

Environmental Commission Meeting

Thursday, October 1, 2015 – 6:00 p.m.
Public Works Building
7700 Southern Avenue

MINUTES

Present

Chairman Joe Skelley
Jimmy Davis
Urania Erskine
Steve Fleischmann

Linda Kaplan
Susan Threlkeld
Jayu Wagh

Staff

Bo Mills
Joe Nunes
Leslie Acerra

Absent: Andy Foster, Paul Mosteller, Scott Schoefernacker and Alderman Dave Klevan

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Skelley called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum for the Environmental Commission meeting was established.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the September meeting were approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Joe Nunes: Amnesty Dumpster Day attendance was down slightly at the Southern Avenue location but was about even at the Johnson Road location as compared to the September 2014 event. Scrap metal and roll off tonnage information has not been received yet. Electronics recycling volume was down 19%.

Since Inland took over, recycling has declined approximately 18% and household waste has increased approximately 18%. There is a concern that the recycling and debris are not being tracked properly. A revised tracking system is being put into place.

The launch of the new large 96 gallon recycle container program did not go as desired. The mechanical equipment is calibrated to pick up the 35 gallon containers and is crushing many of the 96 gallon containers.

The city is continuing to see improvements in Inland's solid waste collection service over the past month. Service requests are down.

In October, Mr. Nunes will be a guest on Mayor Palazzolo's television show, *Focus on Germantown*, on the Houston High School channel. The segment will be called "Talking Trash".

The annual Keep America Beautiful competition is held from October 19 to November 15 this year.

Bo Mills: Mr. Mills explained that the street sweeping contract is about to go out to bid again. The city began contracting this work in 1985 because the machines are very expensive and are high maintenance and because the work is performed unsupervised at night. Street sweeping keeps much of the debris from

entering our stormwater system. This sweeping contract costs approximately \$400,000 per year. Every street in the city gets swept twice per year; once between mid-November and January and once in June. Some streets are swept every week, every other week, monthly or every other month depending on the traffic and leaf volumes. One of the performance measures that Public Works tracks is cubic yards of debris diverted from the stormwater system. A clean city means a lot. The city only picks up leaves that naturally fall in the street. Residents are not allowed to blow their leaves into the street.

Mulch Day is Saturday, October 17. The event begins at 8:00 at the Public Works Complex. Mulch will be available until supplies are gone.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Urania Erskine: Mrs. Erskine complimented staff about how well Amnesty Dumpster Day went this year. She also congratulated staff and volunteers on a successful event.

Mrs. Erskine shared an article about Germantown titled "A Sustainable City" from the *Germantown Area Chamber of Commerce*. Ms. Acerra will email the article to the commission tomorrow.

With winter coming soon, Mrs. Erskine would like an article in the *Talk of the Town* about putting away dog/cat food in hopes to educate people and eradicate roof rats and other unwanted wildlife. Mr. Nunes will pursue through Administration.

Jimmy Davis: Dr. Davis will prepare his annual flu report for next month's meeting. Twenty cases have been confirmed at Union University so far this year.

Jayu Wagh: A 13 year old girl from India won the Community Impact Award at the 2015 Google Science Fair Competition for a low cost bio-absorbent water purifier that cleans waste water. The waste water is filtered through several layers of corn cobs, powdered corn cobs, activated charcoal made from corn cobs and fine sand. Between 72% - 80% of the contaminants are separated. The prize included \$10,000 and a year-long mentorship.

In the winter, drying laundry indoors on racks acts as a natural home humidifier.

Susan Threlkeld: The Green Matters for Shelby County Women Brown Bag Luncheon will be held Wednesday, October 28 at the main branch of the Memphis Public Library. The topic will be urban gardening at local schools.

Linda Kaplan: Modifications/clarifications need to be made to the Go Green in '15 cards that were distributed at the Amnesty Dumpster Day event. Suggestions were made. Staff will adjust cards prior to the next printing.

Memphis and Shelby County Office of Sustainability has a newsletter that is a good source of sustainability activities. Examples of stories include TDEC contributing to a clean energy grant to install solar panels at Lichterman Nature Center; Memphis and Arkansas bridge walk with Jimmy Ogle; guided tours of the Agricenter solar farm; and the Tiger Blue Goes Green event on October 6 from 10:00-2:00.

OLD BUSINESS:

Amnesty Dumpster Day review:

- We need to have more recycling flyers.

- Separating the document shredding and the electronic recycling locations worked much better.
- We will have two trucks for document shredding for the 2016 events.
- We need to have the various advertisements on hand the day of the event.
- We need to have more hazardous waste flyers.

NEW BUSINESS:

Invitations were distributed for the annual Commission Dinner that will be held on Thursday, November 12 at the Great Hall and Conference Center. The RSVP deadline is Thursday, November 5.

Commission appointment applications will go out at the end of October and will be due to Dotty Johnson, City Clerk, by November 30.

The Environmental Commission meeting/holiday party will be held at Mrs. Threlkeld's home on Thursday, December 3 at 6:00 p.m. Members will contact Ms. Acerra as to what they will be bringing to the potluck dinner.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.