
21 our District, the 9th District, but
22 to listen to stakeholders, people who
23 are seasoned experts in this work,
24 but also to kind of really find
25 people who have innovative ideas

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1 around solutions and not have this
2 ego trip where I know exactly how to
3 handle every single thing in the
4 City, right.

5 When it comes to youth
6 development and college access and
7 leadership, I can be considered a
8 stakeholder and some sort of level
9 expert on operations in the nonprofit
10 world, right. But I also recognize
11 that I know a little bit about a lot
12 of different issues, but that doesn't
13 mean I'm the expert.

14 So I say this to say that,
15 Adam and Maurice, today you all
16 provided some very important
17 information and commonsense expertise
18 that we needed to hear. One of the
19 things that I think that sometimes
20 people who are in these positions and
21 we get so far ahead of trying to
22 think about funding and resources and
23 all that stuff and more, that we
24 often times fail to look at the
25 simple things that we can do to solve

6/1/2023

1 this problem.

2 The idea that Maurice
3 suggested giving -- it's almost like
4 remember the recycling revolution
5 where people didn't think about
6 recycling and out of nowhere everyone
7 for the most part is recycling
8 because we're giving them buckets.

9 It's the same thing that we need to
10 do to educate the public about water,
11 getting just those three water gallon
12 containers, store it somewhere, in
13 your basement or a storage area or
14 wherever, somewhere in your home or
15 apartment or place of residence. And
16 then every year annually dump it out
17 and refilling it again to make
18 sure -- or refilling it when it's at
19 a contamination level. That's about
20 preparedness, and that won't cost us
21 as much money.

22 These are the type of
23 innovative ideas or not so innovative
24 in some ways, but important ideas
25 that I think that we have to --

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1 that's why I wanted to have this
2 forum, I mean this hearing, because
3 we need to have our Water Department
4 think through this more deeply and
5 our Office of Emergency Management,
6 because we have to our own way of
7 solving this.

8 So the question that I have
9 for you, Adam, I had a whole litany
10 but I want to keep it to a question
11 is can you just provide a little bit
12 more details on this historic
13 funding, you know, this historic
14 funding that we can really look into
15 to kind of solve the dirtiness of our
16 water for the most part that we
17 really need to try to look to get to
18 that? Can you give us more detail
19 about what we need to be able to get
20 our water even more clean than what
21 it is or cleaner or even clean at
22 all?

23 MR. NAGEL: Absolutely,
24 Councilmember. Thank you for the
25 question. And this is a drum of mine

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1 I've been beating for about a year
2 now, and I apologize to all the
3 members of Council who will be
4 hearing this for I don't know how
5 many times this is.

6 But the Water Department has
7 done very well in chasing dollars
8 from certain sources via the federal
9 government, and that's mainly the
10 Bipartisan Infrastructure law and
11 then there are other resources that
12 have been made available too based on
13 the funding that has been passed by
14 Congress and signed into law by the
15 White House, so I want to give them
16 credit there.

17 So what PennFuture has been
18 advocating for is that there is
19 another opportunity available to City
20 officials to invest funding from the
21 American Rescue Plan Act, which was
22 passed in 2021 mainly for the
23 purposes of relief from COVID, from
24 the COVID pandemic and the subsequent
25 economic recession. However, it

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1 would put into place that cities
2 could invest those dollars into
3 infrastructure, including water
4 infrastructure.

5 Based on last year's budget,
6 and you all are on budget
7 negotiations for next year, there is
8 around \$800 million remaining. Some
9 of that I know there's already been
10 proposed to be allocated by the
11 Kenney Administration, and I believe
12 that the Finance Director in previous
13 hearings related it to the budget and
14 then in the previous hearing before
15 the Committee on Joint
16 Transportation -- the Committee on
17 Transportation and Public Utilities
18 has indicated that money has been
19 allocated to the General Fund through
20 2020 -- through the end of 2024.

