

Environmental Commission Meeting

Thursday, May 1, 2014 – 6:00 p.m.
Public Services Building
7700 Southern Avenue

MINUTES

Present

Chairman Joe Skelley
Clyde Davidson
Urania Erskine
Steve Fleischmann
Andy Foster

Linda Kaplan
Paul Mosteller
Susan Threlkeld
Alderman John Drinnon

Staff

Bo Mills
Leslie Acerra

Absent: Jimmy Davis, Laura Meanwell and Joe Nunes

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Skelley called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum for the Environmental Commission meeting was established.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the April meeting were approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Bo Mills: Mr. Mills shared that the Animal Shelter Expansion will be bid soon. The Friends of the Animal Shelter will be selling brick pavers and donating the proceeds to help offset the cost of the expansion. The pavers will be sold for approximately \$50 each.

Mr. Mills reported that the annual milling and paving contract was awarded to Lehman Roberts Company. The focus will be in the Dogwood Road area between Kimbrough and Forest Hill Irene and assorted coves off of this area. Paving will also be done in the Billy Tagg subdivision. The cost of the project is \$542,000.

Mr. Mills also reported that Lateral G, which is our furthest lateral to the east and it runs with power lines at Houston High School area, was previously an unstudied stream. Federal government studied the stream and declared it to be "in the flood plain". 27 homes that were outside the flood plain last year are now in the flood plain. They are now required to have flood insurance and the property becomes less desirable. Residents have asked the City for help getting out of the flood plain. The Board of Mayor and Aldermen is trying to determine what can be done to help these residents but money is a factor. Also, there are approximately 500 homes throughout Germantown that also have the flood plain designation. The Board is really challenged as to how to address the flood plain issue as a whole. Is it fair to address this newly declared area only without addressing other areas? The City will have to spend between \$5 - \$7 million dollars to bring Lateral G out of the flood plain alone. This includes the area south of Wolf River Blvd. The homes that were built north of Wolf River Blvd were built above the flood plain. Mr. Drinnon explained that the BMA voted to prioritize Lateral G as a primary concern but also to study the other areas that are in the flood plain. The Department of Environment and Conservation will not allow changes to waters of the

state/natural streams. A way to get this area out of the flood plain is to go upstream and detain water with a lake or possibly parallel the earthen ditch with system ditches to help get water out of the area quicker.

Mr. Mosteller brought up what happened in Portland with the boy urinating in the reservoir. He asked what kind of protection the City has in place to protect our water supply. Mr. Mills explained that the building was renovated in 2008. A cross-functional team was established that included the City's SWAT Commander, Police Chief, Fire Chief, Fire Marshal, Planning Department employee and Public Services staff. They did a vulnerability study to see where the weakest areas were. This was treated similar to a Homeland Security issue. The Fire Chief, John Selberg, is a leader in Homeland Security. He is on Task Force 1. Mr. Mills imported these ideas into the renovation plans. The fences are now taller and have wires on them. The gates have latches to make it more secure. The Police patrol the City's seven zones. There is always a risk even with precautions.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Paul Mosteller: Mr. Mosteller read an article online about reducing carbon footprints. It encouraged veganism because meat producers use a lot of water.

Mr. Mosteller also wanted to remind everyone that the spring and summer watering season is upon us. He encouraged everyone to double check their irrigation systems and/or sprinklers and to do your part to conserve water.

Susan Threlkeld: Mrs. Threlkeld asked if the lids for plastic bottles are recyclable. It was confirmed that they are recyclable.

Urania Erskine: Mrs. Erskine shared that some of the comments that she received at the Business Expo were that the citizens wished the garbage cans were smaller and the recycle containers were bigger.

Mrs. Erskine complimented the revised traffic flow design for Amnesty Day at Johnson Road Park. She said that there was less confusion this year.

Alderman John Drinnon: Alderman Drinnon stated that the new school system budget was presented recently. Mr. Drinnon also feels that the housing market and property values will go back up once the schools get started.

Andy Foster: Mr. Foster shared that Stanford University is working on a next generation battery with a new coating. The coating will heal itself within a few hours if cracked. Battery life should be longer if it works correctly.

Mr. Foster also shared that a company is in the development stages of putting digital equipment in old cameras. They are trying to get additional funding now.

Mr. Skelley expressed his appreciation to the volunteers for a very successful Amnesty Day. He also thanked Mrs. Threlkeld and Mrs. Erskine for volunteering at the Business Expo.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

June's meeting will be held at the Farm Park. Ms. Acerra will change the location information on the City's website to reflect this change. The public entrance is off of Cross Country Drive.

May 19 – 23 is National Public Services week. Public Services will be hosting a cookout at the Horse Show Grounds on Wednesday, May 21 at 11:30 a.m. Members of the Environmental Commission are invited to attend. Ms. Acerra will send an email prior to the event.

It was voted and agreed that the July meeting that is scheduled for July 3 will be cancelled. Ms. Acerra will change the calendar on the City's website to reflect this change also.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:47 p.m.