

SUPERVISOR COMMENTS FEBRUARY 2019

A Busy Month for all at the Water Plant and Hall ...

The last few weeks have been quite hectic for our water plant operators, Bruce and Keith. There were issues with the pond freezing which required the purchase of a bubbler system for \$5K. The 300-foot overflow ditch from the pond to the lake almost froze closed and required an additional investment of \$37K to have a 12" insulated drain tube installed and back-filled with sand. They had to collect water samples from 40 residences and send for testing. Four of the samples came back with numbers that exceeded the state's 15 ppb threshold. They then had to collect additional samples from the four problem sites, but this time the results were barely trace amounts. But that makes no difference to the DEQ as they only accept the first sample. Our interaction with the DEQ has been neither pleasant or smooth. With that being the case, I did have several concerns regarding what we had gone through with the DEQ which included phone conference calls and emails, so I sent our new Governor an email stating the following ...

Kudos for attempting to reorganize the DEQ as it is a system and process that is severely broken. They are all covering their butts and running for cover because of Flint and they do not want their fingerprints on anything. As the Sims Township Supervisor in Arenac County, I have had the misfortune of dealing with the DEQ over alleged lead in our water, but there is no lead. Our water plant operators pull random samples from homes and send those samples to the DEQ Lab in Lansing. Four homes showed lead that exceeded the 15 ppb threshold ... follow-up testing of the same four homes x 3 showed no lead. The DEQ recognizes the first sample only and for that, our township had to jump through hoops and do a mass mailing of "educational material" to all residents and in 6 months, may have to do a similar mailing. Our township is now on a "monitoring program" which would be fine if we had lead in the water. We have a new water plant that went on line in 2018. All of our water lines are copper. In the meantime, the lead announcement has caused a certain amount of panic with our older residents as they see this like Flint. Our representative from the DEQ is not a very nice or helpful person and seems to be quite vindictive. We understand she was recently suspended for two weeks for certain "issues." As it stands now, the DEQ has handed off our case to the State Health Dept for additional water sampling for lead where there is no lead. We believe the DEQ should have borne the cost of this mailing, since it is a program they are messing up. Myself and our plant operators would be pleased to meet with you and share more detail of our horrific experience with the broken and fake DEQ.

I have not heard from the Governor's office and no appointment has been scheduled to meet and we are not holding our breath that will ever happen. All of this extra work caused our staff to be busier than usual, as they had to run multiple copies and stuff envelopes to send all of this info to our residents. In

addition, they had an additional mailing to certain residents regarding the 99-2 water bonding program that is ending 2/28/19.

On 2/15/19, an article appeared on MLive stating “Thirteen Michigan water systems failed to meet federal standards for lead in drinking water in the last half of 2018, and seven of those systems had lead levels at least twice as high as the state will allow starting in 2025.” Sims-Whitney was included in that article. I’m curious if other municipalities had similar experiences to our own with the DEQ.

Annual Meeting ...

Mark it on your calendar and tell all your friends that the date and time are March 30 at 10 A.M. ...

Final Thought ...

" I cannot believe that the purpose of life is to be happy. I think the purpose of life is to be useful, to be responsible, to be compassionate. It is, above all to matter, to count, to stand for something, to have made some difference that you lived at all."

[Leo Rosten](#)

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