

Source and Question	Answered		Not complete			Question	Answer
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**Follow-up Questions from January 11, 2018 Meeting Documents – EUC Water Billing Questions and Responses**

"Meeting with EUC Commissioners, January 11, 2018"

1	✓					Water Billing Process Audit, September 2014 Action Plan included the implementation of AQ Program. Please provide water meter reading and billing AQ reports for last 6 months.	An internal Vendor Quality Assurance Review (VQAP) process began in 2016. This process measures the accuracy of the meter reader's first attempt to gather a read on the meter. Attached VQA Review Process graphic and Monthly reports 10-16 thru 11-17.
2				X		Same above mentioned audit states AE Management should improve review process to ensure all system-flagged reads are reviewed prior to billing. <u>For the Sept 2017 billing cycle, how many accounts were system-flagged? And of that number how many were reviewed prior to the September bill going out?</u>	City of Austin utilities Oracle and Customer Care billing system (CCB) maintains high and low water alert parameters to flag abnormally high and low consumption. For the time period in question, parameters for meter reads in hundreds of gallons alerted high use at 325% of the estimated usage, and low use at 25%. Prior to 2017, adjustment to the parameters occurred Oct 2016, setting high use at 350% and low use at 25%. As part of our annual review we have adjusted the high use to 300%, effective Jan 1, 2018. Estimated usage is defined as the high and low range of possible normal consumption that is calculated based on the billing system high and low bill alert parameters. High and Low water alerts flag abnormal consumption that fall outside of the high and low estimated usage range. The estimated usage consumption range is calculated based on the billed consumption for the same month of the previous year.
3					X	Same Audit states that AE should develop, implement and monitor a process to ensure timely identification and communication of potential leaks to customers. <u>What is the current process/method for this notification? What is considered "timely" by the utilities? Are systems in place to text or email the account customers before high bill goes out? (Staff may have provided an answer with Customer Notification graphic but it is unintelligible.</u>	There are two proactive notifications currently utilized. Customer notifications via phone and letter are completed before the Customer receives their higher than normal billing statement or during an off-cycle period. Attached "Water Leak Customer Notification" graphic; graph of number of water leak letters per month Mar 2015 thru Jan 2018; sample customer letter.
4	✓					City of Austin Utility Customer Care Audit, April 2016 states that one of the issues with timely solutions to customer complaints on water billing was lack of coordination between AE billing staff and Water Utility staff. Audit recommended a Service Level Agreement be implemented. Please provide a copy of current Agreement.	Service Level Agreements were implemented for both the Utility Contact Center and Customer Services management (Escalations). Attached Utility Contact Center and Customer Services Management (Escalations) service level agreements between Austin Water and Austin Energy.
5	✓					At the Time of Customer Care Audit, high water bill complaints were averaging a 12 day resolution instead of the 3-day target. For the last year, what is the total number of high water bill complaints and what is the average resolution period? What percent of the time are they resolved in the three-day period?	Occasionally, the Utility experiences an influx of potential water leaks and high water consumption escalations, at which time Austin Energy and Austin Water coordinate resolution efforts to achieve maximum utilization of resources across workgroups. Communication efforts to customers' expectancies are adjusted from the targeted 72 hour response time to 7-10 days. Attached table of number of cases; average resolution (days); number resolved within 3 days; % resolved within 3 days.
6		✓				Audits also identified problems with IT security standards. Items included meter read field could be changed as well as the source field, customer historical usage changed, and current practices for access management of the billing system. Have all these issues been addressed? What type of data and access auditing has been put into place?	Standards for the security access within CCB were revised to address all of these items. A monthly report is generated, which details users who made changes to meter read fields. An associated <u>monitoring activity</u> is conducted to validate the changed fields. Additionally, there is a <u>Risk Assessment exercise</u> to review security controls which is performed annually.

