

Environmental Commission Meeting

Thursday, January 7, 2016 – 6:00 p.m.
Public Works Building
7700 Southern Avenue

MINUTES

Present

Chairman Joe Skelley
Jimmy Davis
Urania Erskine
Steve Fleischmann
Andy Foster
Linda Kaplan

Paul Mosteller
Scott Schoefnacker
Susan Threlkeld
Jayu Wagh
Alderman Rocky Janda

Staff

Bo Mills
Joe Nunes
Leslie Acerra

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.

SELF INTRODUCTION AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:

Alderman Janda thanked the commission members for volunteering and shared that the commissions are important to the aldermen. They listen to the commissions' recommendations for the City of Germantown. Citizen participation is very essential in city government. Alderman Janda is proud and honored to be an alderman. He also shared some personal information and encouraged commission members to email or call him any time as he is always available.

All members introduced themselves and briefly shared some personal information.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the December meeting were approved.

COMMENTS BY CHAIRMAN

Chairman Skelley thanked Mrs. Threlkeld for hosting our December meeting and holiday dinner.

Members were asked for their input as to which areas of concentration they preferred to report.

STAFF REPORTS:

Bo Mills: Mr. Mills went over the Code of Ethics Policy for commission members and the Open Records Policy. He highlighted several areas to stress the importance of following the policies. Commission members signed the Ethics policy form and Ms. Acerra will send the forms to City Clerk, Dotty Johnson.

Kathy Cross, our Utility Billing Specialist, will relocate to this location effective Monday. We now contract out the printing of the utility bills so she no longer has to be located in Finance. This move should be very beneficial because she has multiple interactions with the meter reading personnel on a daily basis.

With the addition of Kathy's cubicle, the new front office configuration limits the space that is normally used for the commission meetings. Mr. Mills asked if everyone was comfortable continuing to meet in this area with the limited spacing or if they would rather move to the Muster Room. Commission members chose to continue to meet in the front office area.

When Whole Foods was built on Poplar Avenue, an old transite (asbestos-concrete) 6" water main that came down Pete Mitchell Road was discontinued and a new water main was run. Transite material is very volatile and susceptible to rupture. The city has been trying to remove it from our water system through the years. Part of this same 6" transite water main came up Dogwood Rd. In routine checking, the Fire Department found low pressure in this section. This is because the connection to the Poplar water main was lost when the new water main was installed. Work was just completed to abandon the old main and switch all of the fire hydrants and service lines onto a 12" water main that runs parallel to the 6" main on Dogwood. This was handled as an emergency repair and all work has been completed. Homes and fire hydrants are back in service.

There were no commission member changes this year other than our alderman liaison change. If commission members know of anything to be addressed, Mr. Mills asked them to contact Ms. Acerra or him.

Joe Nunes: The final draft of the sanitation Request for Proposal is being reviewed.

The sanitation volume is the heaviest it has been all year because this is the week following Christmas. This week, the contractor has also had the highest level of household trash misses in the 14 months of the contract. Therefore, Mayor Palazzolo and Patrick Lawton have been talking to the senior management of Inland Waste Solutions in an attempt to get this corrected. The current contract ends in six months.

Mrs. Erskine reported that she witnessed yard waste being picked up on New Year's Day and on Saturday. Inland Waste and Michael's Tree and Loader Service were both picking up yard debris at the same time in her neighborhood. This was confusing, not only for both of those companies, but also for the residents. Mr. Nunes explained that Michael's Tree and Loader Service is now picking up Inland's missed service requests.

There was concern over who would be paying for the extra costs incurred by having Michael's Tree and Loader Service in addition to Inland Waste. Mr. Nunes explained that the current contract includes a liquidated damages clause. The City reduces payments to Inland Waste in the amount of payments made to Michael's Tree and Loader Service.

Mr. Nunes also explained that the Sanitation Fund is an Enterprise Fund. Although the city has incurred rate increases for sanitation fees from the vendor, there has been no rate increase to customers in approximately eight years. Reductions in payments to Inland Waste due to liquidated damages have aided in keeping the fund balance positive. The city also gives residents the option to have curbside pickup, which is \$4.50 per month less than the backdoor rate of \$24.50. 73% of residents have chosen curbside pickup.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Paul Mosteller: Mr. Mosteller requested better community notification for Amnesty Days this year. He suggested notices in the Commercial Appeal and the Germantown News. These notices need to include the dates, the locations, what is collected at each location, and that this is for Germantown residents only.

He suggested having information on hand for the Memphis/Shelby County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility. He also suggested having the news do a report on Amnesty Day. Mr. Nunes' explained that the Commercial Appeal is too expensive to run ads for the event. Mr. Foster suggested having one of the schools create a video/infomercial and provide the video to the news stations. Mrs. Wagh suggested that Amnesty Day information be included in the electronic notification.

Mr. Mosteller also shared a report on ways to conserve water. Some examples included using your water meter to check for hidden leaks, insulating water pipes and making sure sprinklers are positioned in the correct direction so water does not go into the street. Mrs. Threlkeld requested that the article be emailed so that everyone can read the entire article. Ms. Acerra will email this to the commission members.

Jayu Wagh: Mrs. Wagh read an article stating that President Obama signed a bill that prohibits the sale and distribution of products that contain micro beads. The small plastic beads are often found in exfoliating and skin care products. With the food chain being the way it is, these plastic beads get into the water, fish eat the plastic beads and eventually people eat the fish that ate the plastic beads.

Linda Kaplan: Mrs. Kaplan shared an article stating that San Diego is going all in on clean energy. Their target is 100% clean energy. San Diego is the 8th largest city in the United States. Stanford scientists say that transitioning to 100% renewable energy will save the average American family \$260 per year and another \$1,500 in healthcare costs. Solar industry now employs twice as many people as the coal mining industry.

Jimmy Davis: Dr. Davis questioned whether we would be impacted by the State of Mississippi lawsuit against the City of Memphis over aquifer usage. Mr. Mills said the City of Germantown would not be impacted.

This year the flu vaccine and the actual flu strain are a perfect match. The virus is not mutating. Although people are getting flu, flu-related deaths are much lower than the previous years.

Urania Erskine: According to an article in *USA Today*, we use 76 billion gallons of fresh ground water per day in the United States and ground water supplies are dropping. Mr. Schoefnacker explained that the Memphis aquifer gets a lot of recharge from the shallow aquifer. The Memphis aquifer has no subsidence because it is still pressurized.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Skelley recently met with Mayor Palazzolo. The Mayor would like the commission to research the Pay As You Throw sanitation practice. Some things to research include whether this is a practical collection process and if this is a trend that is increasing or decreasing. Household waste and yard waste should be considered separately. Chairman Skelley asked all commission members to research this subject for discussion at our next meeting.

Mr. Nunes is going to Franklin, TN tomorrow to discuss their Pay As You Throw Program. For household waste over and above what will fit in the curbside containers, their residents pay \$1 per bag. Residents purchase stickers from the city. These stickers must be on the bag or it will not be picked up. Also, Franklin does not accept yard waste in plastic bags. Yard waste has unlimited collection.

The City of Germantown is above average for recycling, but there is still room for improvement. Many residents have multiple carts. Mr. Nunes considered tiered sanitation pricing but our billing system does not

allow for tiered pricing based on sanitation usage. The new contract has a 10 cubic yard/50 bag maximum for yard waste per week.

ADJOURNMENT:

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