

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING
May 3, 2012 6 PM
7700 Southern Avenue (Public Services Building)

MINUTES

Present

Chairman Joe Skelley
Susan Threlkeld
Linda Kaplan
Steve Fleischmann
Urania Erskine

Clyde Davidson
Alderman Palazzolo
Paul Mosteller
Dr. Jimmy Davis
Andy Foster

Staff

Bo Mills
Joe Nunes

Absent: David Thorpe

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Skelley called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVAL:

The minutes of the March meeting were approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Joe Nunes:

Mr. Nunes updated the Commission on Amnesty Day. There were a total of 1,042 cars with 738 from Johnson Road Park and 304 at Southern Avenue. Out of those 738, 468 went to recycling. We collected a total of 71 tons of trash which was a 58% increase over the spring of last year. Scrap metal recycling was down 2 tons.

Electronics saw a 25% increase up to 12.2 tons from 9.75 last spring and we shredded 8.5 tons. In total 24.21 tons was kept out of the landfill. Mr. Nunes thanked all the volunteers for their participation.

Mr. Nunes attended the Tennessee Department of Environmental and Conservation Hazardous Solid Waste Conference. There was a presentation on recycling and brought someone in from the Product Stewardship Institute in Boston to talk about product stewardship and extended producer responsibility. There are a number of states that have those laws but Tennessee is not one. Our approach is voluntary for producer responsibility. They also gave a presentation on composting and Nashville has a facility in conjunction with a compost company starting up. Once you go over 10,000 cubic yards of compost, they have the same permitting requirements of a landfill. So, Nashville is keeping under this limit. The average household produces 10 lbs of kitchen organics per week which in Germantown would be between 200 to 250 tons per month which would cost approximately \$70,000/year to process. Composting of your own material does not kick in to that. They are also having a rule making hearing to propose changes to the solid waste management rule, especially those that relate to waste reduction and plants. The three areas that would potentially impact Germantown is they are making it more stringent for things to qualify as diversion. Every county and ultimately municipality over a certain population has to achieve a 25% reduction in solid waste. Recycling qualifies as diversion because it can be sold as a beneficial use. The rules would change for recycling centers to keep them from storing recyclables for a period longer than a year. The last thing that would potentially change is that all counties would discontinue the use of unmanned recycling drop-offs. They must be either eliminated or manned. This would impact our oil recycling which is currently available 24/7. Franklin, TN made a presentation at this conference, they just started curbside two years ago and they do the blue bag pick-up.

Mr. Nunes reported that recycling was down slightly for April 1.4%. Part of that is that we changed facilities but we will look into that further.

Mr. Nunes reported that the City has ordered and taken down a house on Brierbrook. This was a first for the City and we will try to recoup our money from insurance.

Bo Mills:

Mr. Mills distributed Thank You cards from Brandy Miller to the Commission.

Mr. Mills updated the Commission on current construction. Poplar Avenue construction is moving along through TDOT and the City began a project on Farmington on this week. Last year, we rebuilt the east end of Farmington. Now we are going to rebuild from Allenby to Germantown Road. We hope to have it ready for the Race for the Cure. Most of these improvements are state funded. Poplar Avenue should be completed in August and Wolf River Boulevard in June 2013. Farmington's first phase should be completed by August and the second phase should be done by November 1st. There are a couple more projects coming up on Germantown Road from Poplar Avenue to West Street and crossing over the train tracks. The paving contract is out and the City will begin May 15th with paving 6 ½ miles throughout the City.

Mr. Mills gave an update on the construction of the Southern Avenue Water Treatment Plant. The Plant is finished and we will hopefully have an Open House soon.

Ms. Erskine asked if MLGW would be coming to Germantown about the sewer pricing. Bo responded that we were protected in our contract with them.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Clyde Davidson - Recycle/Household Hazardous Waste/Solid Waste:

Mr. Davidson discussed with Bo contractor clauses and contracts.

Urania Erskine – Storms/Wetlands/Sanitary Sewer:

Mrs. Erskine distributed an article about stormwater and water misuse. Hong Kong uses sea water to flush toilets. Pittsburgh has storm water containers underground and uses stormwater to water playing fields and such. Las Vegas recycles water to flush toilets and such. Ms. Erskine suggested recycling storm water before it became an issue.

Mr. Mills discussed that the US Geological Survey is working on monitoring wells with real time devices so that you can log on at any time and monitor the aquifers. Three times a year we will get quality readings and we will have real time monitoring in the future.

Susan Threlkeld – Composting/Xeriscape:

Mrs. Threlkeld attended and discussed Mulch Day. A class on composting will take place next weekend. Mrs. Threlkeld noted that many employees for the City are working on the Farm.

Linda Kaplan – Think Green:

Mrs. Kaplan discussed the Germantown Temple Israel Cycle the Greenway and passed out the fundraising materials. Mrs. Kaplan also passed out Eco Build information for the Vesta Home Show and the National Home Builders Association hand-out. Mrs. Kaplan also discussed an article showing that we lose 30% of energy efficiency through the duct work.

Alderman Palazzolo:

Alderman Palazzolo thanked the Commission for volunteerism for Amnesty Day and asked about numbers at Johnson Road Park. Mr. Nunes reported that recycling numbers were way up and there were 1,042 cars total at both locations. Alderman Palazzolo reported that we had good cross pollination with our Commission at the Bobby Lanier Farm Park. We are also working to have an intern from Rhodes College in the environmental sciences department to assist at the Bobby Lanier Farm Park. Alderman Palazzolo encouraged the Commission to be advocates for the sustainability projects.

Steve Fleischmann – Recycle/Household Hazardous Waste/Solid Waste:

Nothing to report

Jimmy Davis – Research:

Dr. Davis presented an article from Chemical and Engineering News. The Japanese nuclear reactor should be safely shut down by January 2013. They will then begin removing the trash and decommissioning it which should take 10 years.

Dr. Davis also reported on the cover story which was on recycling consumer electronics which is one of the least recycled materials at 19%. Landfills is where most are going. Recycling papers is changing too because paper is being digitally printed on using water based ink so the process of recycling changes. They're being forced to develop a new method to remove this new ink and sort paper by ink.

Andy Foster – Energy Use Resource Management:

Mr. Foster presented an article on tank less water heaters. Location of the water heaters is important and should be near the shower. It's better to use several small water heaters at point of service and is a good way to save money. Mr. Foster will bring information about Himalayan glaciers.

Paul Mosteller – Water Conservation:

Mr. Mosteller suggested placing "100 Ways to Conserve Water" in the water bill. Number 18: Shorter periods for better absorption with irrigation. Mr. Mosteller also mentioned that city's sprinklers create a constant puddle at Farmington and Exeter. Bo mentioned that we just split the cycles for irrigations in those locations. As of right now, we don't have a system to shut the irrigation down when it rains except manually.

NO NEW OR OLD BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT:

The Commission adjourned at 7:20 p.m.