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7				X		<p>The Austin Water Meter Reading and Testing Accuracy Audit Report published Jan 2016 done by UtilWorks Strategic Utility Consulting documented a 30% failure rate for mechanical meters removed from residential customers service for the test sample which were then independently tested by two separate groups. That seems very high.</p> <p><u>What are the industry averages for mechanical meter failure?</u></p>	<p>To our knowledge, no industry-wide statistics are available to address this question. The AWWA M6 Manual has accuracy standards for new, rebuilt, and repaired meters. (Gave percentage accuracy rates by flow rates. Other discussion pertaining to meter accuracy but not answering the question.)</p>

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**Follow-up Questions from January 11, 2018 Meeting Documents – Questions Specifically Related to Low August Bills and High September Bills, 2017**

"Meeting with EUC Commissioners, January 11, 2018"

1				X		Please <u>provide the document</u> prepared by AE or AWU that defines the use of term "area" as it appears on AE bills for water service of AWU customers.	An area is defined as the same premise type, same zip code, and same cycle. (No document was provided.)
2				X		<u>Please identify each "area" whose average residential consumption for Sept 2017 is more than double the average residential consumption for August 2017.</u>	A "double" consumption increase from August to September aligns with normal seasonal usage patterns. Residential consumption varies greatly. Attached a graph of average consumption for August and September 2017, by zipcode. (The graph is labeled to show average usage by "district", but that is not clearly marked. This graph does not respond to the request, and the text above is non-responsive to the request.)
3				X		Provide details of Corix/Bermex meter reading over the last 3 years: <u>was there in fact an unusually low read for August 2017 and a spike in Sept billing? Provide a graph showing averages by month by district.</u>	We have provided the past three years of consumption averages by month and district. Attached graphic. (District delineation is not clearly marked. The question was not addressed at all.)
4			X			<u>Provide all reports generated by AE or AWU that analyzed the causes of spikes in consumption by AWU residential customers in September 2017.</u>	We are in the process of analyzing data to the route and customer levels. Additional information will be shared as analysis is completed. (No information has been provided to the Working Group to date.)
5	✓					For the past 12 months show trend lines of the daily data that can influence water consumptions such as rainfall and temperature for each day.	A graph of rainfall and temperature was provided.
6				X		For the same 12 months, show water pumping for each day by Austin Water Systems that would reflect general consumption patterns and quantity of water <u>through whatever individual pipelines are measurable</u> to help provide more fine resolution of the consumption <u>for the neighborhoods that had residential customers whose Sept 2017 consumption was more than double their Aug 2017 consumption.</u>	A graph of total system pumpage and billed consumption was plotted against rainfall. (This is not responsive to the question.)
7				X		<u>For areas where the September 2017 average residential consumption is more than double the average residential consumption of August 2017, please provide the average residential consumption for those areas for August and September.</u>	There is not one profile that fits to an average water residential customer. We have provided water customer profiles to illustrate how our residents can vary. Attached was a graph of average consumption for August and September by zip code (same as for Question 2 above). Also, graphics illustrating water bills at different levels of usage. These are non-responsive to the requested information.
8	✓					Provide a timeline of any events that could have led to billing errors, particularly changes in meter reading contractors, or practices in meter reading, logging, and transferring to billing system.	The Meter reader vendor transition timeline shows the sequence of events that occurred from the beginning of the Bermex contract on May 11, 2017 to the ending of the Corix contract on August 31, 2017. Attached a timeline graphic.

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9					X	Please <u>identify each route</u> that has more than one AWU residential customer whose Sept 2017 consumption is more than double the billed Aug 2017 consumption. <u>For each route so identified, please indicate the number of customers who had Sept consumption that is more than double the Aug billed consumption.</u>	Out of the 1,080 meter reading routes, 758 routes were identified to have two or more residential customers whose Sept 2017 consumption was more than double the consumption for Aug 2017. This included a total of 14,644 accounts, but some of these may be the same premise. A double increase in consumption for September aligns with seasonal consumption patterns and does not necessarily indicate an error. <b>We are continuing to conduct further analysis (not received to date).</b>
10				X		Please <u>provide the document</u> that sets forth the parameters for high and low flags for abnormal water consumption by AWU customers in August and September 2017.	City of Austin utilities Oracle and Customer Care billing system (CCB) maintains high and low water alert parameters to flag abnormally high and low consumption. For the time period in question, parameters for meter reads in hundreds of gallons alerted high use at 325% of the estimated usage, and low use at 25%. Prior to 2017, adjustment to the parameters occurred Oct 2016, setting high use at 350% and low use at 25%. As part of our annual review we have adjusted the high use to 300% effective Jan 1, 2018. Attached "Austin Energy and Meter Reading Vendor Contract Summary" <b>which does not reference the requested parameters.</b>
11	✓					Please provide complete copies, including any amendments of both the Bermex and Corix Meter Reading contracts.	The Bermex contract is included. (It was not sent to WWWC members until May.) The Corix contract is currently being reviewed by the COA legal team to redact any non-public information. Upon completion of redaction, the Corix contract will be provided. <b>(Copies of both contracts ultimately provided.)</b>
12	✓					Please provide invoices from both Corix and Bermex for July through September 2017 for meter reading services, along with any adjustments to the invoices recommended or sought by AE.	Invoices included for requested timeframes.
13	✓ (?)					Please provide monthly reports, productivity reports and any other reports submitted by Corix to AE during and after August 2017.	Reports are included for requested timeframe.
14	✓					Please provide reports, including productivity reports, submitted to Bermex to AE for meter reading activity that took place during September 2017.	Reports are included for requested timeframe.

