

# Environmental Commission Meeting

Thursday, April 2, 2015 – 6:00 p.m.  
Public Works Building  
7700 Southern Avenue

## MINUTES

### Present

Chairman Joe Skelley  
Urania Erskine  
Steve Fleischmann  
Linda Kaplan

Paul Mosteller  
Susan Threlkeld  
Jayu Wagh  
Alderman Dave Klevan

### Staff

Bo Mills  
Joe Nunes  
Leslie Acerra

Guests: Clyde Davidson and John Zeanah

Absent: Jimmy Davis, Andy Foster and Scott Schoefernacker

### CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Skelley called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

### ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum for the Environmental Commission meeting was established.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:

Clyde Davidson, former member of the Environmental Commission, attended the meeting.

John Zeanah, Administrator from the Memphis and Shelby County Office of Sustainability Division of Planning and Development, was the guest speaker.

### CLYDE DAVIDSON HONORARIUM:

Mr. Davidson retired from the Environmental Commission in December 2014. In honor of his many years of service, the Commission purchased five books on some of Mr. Davidson's favorite topics, which include antique cars, military history and the environment, and donated them to the Germantown Community Library. The books were on display during the meeting. A monetary donation was also made in his honor to the Germantown Animal Shelter. A time of fellowship and sharing of memories accompanied a break in the meeting to enjoy pies made by Ms. Acerra.

### CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the February meeting were approved.

### GUEST SPEAKER – JOHN ZEANAH:

Mr. Zeanah distributed Mid-South Regional Greenprint 2015/2040 books to the commission members. This plan is the product of a \$2.6 million HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant. Over 80 organizations and 300 individuals in the tri-state region were involved in effort. The plan developed a vision for a network of green space connecting counties in the tri-state area. The two major components of the plan are: 1: It is a concept for connecting a system of green space across our region (Shelby, Fayette, Crittenden and Desoto counties) and 2: It is a set of strategic actions that incorporate broader benefits such as transportation choices to employment and the health impact of green space. They really tried to find a

balance between urban, suburban and rural areas. They recognize that the plan is not a “one size fits all” plan and it won’t work in its entirety for everyone. They encourage every community to consider the recommendations and use which parts that they can.

Mr. Mills asked if there is a reporting clearing house. Mr. Zeanah explained that they have received a grant from the Hyde Foundation to create a coordinator that will work directly with his office and the chambers of commerce over the next two years to maintain the information and to be a resource for each of the communities going forward.

Mr. Zeanah shared his business cards with those in attendance so he can be contacted if anyone should have questions.

Mr. Zeanah shared that Memphis and Shelby County were recognized today for receiving a 4-Star sustainable community rating from Star Communities which is a national organization which looks at standards and certifications for sustainable communities. Seattle, Washington and Northampton, Massachusetts are the only communities with the 5-Star rating.

Mr. Skelley suggested for the commission members to study over the Greenprint plan so it can be discussed in the May meeting.

#### STAFF REPORTS:

Bo Mills: Mr. Mills explained that from March 9 to March 12, residents from all areas of the city reported a sulfur smell in the water. The water department immediately switched to different wells, in case the smell was related to the wells being used. It was determined that the strong smell was coming from well #6. Although the well was taken out of service immediately, it took several days for the smelly water to be flushed through the system. The Groundwater Institute came out and took samples. Samples were also taken to the Shelby County Health Department. Nothing ever showed up to be hazardous or bacteria laden. No sickness was ever reported. It just smelled bad. Well #6 is still out of service with what we think to be a bacterial growth in the well. Mr. Mills has asked Chairman Skelley to review the chemical analysis in the reports. The recommended solution is basically a good scrubbing of the 800’ well using chlorine and bubble action to boil the well. Hopefully, this well will be back in service by the summer. Additional chlorine, remaining within the state’s guidelines, was added to the water.

Mr. Mills shared that the Southern Avenue Water Treatment Plant should be back to 12 million gallons per day capacity by April 15. The new fan-forced electrical aeration units are set and should be back in service soon. One aeration tower has been taken down and the other one will be taken down once the two new aeration units are in service.

