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CHAIRWOMAN, COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION & ENERGY

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

COMMITTEES AND RULES
ETHICS AND GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT
BUDGET & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION & ENERGY
HEALTH AND HUMAN RELATIONS
HOUSING AND REAL ESTATE
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PUBLIC SAFETY

Joint Committee on Environmental Protection and Energy and Public Safety Monthly Rule 45 Report: October 2023

Pursuant to the Rule 45 of City of Chicago Rules and Order, the **Committee on Environmental and Energy Protection and the Committee on Health and Public Safety** submits the following monthly report for **October, 2023**.

Date, Time & Location of Meeting:

On October 13, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., the Committee on Environmental Protection and Energy and the Committee on Public Safety held a joint meeting in City Hall Council Chambers, in Chicago, Illinois.

Roll Call:

The following committee members were present: Hadden (49), Hopkins (2), Knudsen (43), Chico (10), Ramirez (12), Gutierrez (14), Lopez (15), Scott (24), Sigcho-Lopez (25), Cruz (30), Conway (34), Vasquez (40), Reilly (42), Lawson (44), Gardiner (45), Clay (46), Martin (47), Manaa-Hoppenworth (48).

Remote participation: LaSpata (1)

Per rule 59, Chairwoman Hadden asked for a motion to approve Alderman LaSpata for remote participation by the same roll call that was applied to establish quorum. Alderman Reilly so moved, and Alderman LaSpata was marked as present.

Non-members present: Coleman (16), Rodriguez (22), Mitts (37)

The following members were absent: Yancy (5), Curtis (18), Tabares (23), Fuentes (26), Taliaferro (29), Rodriguez-Sanchez (33), Sposato (38), Silverstein (50)

Reports and Materials Received by Committee:

- 1) Urban Flooding report map from UIC Greatest City Institute
- 2) Addressing the Urban Flooding in Chicago document by Dr. Teresa Córdova
- 3) Space to Grow (STG) program fact sheet and highlights from Openlands
- 4) Growing Chicago Tree's from Openlands
- 5) 3-1-1 data by ward from the July 2 storm from DWM
- 6) Briefing slide deck from city departments and MWRD

Public Comment:

There were **0** public speakers and **1** written comment.

Written Public Comment Submission:

- 1 written comment submitted by the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) highlighting Chicago's persistent flood challenges, particularly in low- and middle-income areas, urging immediate action, community-led efforts, data updates, interagency coordination, and green infrastructure enhancements.

The Committee addressed the following item:

- 1. A subject matter hearing on R2023-0002926 to discuss recent extreme flooding events and the City's Plan to mitigate and respond to flooding**

Chairwoman Hadden asked for a motion to recommend approval of **(R2023-0002926) Mitigate and respond to extreme flooding hearings** by the same roll call that was applied to establish quorum, Alderman Martin so moved; the item passed without objection and Chairwoman Hadden stated that the do-pass recommendation would be reported out at the following City Council meeting.

Several City representatives, regional partners, and community partners were present to provide testimony. Those included:

- a. Cheryl Watson, a Chatham community advocate, spoke about seven decades of persistent flooding challenges exacerbated by heavy rainfall in Chicago's Chatham area.
- b. Angela Tovar, Chief Sustainability Officer, spoke about the unequal impact of climate change-related flooding on underserved communities. She mentioned proposed solutions involving green infrastructure, the "Space to Grow," and "RainReady Chatham" programs, and continued collaboration with the Department of Water Management to tackle disparities.
- c. Andrea Cheng, Commissioner for the Department of Water Management, addressed climate change-induced heavy rainfall in Chicago, emphasizing the importance of rain blockers, restrictors, and downspout disconnection to manage the combined sewer system and prevent basement flooding.
- d. President Kari Steele from MWRD spoke about Chicago's wastewater and stormwater management, highlighting infrastructure improvements aimed to protect the over 17,000 infrastructure pieces in the city.
- e. Katherine O'Connor (MWRD Engineer) talked about the importance of disconnecting downspouts to prevent the accumulation of water and other local initiatives.

- f. Anne Zhang, Deputy Commissioner from the Chicago Department of Transportation, addressed the flooding vulnerability of the city's 1,900 miles of public alleys. CDOT has installed over 400 green alleys since 2007.
- g. Kamil Muhammad from the Office of Emergency Management and Communications talked about the response to the July 2 storm by OEMC, emphasizing FEMA relief, in-person assistance, volunteer teams, and ongoing recovery efforts involving entire counties in emergency declarations.
- h. Dr. Córdova, from the University of Illinois at Chicago, stressed the need for urgent infrastructure investments due to increasing climate-induced floods, particularly affecting disinvested, African American communities.
- i. Rachel Havrelock from UIC addressed the challenges of Chicago's low surfaces and emphasized the importance of community collaboration. She proposed an OEMC household alert system, educational campaigns, storm drain maintenance, more tree planting initiative, and prioritizing affected neighborhoods as essential strategies for improvement.

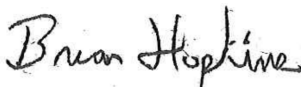
Representatives responded to all questions and the question-and-answer period concluded.

Having no further business before the joint committee, Chairman Hopkins requested a motion to adjourn. Aldermen Knudsen so moved; hearing no objections, Chairmen Hopkins adjourned the meeting at 12:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. E. Hadden".

Chairwoman Maria E. Hadden (49)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Hopkins".

Chairperson Hopkins (2)