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**Follow-up Questions from February 12, 2018 Meeting Documents**

1	✓					Was there any penalty when meter reading contractor did not reach the 99.5% accurate read rate required in the contract?	Yes, the Corix contract requirements did include a charge back of \$1.13 per register read plus an additional \$15 charge per instance. Both of these charges are recorded within the "Adjustments" section of the invoices. (Examples were cited.) Attached bills with adjustments from Corix.
2		✓				While :Proactive Customer Notification Process for water leaks is outlined, there is no timeline information. Example of way to answer would be to add to chart showing how many letters went out per month, when meter read, when leak letter went out and when bill went out.	An explanation and a graphic "Water Leak Customer Notification" (same as in the answer to Question 3, "Follow-up Questions from January 11, 2018 Meeting Documents – EUC Water Billing Questions and Responses") and another process graphic were provided, however the language and process are difficult to follow.
3		✓				Chart shows only 26% of Water complaints are resolved in 3 days on an annual basis (have to assume resolve time longer in months with more complaints). What does staff recommend to get the resolve rate time down? What is needed?	We are conducting additional cross training to ensure that Escalations department is skilled in multiple areas versus specialization. We are also exploring opportunities to include soft skills training and are reviewing staffing levels.
4	✓					Weather data provided under Tab 12 (Jan 11) and information obtained from weather service does not support the statement "double consumption between Aug and Sept aligns with normal seasonal usage patterns". For the meter reading cycles for the Aug and Sept bills (July and Aug weather data) high/low temp was about the same both months, maybe a little higher in July, and there was more rain in Aug not including Harvey. Weather as a reason for 2017 Aug and Sept high water bills does not make sense.	Additional analysis completed since the Jan 11th meeting has confirmed that there was an unusual usage pattern between Aug and Sept for approximately 17K customers on 135 identified meter routes. This pattern was not due to weather.
5		✓			✗	Please provide more information concerning the GPS tracking mechanism required in meter reading contract, <u>exactly what location data is captured and how is it transferred to the City?</u> Assume also required in new contract. Also, on page 9, Bermex contract requires Meter Read Completion stats (by cycle, route) monthly. Requesting copies of these required reports for July and Aug 2017. Additional monthly reports required by contractor is <u>meters skipped more than one month in a row</u> , meter skips by reason, and meters assigned vs. reads provided and meters assigned against with no read by cycle, route and address. I would also like copies of these required reports for July and Aug 2017.	The Corix contract references the requirement of a GPS tracking device within section 0500 (pg 6) as it relates to 24-hour notice delivery purposes only, which is the special read (i.e., those performing soft services) team. The contract states "Contractor must keep a log of GPS reports extending back at minimum 3 months. Contractor must be able to provide GPS data to the City within 24 hours of request". The Bermex contract includes this provision as well. Attached Bermex Meter Read Completions stats (beginning reading meters on 8/28/17). Monthly scorecard for Corix for June and July 2017; skipped reads report.
6	✓					Corix invoices, Invoice Detail again what does CGI stand for, and there is no breakdown between water reads and electric. What makes up the difference between total meter reads in July and in Aug? Appears to be about 30,000 difference. Bermex training numbers for Aug does not seem to be the difference.	CGI stands for "Cannot Get In" which equates to the meters marked with a skip code. The skip code indicates the meter reader was not able to obtain a read from the meter. For Soft Services, it means the same thing (CGI) and is for those meters marked as incomplete due to reasons preventing the reader from reading the meter (i.e., locked gate, bad dog, damaged meter, etc.). Differences in meter registers and dollars was explained due to the period being the changeover from Corix and Bermex, with part of the work done by each firm.

