



## **OUDPC- Size/Scope of a Locate Request Focus Group**

Minutes

7/16/2024

**Call to Order/Opening Statements:** Jim Wooten

**Roll Call:** Jim Wooten, Jason Broyles, Chuck Muller, Dave Coniglio, Frank Riegler, Deron Large, Lori Wade, Jessica Burlett, Drew Williams, Greg First, Mary Logan So, Chris Russ, Jim Collins, Johnny Henson

**Review/Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the July 11 meeting were reviewed and approved.

**Size/Scope of Locate Request:** Jim Wooten opened with statement about the intentions of the groups conversation. He stated that smaller tickets on larger projects allows locators to be able to respond more effectively to positive response. It could also combat unnecessary locate requests on areas of work that are already complete but fall under the large ticket. Mary So stated that if you spend a little more time on the front end, it saves a lot of time later. If we move forward, there will be a strong demand for education.

Lori Wade used the process that George J Igel Co has incorporated into their process as an example of how successful this could be. Dave Coniglio stated that projects that have work being completed simultaneously in all areas of the project would still have to be called in and located within 48 hours regardless of the size of request.

Chuck Muller suggested using 1 mile square for roadways and mile markers for interstate.

Jim Wooten asks if contractors would be interested if separated based off of geographic location (rural vs city)? Dave responded that it would be worth having the conversations.

Jim Collins provided the group with new legislation going into effect in MN starting August 1. *Effective Aug. 1, 2024, locate requests to Gopher State One Call that involve excavation of one mile or more in length will require a "Meet" ticket. This is a meeting to take place on site to*

*discuss the proposed excavation, schedule utility locates and to share other necessary information about the project.*

*The meeting must take place at least 48 hours after the request. An affected facility operator must attend the meet or contact the excavator before the meet and reschedule or reach a mutual agreement that the meet is not required. The excavation start time on the site must be at least 48 hours after the meeting. Both 48 hour periods exclude weekends and holidays."*

Mary stated that it is a good concept but challenge was that they had a horrible time since utilities were not getting involved. It was hard to get positive responses and shuts work down. Jim Wooten added by stating that there would need to have enforcement surrounding the process. Jim Collins agreed and stated that they would support legislation making utility participation in the meetings mandatory. Mary repeated that failures to respond by utilities can not hold up the start time/date on the requesting contractor. Jim Wooten stated concerns that if the contractor called it in as two half mile tickets, they would beat the system. Mary responded that even if they would go that route, the goal is still getting met. Lori Wade added that there would have to be some stipulations surrounding this because if all requests are called in at the same time, regardless of size, the whole area would still be due within 48 hours. Mary stated that you can not assume that all work on a project would be lateral and can be continuous work in the entire project area at the same time. Lori added that increased tickets would allow for an increase in locate staff assigned to the project. She continued by stating that there would have to be language spelling out/identifying would be okay but understands the difficulties in defining and getting education out. Dave Coniglio agrees and is willing to have these conversations. He cannot guarantee contractor support until those conversations are had.

Jim Wooten stated that we need to keep in mind that we do not want PHMSA to mandate regulations without industry input. Johnny Henson said that it is really all about communication and cooperation. Possibly look at .5 miles for rural areas and intersection to intersection in city. Mary added that defining areas gets sticky and has been discussed before. Education plays a huge role in getting a process like this to work. Johnny added that everyone must understand the impact on everyone else involved, whether it is legislatively mandated or not. It was discussed how this may be achieved by clarifying language and stipulations around what a large project is and making some changes to the current language to manage.

Meeting adjourned.