21 However, we believe that the
22 policy both for the next couple of
23 weeks and depending on how budget
24 talks shake out potentially for the
25 next Mayor and the next City Council,

6/1/2023

1 we believe that some of that funding
2 should be utilized to upgrade our
3 water infrastructure as envisioned by
4 Congress and the White House.

5 It is important the Trinseo
6 spill highlighted the dangers to our
7 drinking water and our water system,
8 and we all know that there are
9 necessary upgrades that need to be
10 made, whether it be lead pipe
11 removal, upgrading aging water pipes
12 or cleaning and greening our City
13 through Green City, Clean Waters,
14 which also will help improve water
15 quality. I'll stop there because I
16 feel -- I can go on, but I'll stop
17 there for now.

18 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Thank
19 you. And I just had an additional
20 question. We mentioned some other,
21 you know, other water revitalization
22 plans, Maurice, that you think that
23 can be really helpful for those in
24 the Administration that are
25 overseeing the water revitalization

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1 plan in terms of making sure that
2 we're effective next time.

3 I did hear Adam mention about
4 the translation, which is really
5 important. I don't understand how we
6 don't have that in place already. I
7 think there needs to be someone
8 really dedicated to just focusing on
9 this emergency preparation because
10 it's bound to happen again, and we
11 have to be ready. We have to be
12 better prepared this time and so
13 forth. So, Maurice, just from your
14 standpoint a stronger water
15 revitalization plan?

16 MR. SAMPSON: Well, I liked
17 what I heard in terms of how the
18 whole hierarchy and how we get
19 information across. That wasn't the
20 issue. My question is what
21 information are we going to be
22 providing. I'm not really interested
23 when there is an emergency of knowing
24 that everybody is saying the right
25 things to everyone. I want to know

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1 what it is that I need right now to
2 take care of the emergency.

3 And I think that's the first
4 level of information that needs to be
5 given out. Tell us what we can do
6 right now that will help us through
7 our own effort, our own energy to
8 take care of ourselves and our
9 families. That's the first level of
10 information that we all need to hear,
11 and that's what we need to hear from
12 our elected officials. Here's what
13 you need to do to take care of
14 yourself. We are working with the
15 City officials to take care of the
16 deeper problem. We'll get back to
17 you. But if you do this, you will be
18 safe, you know.

19 And I think regardless of
20 what the water emergency is, the
21 first thing I need to know is that
22 the water I need to drink, the water
23 I need to cook is safe water. And I
24 can do that, I can do that now. I
25 can put that water in storage in my

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1 basement, and I can do that now.

2 Beyond that, I believe that
3 we are intelligent enough to handle
4 information. I think the idea that
5 there was too much information
6 delivered to us, I think it's how
7 that information is presented, that
8 was the problem. The message changed
9 several times, that was the problem.

10 It was what information that
11 was conveyed, not that there was too
12 much information. Some of the
13 information I can learn about later.
14 If I know that I can be taken care of
15 now and that you're working on
16 handling the problem, that's where
17 the trust comes in. Make sure that I
18 have what I need to take care of my
19 family, you know, and my
20 neighborhood. That's where the trust
21 comes in.

22 If I can trust that you're
23 going to give me that information, I
24 can wait for the details. I can wait
25 for the details. But the truth of

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1 the matter is that wasn't the
2 information that we got. And it
3 happens too often in too many ways.

4 Right now we have a real
5 problem in the City because we don't
6 trust the police, we don't trust how
7 our water can be handled and we can't
8 get our trash and recycling picked up
9 the right way. Those are very
10 fundamental municipal tasks, and it's
11 hard to believe that we can handle
12 any other issues and we can't deal
13 with the very basic issues or even
14 get information about the very basic
15 issues.

16 But in terms of the system,
17 I'd like the pyramid that I saw. I
18 liked the structure of how
19 information is going to be put out,
20 but I think it's what information you
21 give and what it's meant to do. If
22 the first step is always tell people
23 what they need to do right now to
24 help them to take care of themselves,
25 I think a whole lot of trust is going

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1 to be rebuilt just knowing that I'm
2 going to get that information first.