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7				X		Please provide the <u>entire document</u> in use in August and September 2017 that contains the definition of "area" as that term appears on AE bills of AW residential customers. Please set forth the <u>name of the document</u> if not otherwise designated on the document that is provided. (Repeat of Question 1 from "Follow-up Questions from January 11, 2018 Meeting Documents – Questions Specifically Related to Low August Bills and High September Bills, 2017", above.)	An area is defined as the same premise type, same zip code, and same cycle. (No document was provided.) (Repeat of answer to Question 1 from "Follow-up Questions from January 11, 2018 Meeting Documents – Questions Specifically Related to Low August Bills and High September Bills, 2017", above.)
8					X	Please <u>provide the document</u> that was in use in August 2017 that spelled out how estimated reads were to be entered into the billing system, including bills for residential AW customers, when meters were not read. What individuals, by job title, were authorized to enter estimated reads? <u>Under what circumstances was Corix paid for estimated reads?</u>	The vendor is obligated to obtain an accurate and timely meter read. If a read cannot be obtained, a skip code (e.g., CGI-'can't get in' or 'bad dog') is entered into the handheld. Depending on the code entry, a new field activity is created to allow the vendor another read attempt for the next day, at no additional cost to the City. For example, an unfriendly dog presence one day may not exist the next day, and the vendor is ultimately able to obtain a read. If a read still cannot be obtained, the reason is noted in field activity notes. The premise information then flows to the billing department for further investigation, including a potential read attempt by an Austin Energy field employee. Some skip code entries go directly to Austin Water (meter removed or missing, stained dials, etc.) for infrastructure correction. Ultimately, if a read cannot be obtained, the billing system will estimate consumption based upon previous usage history at the premise. Vendor meter read ID's are numeric; supervisor and manager IDs for the vendor are name based. For the Corix contract, only the site manager had administrative authority and system access to change a meter read, because of process. This was a necessary part of their picture based review, to allow them to validate hi/low reads against pictures, prior to the end of day file generation and upload. We continue to investigate meter read files at the detailed level to identify the potential for any data changes prior to file upload. (No answer to payment to Corix for estimated reads.)

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9						<p>Please <u>provide the entire document</u> in use in August and September, 2017 that sets forth the parameters for high and low flags for abnormal water consumption by AW customers. Please <u>provide any documents in existence prior to August 2017 that provide the basis or reasoning</u> for setting the high use flag at 325%. Please <u>provide the document in existence in August 2017 that describes what action should be taken</u> once the high use consumption level is achieved. Please <u>provide the document in existence in August 2017 that describes what action should be taken</u> once the low use consumption level is achieved.</p>	<p>The high and low parameters are set forth with the purpose of identifying water or electric meter reads that require review and validation. This process requires the meter reader and/or the billing analyst to review and validate the read before moving forward. The utility billing system high and low parameters are established through an annual review process and review of benchmarking data with other large water utilities also using Oracle's Customer Care &amp; Billing (CCB) system. The City's high and low parameters are either in line or match the benchmarked utilities. The annual review of the high parameter was most recently completed in December 2017. The annual review of the low parameter takes place in February 2018. The utility billing system calculates the potential consumption range for each account prior to collection of the meter reads. The algorithm bases the calculation on consumption from the prior year (same month and same premise), dividing consumption by the number of days of service to arrive at the prior year's consumption per day. If the premise service point has a different customer or an estimated consumption for the prior year's month in review, the algorithm will calculate the potential consumption range based on the prior month's consumption. The algorithm then calculates the current month's potential consumption multiplying the current month's days of service against the prior year's consumption per day to arrive at the current month total potential consumption. The current month total potential consumption is multiplied by the billing system high and low parameters to then arrive at the calculated high and low consumption parameters. The calculated high and low consumption parameters and the previous reading value are downloaded into the meter reading file. Field personnel cannot see the downloaded data on the handheld device, and user access to that data is limited to the</p>
10			X			<p><u>Please indicate how many residential AW customers had September 2017 consumption than was more than 3 times their August 2017 consumption. Please identify the 25 routes with the most AW residential customers with September 2017 consumption that is at least 3 times their August 2017 consumption ("Top 25"). Please identify each of the Top 25 routes with a map or narrative description. Please indicate how many residential AW customers had August 2017 consumption that was less than half of their August 2016 consumption.</u></p>	<p>No data to provide at this time.</p>