Mr. Mills shared that the Animal Shelter Phase I renovations are almost complete with the exception of a few punch list items. Bids were opened today on Phase II and came in under budget.

Joe Nunes: Mr. Nunes shared the sanitation volumes graphs. Recycling was up in February as compared to February 2014. Year-to-date numbers are about even with 2014.

Mr. Nunes reported that Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) presented the 2015-2025 Solid Waste and Materials Management Plan. He will send Ms. Acerra a link to share with the commission members. There is a section of the plan that is primarily guidance for local governments which

is an indication of best practices. Once the plan is adopted by TDEC, the implementation will begin. This will affect how municipalities report volume to the state.

Mr. Nunes reported that approximately 300 residents were served on Mulch Day.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Susan Threlkeld: Mrs. Threlkeld toured the Household Hazardous Waste Facility. Christine Donhardt is in charge of the sustainability department. To receive her monthly email blasts, email her at [Christine.Donhardt@MemphisTN-Gov](mailto:Christine.Donhardt@MemphisTN-Gov) and request to be added to her monthly blasts for environmental events throughout Shelby County.

Mrs. Threlkeld reminded the commission that Mr. Nunes wants to get the school recycling program revamped. Mrs. Threlkeld said that Brandy Miller will be glad to help. Mr. Mosteller asked if it is possible to work through the Germantown Municipal School Board to get a liaison to work with the commission on the program. Mr. Nunes wants us to decide what we want to present because the prior program is dated. He would like to find the hook that will bring teachers in to the program.

Paul Mosteller: Mr. Mosteller shared articles on recycling and water conservation. Recyclables do not have to be squeaky clean. This information can be used in the school program. He also suggested that some things can be put in the dishwasher before they are put in the recycling bin.

Mr. Mosteller also shared that he recently purchased a battery operated weed eater and it works great. It is lightweight and does not use any gas or oil.

Alderman Klevan: Alderman Klevan shared that Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) has a class scheduled in April titled Layman's Approach to Regulations of Portable Water Systems.

Alderman Klevan acknowledged that the Public Works Department has gone over and above to keep the city functioning during the bad weather. Roadways were kept in good shape by keeping the streets clear and repairing the potholes.

Alderman Klevan also shared that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen met last night to discuss the Germantown Municipal School Board budget and Capital Improvement Projects (CIP).

Jayu Wagh: Mrs. Wagh's husband is a geotechnical engineer and he has designed several landfills. She shared the following points that she got from him:

As long as we create waste, construction of landfills is inevitable. The primary purpose of the landfill is to isolate waste from the surrounding environment. Given that, the location of the landfill is a very critical and sensitive issue. Unless a landfill is properly planned, designed, constructed and maintained, problems could be created. Obvious problems are odor, rodents and/or ground water contamination. In view of these issues, communities do not want landfills in their vicinity. Once a landfill is properly encapsulated, it can be reused.

Linda Kaplan: Mrs. Kaplan shared an article that reports Clean Line Energy Partners is focused on bringing wind power from the Oklahoma panhandle to Millington. This project will cost approximately \$2 billion. It will deliver 3,500 megawatts of power, which is three times the amount generated by Hoover Dam and is enough to serve 1,000,000 homes, from wind turbines in Oklahoma to a station in northern Shelby County.

The electricity will then be sent to the TVA grid which provides wholesale power to MLGW and about 150 other organizations.

Mrs. Kaplan also shared that France is mandating “green” or solar roofs for all new commercial construction.

Urania Erskine: Mrs. Erskine recently visited Las Vegas. The city is requiring residents to conserve water. Residents can only irrigate their lawns on certain days. The city is also paying residents to remove the grass from their lawns and put in rocks. Pools must be covered to stop evaporation.

Mrs. Erskine also shared that the Farm Park will be hosting a rain barrel class in May. She will send the information to Ms. Acerra to forward to the commission members.

OLD BUSINESS:

Amnesty Dumpster Day is scheduled for Saturday, April 18. A volunteer sign-up sheet was passed around.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.