



## Environmental Commission Meeting

Thursday, November 3, 2016 – 6:00 p.m.

Public Works Building  
7700 Southern Avenue

### MINUTES

**Present:**

Chairman Joe Skelley  
Jimmy Davis  
Steve Fleischmann  
Andy Foster  
Alderman Rocky Janda

Linda Kaplan  
Paul Mosteller  
Scott Schoefernacker  
Susan Threlkeld  
Jayu Wagh

**Absent:**

Urania Erskine

**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.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:**

The minutes of the September meeting were approved.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

Joe Nunes:

Amnesty Dumpster Day Report: Being fall, there was less turn out than in the spring. We collected 19 tons of material using an estimate of 5.5 tons of shredded paper. Thank you for the support of the Environmental Commission.

Recycle Volume, Inland vs Waste Pro, clearly Inland was not collecting all of the recycle material or at least not taking it to the recycle facility. Memphis hosted an event today announcing their partnership with the "Recycling Partnership" to put another 40,000, 96 gallon recycling carts in the City of Memphis. They received a grant which will enable them to do public education on proper recycling. There will be bus ads and possibly billboards which will benefit Germantown also with broader exposure.

Trash volume is down but is a usual trend in October; the good news is we are at 937 tons for the month which is below of average of a little over a 1000 tons per month. Waste Pro complaints continue to go down

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every month and we are very pleased with Waste Pro's performance to date. The City sent out postcards approved and funded by Waste Pro concerning yard waste collection guidelines.

#### Bo Mills:

Leaf collection season is here. There is always confusion as to what the City's responsibility is and what the homeowners' is. The City is responsible for what "naturally" falls or blows into the roadway. If it is between the curb faces, in the roadway, the City has a couple leaf vacs that will come around to pick those up and also the street sweeping contractor will pick those up. Any leaves from the curb up to the yards are the homeowner's responsibility. We want to encourage composting and mulching as fantastic ways to avoid having a lot of leaves to put out for collection. Our purpose for keeping leaves out of the roadway is to protect our storm inlets and keep them clean. One of our Departmental performance measures in Stormwater is to track how many cubic yards of debris we divert from the stormwater system via our processes, either our vacs or the contracted street sweeper. We will record around 3000 cubic yards of material our vacs have collected throughout the fall. We will make several runs concentrating on the heavy leaf areas. On days when routine street work can't be performed, street crews take the leaf vacs out and run them around the City. The City is divided into quadrants and each crew supervisor is responsible for keeping their quadrants clean. Calls concerning inlets that are blocked should be made to Public Works at 757-7350 during regular business hours or 757-7338 after hours.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

##### Jayu Wagh:

During a trip to Barcelona this October, Mrs. Wagh discovered a street where a recycling art workshop called "Drap Art" was being held. There was artwork made from recycled material being sold, such as CD's that had been made into jewelry, and a keyboard that had been made into rings. There is a similar workshop held in Pittsburgh, PA.

##### Rocky Janda:

Great turn out for early voting.

##### Paul Mosteller:

From a water conservation standpoint, with colder weather approaching, it is time to winterize faucets with covers to avoid broken water pipes.

Mr. Mosteller accompanied Joe Nunes on a trip to the Memphis City dump. As a pharmaceutical representative in his younger days, he represented a company that manufactured baby formula. There was a recall on some of the product that was bad. He spent two days riding in a garbage truck collecting the bad formula from grocery stores and other vendors, then depositing it at the City dump. At that time, the dump was just a hole in the ground. The facility has become a massive operation and has a capacity for 35 additional years. There are areas that have been capped off and used as sources of methane gas that can



be used for 25 to 30 years. The Dupont factory is one facility taking advantage of this methane gas source. Once the dump space has reached its "lifespan", it's been proposed to be used as a site for photocells .

Linda Kaplan:

An organization called GreenFaith: Interfaith Partners in Action for the Earth published an article about international climate negotiations being held in Marrakesh this November. Marrakesh is a largely Muslim country rich in religious diversity. The Muslim leaders are stepping forward to offer more leadership on climate change. Many of the world's 1.3 billion Muslims live in regions of the world such as North Africa that are at great risk from the climate change induced droughts. Their leadership is critical to the safe and healthy future of us all.