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11	✓					For Aug 2017, please set forth the number of AWU residential customers whose consumption was at or below the low usage parameter and, in addition, set forth the number of AWU residential customers whose consumption for Aug 2017 was at or above the high usage parameter. for Sept 2017, please set forth the number of AWU residential customers whose consumption was at or below the low usage parameter and, in addition, set forth the number of AWU residential customers whose consumption for Sept 2017 was at or above the high usage.	While the high and low parameters are different thresholds, there is only one type of high/low alert. <b>The alert does not differentiate whether the read triggered the high parameter or the low parameter. Additionally, the alert does not specify the utility type for the read that triggered the alert.</b> If a metered utility service reading falls outside of either parameter, the High/Low alert will prompt the meter reader and/or billing analyst to review the read. In Aug 2017, the high/low parameter alert was triggered for 20,172 residential readings during billing. In Sept 2017, the high/low parameters alert was triggered for 25,274 residential readings during billing. Attached graph shows number of high/low billing alerts by day for Aug and Sept 2017, but <b>includes both water and electric. (Not useful.)</b>
12			X			<u>Please provide a copy of the data from the handheld data collection devices for meter reads during August 2017 for: the route that included Aspen Street, for the route that included York Bridge Circle, and for the route that included Port Royal Drive.</u>	No data to provide at this time.
13	✓					Please provide the Corix service agreement contract with the City of Austin that was in effect during 2017.	A redacted copy of the Corix contract was provided, along with related documents.
14	✓ (?)					Please provide the most current performance review of Corix' performance per the meter reading contract with the City of Austin.	See Question 5 above for this section.



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**Questions for May 17, 2018 Meeting**

1						<p>We appreciate the hard copies of documents and answers to questions and hope you will continue to do that in the future. However, we would appreciate it if you would please send us electronic copies, in advance of meetings, so that we can see the materials and digest them prior to meetings and make extra copies for notemaking.</p>	
2						<p>Please send correspondence to all Working Group (WG) members; we currently are not sure who gets communications from Staff. Email addresses for WWWC Commissioners are: BC-Mary.Bell@austintexas.gov, bc-Nhat.Ho@austintexas.gov, and bc-Mickey.Fishbeck.Maia@austintexas.gov. AE responses can either be emailed to each WWW Commissioner or to commission coordinator Felicia Cancino at AW for distribution to Commissioners.</p>	
3					X	<p>We have had difficulties in understanding presentations and documents when language or terms are used which are not in common parlance of those outside your areas of expertise. To help us better understand, please provide: (a.) A list of all acronyms used in all provided documents or presentations that are not in common parlance. A few examples are: RMC, CCB, ISO, QA. (b.) Descriptions or definitions of terms not within common understanding by laypersons. Some examples from provided documents are: Escalations, Flag, Field Activities, Water Field Activity, Customer Care, Premise, Monitoring Activities, Risk Assessment Exercise, Soft Services (list). (c.) Please understand that we have incomplete understanding of your internal processes, and do not necessarily understand the significance of your reference to those processes in presentations and documents. Reference to your management or operational processes will need a beginner-level introduction for us to understand the significance of your statements or documents on these topics.</p>	A copy of Customer Care Services Functional Thesaurus has been provided.
4	✓					<p>Please provide a list of the reports produced by AE and AW on a periodic basis that relate to (a) customer care, (b) the contact center and (c) the resolution of billing disputes.</p>	<p>AE and AW produce several customer care, contact center and billing resolution reports including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volume of Utility Contact Center Water/Wastewater inquiries</li> <li>• Water related Escalation Cases (High Bill, Tampering, Meter Issues, etc.)</li> <li>• Water High Bill Administrative Adjustment Requests and Resolutions</li> <li>• Tracking of Administrative Hearing Requests and Resolutions</li> <li>• Operational Reporting as part of the AE / AW Service Level Ag</li> </ul>

