



OUDPC- Size/Scope of a Locate Request Focus Group

Minutes

3/5/25

Call to Order/Opening Statements: Opening Statement by Jim Wooten

Roll Call: Jason Broyles, Frank Riegler, Chuck Muller, Dave Coniglio, Clayton Heitz, Jim Wooten, Chris Russ, James Mander, Jim Collins, Lori Wade, Deron Large, Jessica Burlett, Mary Logan So

Review/Approval of Minutes: No minutes to approve

Size/Scope of Locate Request: Jim Wooten read through possible language. Jim Mander asks how the language is going to fix any issues? Jim Wooten explains how the process could assist with getting more locators in the field to better be able to service the timeliness of locates. Jim Mander responded that this was a step in the right direction. Chuck Muller added that by breaking the locate requests down, it would allow an excavator to start work earlier and would add to the coordination on an ongoing project.

Jim Wooten addresses a question on “will this language prohibit someone from requesting locates shorter than 1320 feet.” The intent behind this language is to prohibit requests larger than 1320 feet, not to prohibit requesters from calling in for a smaller area: “Shall not exceed...”.

Lori Wade raises a question surrounding the “mutually agreed marking schedule”, who will house this information and would this be done as verbal or written? After discussion, it was decided to add “This schedule shall be documented by requesting party in writing and housed with all participating organizations.”. She recommends that requesting excavator hold the responsibility of housing the information. Jim Wooten speaks to the point that as

a utility company representative, he would want to keep record(s) and feels that all the utilities would as well.

Chris Russ adds a word of caution that South Carolina is currently having a similar conversation through legislation. Explains that language could cause deeper conversations and questions dealing with the overall process.

Throughout the conversation, concerns were raised about using the term “Large/Complex” since it is not clearly defined through the ORC. Explanation given that part of the intent in looking at this topic is to be able to have some definition added to ORC. A question was raised about enforcement. Jason Broyles stated that the subsection this language would ideally go under is currently an enforceable subsection of the ORC.

Jim Wooten comments that he feels the focus group is at a point where they are ready to take the conversation to the full subcommittee. Mary Logan So comments that contractor basis is unsatisfied with the language and feels that changes are being shoved down their throats. Mary referenced prior conversations that are said to have been had in the past where things were promised the contractors and they have not seen any fruits from those conversations. Specifically noted conversations surrounding probable change from 48 hours to two working days not including the day the request is received.

Current proposed language to be presented to subcommittee:

If an excavation will cover an area exceeding 5,280 feet in linear length and will progress from one area to the next over a period of time, the excavator shall provide written notice to the utility owners in the affected area through the use of the state notification center. This notification shall be made with a “Large/Complex Project” notification with projected timelines for segments of the excavation as the excavation progresses in order to coordinate the marking of underground utility facilities with actual excavation schedules. Under such circumstances, the utility and excavator shall determine a mutually agreed upon marking schedule based on the project schedule. Once such a schedule is established, the marking and notification requirements set forth in division (A)(1) of section 3781.29 of the Revised Code shall not apply.

If an excavator is not willing or able to provide notification, as set forth in ORC 3781.28(E) through the use of a “Large/Complex Project” notification, the excavator shall not exceed 1320 feet in linear length for each notification. If the location request pertains to interstate roadway systems/divided highway, the excavator shall not exceed 5,280 feet in linear length for each notification.

If a notification is deemed to be a “Large/Complex Project”, it shall be mandatory for all utilities and the requesting excavator to participate in a meeting, the meeting may be accomplished through the use of virtual methods, to determine a mutually agreed upon marking schedule based on the project schedule. This schedule shall be documented by

requesting party in writing and housed with all participating organizations. Once such a schedule is established, the marking and notification requirements set forth in division (A)(1) of section 3781.29 of the Revised Code shall not apply.

Next Steps: Report to subcommittee on rough draft language at next meeting to occur on March 18, 2025.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 1:55 pm.