

# Environmental Commission Meeting

Thursday, March 6, 2014 – 6:00 p.m.

Public Services Building

7700 Southern Avenue

## MINUTES

### Present

Chairman Joe Skelley

Jimmy Davis

Urania Erskine

Laura Meanwell

Paul Mosteller

Susan Threlkeld

Alderman John Drinnon

### Staff

Bo Mills

Leslie Acerra

Absent: Clyde Davidson, Steve Fleischmann, Andy Foster and Linda Kaplan

### CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Skelley called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

### ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum for the Environmental Commission meeting was established.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:

David Thorpe, former member of the Environmental Commission, attended the meeting.

### DAVID THORPE HONORARIUM:

David Thorpe ended his long tenure of service from the Environmental Commission in December 2013. In honor of his years of service, the Commission purchased five books on environmental subjects and donated them to the Germantown Community Library. The books were on display during the meeting. Bo Mills presented Mr. Thorpe with a list of the books.

### CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the February meeting were approved.

### STAFF REPORTS:

Bo Mills: Mr. Mills shared on Joe Nunes' behalf that Mr. Nunes has applied for a Keep America Beautiful Recycling Container Grant. Mr. Nunes should have information later in the spring as to whether we will get that grant. It will be used to help support the recycling programs in Cameron Brown and Bob Hailey parks.

Mr. Mills reported that in 2001 a carbon-activated biofilter was constructed in Poplar Estates Park to capture the gases from the sewer system. The cost to recharge it is \$18,000. The City has decided to go with a bio-bed which is basically a bed of mulch with pipe work underneath it. This is a more natural decomposition process. The City is looking to put this in as an emergency plan. The cost is approximately \$50,000. A sprinkler system is required to keep everything moist. The mulch will have to be changed out a few times per year. The creek from the Wolf River lateral has flooded the park a few times in the past. To insure that the biofilter isn't flooded, the area will be shored up or a berm will be built around it.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Urania Erskine: Mrs. Erskine asked if the City of Memphis school system will be billed for the water consumption for the new school district. Mr. Mills explained that they are already metered and the proper authority will be billed.

Mrs. Erskine would like the Farm Park to have a rain barrel workshop. Mr. Mills confirmed that Tim Bierdz, the City Stormwater Engineer, has purchased a couple of rain barrels and has them on display in the Blue Room in the Economic and Community Development Building.

Susan Threlkeld: Mrs. Threlkeld shared that the Master Gardeners have people that can speak on the topic of rain barrels.

Mrs. Threlkeld also mentioned that Urania Erskine is the new President of the Germantown Community Garden Association at the Farm Park.

The Arbor Day dogwood tree giveaway is tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. in the shopping center at Germantown and Farmington. This is sponsored through the Germantown Beautification Commission. At 11:00 a.m., fruit trees will be sold at the Farm Park.

Paul Mosteller: Mr. Mosteller questioned if there was a way to collect and reuse water that gets drained when the City flows fire hydrants. Mr. Mills explained that the water would not be of good quality since it sits dormant for a year. It will contain rust and sediment.

Jimmy Davis: Dr. Davis saw a story online about how to clean bacteria from water by filtering it through wood. The process filters out up to 99.9% of the bacteria. Mr. Mills explained that the City's water comes from subsurface wells and has not been exposed to these levels of bacteria.

Laura Meanwell: Mrs. Meanwell continued on the topic of dirty water by explaining that the micro beads that are in many of the facial scrubs are actually a draw for bacteria. They are so small that they don't get filtered out.

Mrs. Meanwell has been in support of a recycling program at Cameron Brown and Bob Hailey 4-field complexes. Jamie White, Grounds Superintendent, put together a mini business plan for a recycling program during the recreational baseball season. The program will focus on aluminum and plastic. If we receive the Keep America Beautiful grant that Mr. Nunes has applied for, more recycling receptacles will be purchased. At this point, we have eight receptacles to start the program. Mrs. Meanwell is on the Germantown Baseball League Board and they will promote the recycling campaign in their communications to members. Once the program has begun, Mr. Mills will share the volume that is collected.

Alderman John Drinnon: Mr. Drinnon mentioned that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen have discussed the traffic problems at the intersection of Wolf River Blvd and Germantown Rd. This is the most heavily travelled intersection in Shelby County. There is a need for traffic reduction. Several ideas have been discussed. There is also a speed limit concern.

#### COMMENTS BY CHAIRMAN SKELLEY:

Mr. Skelley had nothing to report.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Mills researched the efficacy rate and the minimum fluoride saturation is .7 parts per million which is what the City is at currently. If we go below this rate, we will have to discontinue adding fluoride to the water supply. After discussion among the commission members, the consensus is to leave things as they are.

NEW BUSINESS:

Amnesty Dumpster Day is scheduled for Saturday, April 12, 2014. Normally, it is scheduled for the third Saturday in April. This year it would have been on the Easter weekend so it was changed to a week earlier. A sign-up sheet was passed around for Commission members to volunteer to work.

After discussing the complications with the Wolf River Canoe trip, it was decided to disregard this idea and change the outing to an event at the Farm Park in May.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.