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5	✓ (?)					Please provide a copy of the four most recent monthly reports of high water use billing adjustments.	High Water Use Billing Adjustment reports are compiled on the 15th for the previous month. The following report shows Adjustment data from February- May, 2018. <b>[The report document was not provided. Instead Staff prepared a graph.]</b>
6	✓ (?)					Please provide a copy of the four most recent monthly administrative hearing reports.	The following reports show Administrative Hearing data for February 1 - June 12, 2018. <b>[The report document was not provided. Instead Staff prepared a graph.]</b>
7	✓					What types of customer satisfaction surveys are conducted by AE and AW regarding billing and other customer service? Please provide copies of the results of those surveys for the past two years.	Answer: Austin Energy conducts four customer satisfaction surveys: After Call Survey, First Call Resolution), Voice of the Customer, JD Power. Additional information about each survey was included in the answer.
8				X		Please provide any drafts or proposals for changes to the "flags" for high or low water consumption or for "flags" regarding unexpected consumption for customers who reside in close proximity to each other (clusters).	High / Low flags are based on algorithms, which are reviewed annually. The goal of the annual review is to ensure the greatest number of bills are captured for manual review while continuing to generate bills in timely manner. High / low algorithms are based on customer class (residential vs commercial) and type of read rather than geographic proximity. The most recent change to the algorithm occurred in December 2017, where the high parameter was changed to a lower threshold, flagging more bills for manual review. The following documents outline how the algorithm works, a history of changes and a benchmarking study
9			X			Please provide any changes that are being considered by AW Staff to the High Water Use ordinance, 15-9-142, and to other ordinances which govern billing disputes and resolutions.	
10	✓					Please provide a copy of the changes that were made to the AE/AW Utility Contact Center Service Level Agreement since September 2017.	No changes to the Service Level Agreement have been made since September 2017. The Service Level Agreement is reviewed and updated annually during the fourth quarter of the fiscal year. This year's review of the AE/AW Utility Contact Center Service Level Agreement is scheduled to begin in July 2018. Contact Center Service Level Agreement is scheduled to begin in July 2018.
11	✓					Please provide a copy of the changes that were made to the AE/AW Customer Services Management Service Level Agreement since September 2017.	No changes to the Service Level Agreement have been made since September 2017. The Service Level Agreement is reviewed and updated annually during the fourth quarter of the fiscal year. This year's review of the AE/AW Customer Services Management Service Level Agreement is scheduled to begin in July 2018.