3 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Yes.
4 Well, thank you. Thank you to the
5 two of you.

6 And thank you, Chairman
7 Johnson, for you chairing this.
8 That's all I have.

9 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Well,
10 thank for your leadership around this
11 issue.

12 I want to thank Maurice and
13 Adam for your testimony, and
14 obviously this was a prevented
15 catastrophe. But from a
16 communication standpoint we
17 definitely had to make sure that we
18 do a better job. I remember having
19 to go to the beer distributor and I
20 got like 10 cases of water. And when
21 I got home, they said, oh, everything
22 cool.

23 So I know there's a lot going
24 on. So when you can't drink until
25 10:51, and then -- so what happened

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1 at 10:51 then? Then what do we do.
2 And then 12:35, I don't know. But at
3 the end of the day, it's hearings
4 like this to make sure that we're
5 doing accountability, transparency
6 and hopefully putting forth a better
7 job moving forward. So I just thank
8 the two of you for taking time out of
9 your schedule to testify.

10 Any other questions or
11 comments from the Committee?

12 MR. SAMPSON: I would like to
13 offer one last thought here. The
14 water that we get out of our tap that
15 runs through a carbon filter is
16 better water than any water you're
17 going to buy in any bottle. Okay.
18 We know what's in that water. We
19 know that it's been tested. If you
20 don't like the way it tastes, put it
21 through a carbon filter and now you
22 have what a lot of people are putting
23 in those bottles anyway without the
24 plastic.

25 We really do need to make

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1 people understand that we have got
2 great water in this City, and that
3 what's in those bottles is more
4 expensive. It's more for the bottle
5 we're buying than paying for the
6 water bill every month.

7 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Well, if
8 that's the case, you would have to do
9 an overall PR campaign. Just the
10 reputation about the Schuylkill --
11 they call it Schuylkill punch for a
12 reason. So if we really are going to
13 change the minds and culture on how
14 we think about water, we have to do a
15 yeoman's job and really educate the
16 public.

17 And for me, and I'm going to
18 wrap up on this, everybody grew up
19 drinking regular water, right. We
20 didn't have that luxury. It's a
21 water fountain, right. And the water
22 inside the house, good ole spigot
23 water is good water for me, for me,
24 right.

25 I think the wider public, we

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1 got cute all of a sudden. We started
2 buying bottled water. I don't know
3 what had happened, right, an
4 economical thing or whatever. But at
5 the end of the day if I want some
6 good cool water, especially in the
7 summertime, a lot can't compete with
8 that good ole spigot water. So I'm
9 going to leave it there, y'all. And
10 I don't have 11 toes. I don't have
11 12 fingers. Everything is all right,
12 you know, my body is doing good.

13 But in all seriousness thank
14 you, gentlemen. Keep up the good
15 work. Thank you for your leadership
16 as always.

17 And to Mr. Phillips, thank
18 you for stepping up to the plate and
19 making sure that this issue didn't
20 happen without a hearing addressing
21 it. So thank you very much.

22 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS:

23 Thank you.

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: If there
25 are no more questions or comments

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1 from members of the Committee, this
2 concludes the Joint Committee on the
3 Environment and Public Utilities and
4 Transportation. This meeting is now
5 adjourned. Thank you very much
6 everyone. Take care.

7 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS: Thank
8 you. Thank you, everyone.

9 (Joint Committees on the
10 Environment and Transportation and
11 Public Utilities concluded at
12 2:35 p.m.)
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1 C E R T I F I C A T I O N

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I, hereby certify that the
proceedings and evidence noted are
contained fully and accurately in the
stenographic notes taken by me in the
foregoing matter, and this is a correct
transcript of the same.

TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

(The foregoing certification of
this transcript does not apply to any
reproduction of the same by any means,
unless under the direct control and/or
supervision of the certifying reporter.)

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