An article in The Guardian reveals how Americans waste food. Americans throw out approximately 2 tons of food per second due to lack of aesthetic appeal or because we are too finicky.

Susan Threlkeld:

In addition to the mail out from WastePro, for the past three months there have been items about trash collection included in the City's Talk of the Town water bill insert. These small "sound bites" could be easier for people to take in rather than giving a lot of information at once.

Mrs. Threlkeld's daughter who lives in Anaheim, CA was out for a walk and noticed some trash containers that have solar compactors installed on top. These containers would reduce labor costs of frequent emptying of the containers and solar power eliminates the need for electricity.

Mrs. Threlkeld attended a Conservation Camp in October associated with her Garden Club near Nashville. They gave out bottle openers from the Metro Beautification and Environment Commission in Nashville that are combined. Our Environmental Commission was started by people in the Beautification Commission that thought we should have a separate commission. There are approximately 35 different districts represented on Nashville's Metro Beautification and Environment Commission. It could be a fun field trip to attend one of their meetings.

At the Conservation Camp, the drinking cups being used were labeled as "industrial compostable". The cup was made from corn, instead of petroleum. Although it is good that it isn't made from petroleum, the problem is that you are using an edible commodity to make a drinking cup. Industrial compostable items are not suitable for home composting but have to be sent to a facility. In some places such as the San Francisco Bay area, you cannot get plastic bags, but you can get industrial compostable bags or paper bags. Another problem with industrial compostable items is that they belong in the regular trash and not in our recyclables because it will contaminate the stream. Biodegradable items are broken down, but compostable items are broken down into environmentally friendly byproducts. Biodegradable items can leave metal residue. Joe Nunes shared that at the City of Memphis trash facility, they have the motto "When in doubt, throw it out!" instead of taking a chance on contaminating the recyclables. Mr. Foster shared that if the wrong materials get into plastic, they can destroy the injection mold which can be very costly. This is another reason why it is so important only to put appropriate materials in our recycling.

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Andy Foster:

Mr. Foster shared an article about fluoride. The article says that fluoride started as a byproduct of aluminum production. ALCOA was trying to find a use for the byproduct. Dr. Davis opposed that theory; it started as a health issue for kids' teeth and fluoride occurs naturally. Fluoride, included in our drinking water at safe levels, can be harmful in large amounts. Mr. Foster shared that fluoride can collect in your hot water heater and on its elements, so hot water should not be used for cooking or drinking.

Scott Schoefernacker:

Mr. Schoefernacker announced that funding for the stormwater stickers was finally received. With the help of Alderman Janda and Tim Bierdz, a letter was sent to Patrick Lawton, who then directed reallocation of funds to put more into the stormwater expense fund to afford the stickers. All of English Meadows Neighborhood Association should be covered with the 115 - 120 stickers that will be purchased, approximately 600 houses. Tim Bierdz, along with Mr. Schoefemacker will speak with the English Meadows Neighborhood Association at their next quarterly meeting in January about scheduling a time, possibly in March, to install the stickers on the stormwater drains. This will be a great start and more stickers should be purchased yearly with Poplar Estates being the next target. The stickers should last about 10 years and cost approximately \$3 each.

Update on TVA –vs. -- Sierra Club: Sierra Club appealed to the Ground Water Quality Control Board. The last two wells are on hold. The lawyers for TVA and Sierra Club are mediating and the appeal meeting will be soon in Bartlett, TN where the Groundwater Board Meeting is normally held. If either of the remaining permits gets turned down, alternative options will have to be explored. They can purchase water from MLGW, use filtered river water or go with the original plan to use gray water.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mark your calendar for the Commission Dinner on November 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm.  
Reappointment Applications are due November 30, 2016. All applicants must apply on-line.

NEW BUSINESS:

Environmental Commission Holiday Meeting / Party will be graciously hosted by Susan Threlkeld on December 1<sup>st</sup> at 6 p.m. Please sign up for a dish you would like to bring.

ADJOURNMENT:

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