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12	✓					<p>Please provide a copy of changes that were made after September 2017 to the scripts or instructions or protocols utilized or relied upon by Customer Care personnel when dealing with billing-related issues.</p>	<p>Specific scripts are not provided for Customer Care personnel regarding high bill calls. Instead, training is focused on call flow and process. AE is currently expanding its Quality Assurance Call Monitoring and Coaching program as well as adding additional soft skills training with a focus on empathy. The Call Monitoring and Coaching program has increased call monitoring from 3 monthly calls per agent to 15 monthly calls per agent, which is above industry standard. Additionally, longer calls are now being included. Agents receive a scorecard outlining customer service goals and receive regular feedback regarding their performance through coaching sessions. The Empathy Training program was introduced on May 22, 2018. AE facilitators successfully completed certification on May 24, 2018. Multiple courses are planned to be delivered to the Utility Contact Center on an ongoing basis, beginning in July 2018. Initial topics will include the Principals of Empathy &amp; Tone, the importance of Active Listening, Conversational Bookends &amp; Word Choice and Handling High Bill Calls.</p>
13	✓					<p>How did Corix and/or Corix meter readers obtain data on "flag" boundaries from the AE billing system that allowed them to enter fraudulent meter readings undetected? Given Corix's GPS system that Corix said would take a reading on the position of their meter readers every two minutes, why did the GPS readings not alert Corix managers or AE of a period of non-moving meter reads? How did AE determine that the two meter readers entering non-existing meter reads into the system were the sole source of low-August/high-September billing problems?</p>	<p>(a) Based on Austin Energy's conversations with Corix, Corix meter readers did not have access to the read range or the previous month's read. Corix communicated that the two meter reader's ascertained access to files showing previous reads and the read range. (How?) The current vendor, Bermex, does not have access to the read range or the previous month's read. AE has met with management and executives with the current vendor (Bermex) to review their access protocol to ensure that this breach would not occur with the new vendor. (b) Corix used truck based GPS system data. Meter Readers will usually leave the vehicle and walk the route. Austin Energy did not have direct access to the GPS system used by the vendor, Corix. Corix did not alert Austin Energy of any anomalies regarding GPS data. The current vendor, Bermex, has technology that uses Google map coordinates and cellphone location. The GPS location of meter read entry and meter reader id is captured and tracked by the vendor. (c) Individual water usage can vary greatly from month to month as well as seasonally, due to a variety of factors including irrigation systems, number of people in the household on any given day and leaks. Because of this natural variation, it is difficult to identify an anomaly at a granular level. Austin Energy began looking for unusual Aug to Sept usage patterns at a reviewing aggregate billed consumption by month and consumption by billing cycle. There were no systemic anomalies found at that level. Next, Austin Energy looked at the meter route level, and identified 135 routes that had unusual usage patterns. Austin Energy began working with Corix to further investigate the meter readers in question. Corix looked at log in, log out, and break times for all meter readers during Aug and Sept. Those same anomalies did not exist with other employees. Attached "Methodology for Route to</p>

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14					X	Please provide a copy of the demand letter sent to Corix for costs related to the failure to properly read meters over 7,000 meters in August 2017.	AE has reached out to the COA Attorney who drafted the letter. The lead attorney is out of the office until 5/16/18. AE will obtain a copy of the letter (if approved by legal) and bring it to the 5/17/18 meeting.
15	✓					In light of the failure by Corix meter-readers to read over 7,000 meters during August 2017, what reforms were instituted to tighten up the management of the meter reader vendor by AE?	The following reforms were expanded and/or instituted: • Contract Amendment: Vendor began taking a picture of the meter number and meter read on 100% of the meters for all read cycles -- Effective 1/29/18. ◦ Has been helpful in validating reads; ◦ Allows for photographic evidence where reads cannot be obtained (i.e., covered meter). • Issue Tracker Implementation ◦ Reading errors in field issues are tracked, resolved and reviewed with the Vendor, AE, and AW monthly. • Increase in AE Quality Assurance field reviews: ◦ Increased from 8 random read cycles to all 20 read cycles per month; ◦ Increased from ~380 field reviews to ~1800 field reviews per month. • AW has initiated a Quality review program to conduct sample quality audits. • Establishing an in-office Quality Assurance review on a percentage of the photos taken of the meter reads. • Vendor's leadership team performing proactive reviews of photos/reads triggering a high or low read, while meter readers are reading routes. • Increased reporting and analysis to strengthen transparency and oversight. • Implementing Raw Meter Read file review process to proactively identify any data anomalies at the route level. • Added GPS tracking from Vendor technology to include meter read location and photo.
16	✓					Please provide documents and reports showing the number of Bermex meter readers since they took over meter reading responsibilities.	The vendor is required, at a minimum, to provide a monthly Employee Roster to Austin Energy. They also provide an updated Employee Roster anytime an employee leaves their organization, or is hired. In addition, AE and AW meet with the vendor on a monthly basis and staffing levels are reviewed. The Office of the City Auditor performed a special project at the request of Council Member Troxclair to review a sampling of the new Meter Reader Vendor. Attached are Copy of the most recent Bermex Employee roster; Documents from last Bermex meeting; and Copy of City Auditor's report. (Auditor's Report says only that AE handled a sample of complaints about high water bills in accordance with their policies and procedures. Need to explain Exhibit 4 on page 5.)

