

Environmental Commission Meeting

Thursday, May 2, 2013 – 6:00 p.m.

Public Services Building

7700 Southern Avenue

MINUTES

Present

Chairman Joe Skelley

Clyde Davidson

Jimmy Davis

Urania Erskine

Steve Fleischmann

Linda Kaplan

Laura Meanwell

Paul Mosteller

David Thorpe

Alderman John Drinnon

Staff

Bo Mills

Joe Nunes

Leslie Throneberry

Absent: Andy Foster, Anne Wesberry

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Skelley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum for the Environmental Commission meeting was established.

MINUTES APPROVAL:

The minutes of the April meeting were approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Bo Mills: Mr. Mills reported that for five straight years the water sales have decreased. Conservation and the economy are probably part of the reason. The problem is that this decreases our revenues. The reduction in utility fund balances makes it more difficult for the City to be able to afford to do capital projects. The City may be looking at a rate increase in the next few years to offset this deficit. Mr. Mills thanked the Commission for their work in raising awareness of water conservation. Mr. Mosteller stated that at the Financial Advisory Commission meeting this week it was discussed that they would like the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to do a better job in communicating to the citizens/public about the budget/revenue process, i.e. because of conservation efforts, water sales are down; therefore, revenues are down and we are counting on the revenues to do certain projects.

Mr. Mills also shared a thank you note from Susan Threlkeld for the gifts the Commission gave her for her retirement.

Joe Nunes: Mr. Nunes reported that the solid waste collection strike is over. Regular crews came back to work this week. Yard debris pickup is still behind. All routes are running on their regularly scheduled days with regular equipment. The City has requested a meeting with Republic to gather input from the strike. An After Action Report will be completed. The City's observation was that things did not go according to plan. Mr. Nunes will make a presentation to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for a possible credit to customer's accounts for the missed pickups during the strike. The City is preparing to request significant liquidated damages from the contractor due to the excessive service misses.

Mr. Nunes has not received the volume reports for April yet. He expects the volume to decline due to the strike.

Mr. Nunes thanked the commission members for serving at Amnesty Day. In total, approximately 958 vehicles came through both locations. Electronics recycling volume was down. This is partially suspected to be because of the economy.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Joe Skelley: Mr. Skelley also thanked the Commission members for serving at Amnesty Day.

Paul Mosteller: Mr. Mosteller had nothing to report.

Jimmy Davis: Dr. Davis discussed an article about drugs that end up in the water supply. One way is from pills being flushed down the toilets. Another is from drugs that aren't fully absorbed in our systems. A study was done on anti-anxiety drugs in water supply. Wild European perch fish from Sweden were tested. These fish are normally very timid and stay together in schools. After giving the fish very low dosages of benzodiazepine, the fish became aggressive, wouldn't stay in schools and ate more food.

Mr. Mosteller asked if we could coordinate a drug take-back collection with our Amnesty Day schedule.

Dr. Davis also mentioned alternative fuels. Hydrogen has been mentioned as possibly being the fuel of the future but it is difficult to distribute. It may be possible to use methanol and use a catalyst to harvest it.

David Thorpe: Mr. Thorpe shared an article about Craigmont High School being named a top finisher in the third-annual Energy Star National Building Competition by decreasing their energy use by over 34 percent.

Laura Meanwell: Mrs. Meanwell had nothing to report.

Urania Erskine: Mrs. Erskine had nothing to report.

Linda Kaplan: Mrs. Kaplan brought in an article from *Architect Magazine* about a power parasol at Arizona State University. This is a 227,700 square foot parking structure that is covered with photovoltaic panels. The structure generates over 2.2 megawatts of electricity.

Mrs. Kaplan also discussed an article about harnessing the sun's energy with carbon. Scientists are proposing an all-carbon solar cell as a replacement to using rare and expensive minerals.

Steve Fleischmann: Mr. Fleischmann had nothing to report.

Clyde Davidson: Mr. Davidson had nothing to report.

Old Business: N/A

New Business: The next meeting is on June 6, 2013.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.