Source and Question	Answered		Not complete			Question	Answer
	Answered	Answered with Difficult Language	Not Answered	Non-Responsive	Incomplete		
17	✓			✗		During the period of July-December, 2017, how many residential customers were billed zero gallons of use? What investigation has been performed by AE to determine whether the zero billings are anomalous? What investigation has been performed by AW personnel? What did you determine were the reasons for anomalous zero reads? What actions have been taken to resolve those anomalies? Have customers been ultimately billed for some amount of water following this type of anomalous reads? Have they been put on a payment plan? Are you applying late charges for these reads?	<p>In addition to system generated high / low flags in the aforementioned question, AE produces multiple reports to proactively identify potential anomalies such as zero reads.</p> <p>Below are some examples of daily reports used to identify and correct anomalies before the bill is sent to the customer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Pending Bills requiring manual review for completion</li> <li>•Same Usage in Consecutive Bills- Water</li> <li>•Zero Consumption – Water (new)</li> <li>•Zero Reads (new)</li> </ul> <p>Customers affected by anomalous reads receive re-issued bills with corrected reads and are credited any overcharges.</p> <p>The City of Austin Utilities offer payment arrangements to any customer whose utility account is eligible. Examples of accounts who do not qualify for a payment arrangement are: the utility account has been stopped, the utility account has meter tampering charges on it, or the utility services have been disconnected for non-payment. The City of Austin Utilities do not assess late charges on reads. Late charges are assessed on utility bills that have generated but not been paid by the bill's due date..</p>
18	✓					Please provide the Bermex contract to the three Water and Wastewater Commissioners. The notebook materials that you sent did not include that document.	Sent to WWWC members.
19	✓					Referring to the November 28, 2012 letter from Neil Auen of Corix to the City of Austin, on page 1, Mr. Auen says that GPS trackers record the location of the "mobile workforce" every two minutes. Was this process used for meter readers as well as for provision of soft services? Did AE have access to the tracking data? If so, why were the fraudulent non-existing readings not detected due to lack of movement of the two meter readers?	(a) Yes, the GPS trackers supplied by Corix were also used on those performing work for the soft services. (b) Corix used truck-based GPS system data. Meter Readers will usually leave the vehicle and walk the route. Austin Energy did not have direct access to the GPS system used by Corix. Corix did not alert Austin Energy of any anomalies regarding GPS data. The current vendor, Bermex, has technology that uses Google map coordinates and cellphone location. The GPS location of meter read entry and meter reader id is captured and tracked by the vendor. AE has met with management and executives with the current vendor (Bermex) to review their access protocol to ensure that this breach would not occur with the new vendor.

**Questions for July 17, 2018 Meeting**

1			✗			Please provide the document prepared by AE or AWU that defines the use of term "area" as it appears on AE bills for water service of AWU customers. (Repeated from January 11.)	
1			✗			Please provide the document that sets forth the parameters for high and low flags for abnormal water consumption by AWU customers in August and September 2017. (Repeated from January 11.)	

Source and Question	Answered		Not complete			Question	Answer
	Answered	Answered with Difficult Language	Not Answered	Non-Responsive	Incomplete		
1			X			Please provide the document that was in use in August 2017 that spelled out how estimated reads were to be entered into the billing system, including bills for residential AW customers, when meters were not read. What individuals, by job title, were authorized to enter estimated reads? Under what circumstances was Corix paid for estimated reads?. (Repeated from February.)	
1			X			Please provide the entire document in use in August and September, 2017 that sets forth the parameters for high and low flags for abnormal water consumption by AW customers. Please provide any documents in existence prior to August 2017 that provide the basis or reasoning for setting the high use flag at 325%. Please provide the document in existence in August 2017 that describes what action should be taken once the high use consumption level is achieved. Please provide the document in existence in August 2017 that describes what action should be taken once the low use consumption level is achieved. (Repeated from February 12.)	
1			X			There are many more incompletely or nonresponsively answered questions from the January and February meetings, many of which also asked for documents that were never provided. Additionally, responses to some questions promised to deliver information to the Working Group in the future, after Staff finished compiling information, but those have never been provided during the past ~five months. We want to be clear that those other inadequately-answered questions remain important, and we encourage the Staff to review their previous answers and make efforts to amend answers as they want them to appear in the record. But those questions are well-known to Staff, and we will assume that Staff does not want to improve their responses from those originally made if we do not hear otherwise.	