

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING
September 3, 2009 6 PM
MUNICIPAL CENTER

MINUTES

Present

Chairman Joe Skelley
Jimmy Davis
David Thorpe
Clyde Davidson
Linda Kaplan

Craig Lazarov
Susan Threlkeld
Sandra Hayne

Staff

Bo Mills
Juanita Bell
Joe Nunes

Absent: Andy Foster, Brandy Miller, and Tim Sauter

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Joe Skelley called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS AND GUESTS:

The Commission welcomed Pam Beasley, Parks and Recreation Director and Michelle McDonnell, Special Events and Marketing Coordinator. They will be discussing upcoming events with the Commission. The Commission also welcomes Ken Adams as a recurring visitor.

MINUTES APPROVAL:

The minutes of the June 4, 2009 and August 6, 2009 meeting of the Environmental Commission were unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Joe Nunes:

Mr. Nunes reported that the recycling totals were down significantly (23 tons – 5.8 % per household) from July last year and down 5% year to date. No explanation for why this number dropped so dramatically. Mr. Nunes announced a Public Forum that will take place at the Agri-Center on September 17th at 6:30 p.m. on the “Bottle Bill”. This forum has been organized by Marge Davis with Pride of Place. Tim Sauter requested that Joe present an article to the Commission, “Board Considers Storm Water Management” which describes the work session with the Board of Mayor and Alderman to discuss the storm water fee. The next step will be to conduct an analysis and present some recommendations to the Board on what that fee might be. Chairman Skelley asked Joe if residents were still paying for recycling? Joe responded that residents so pay to recycle bottles and cans but not paper. Linda Kaplan inquired about the information received from Waste Management and if it was broken down into groups. Joe advised that they do receive two weights: paper and bottles, cans, plastics, etc. are broken down based on industry averages.

Bo Mills:

Mr. Mills updated the Commission on the Well #5 progress. Well #5 will need to be moved because the current well is not repairable and will be abandoned. The new well will be 80 feet away from the current well and the cost for this new well will be \$310,000. The cost to close the current well is \$40,000. Staff will attend the Board of Mayor and Alderman on September 28th to request funding. The current well is 678’ deep, was built in 1978 and handles 1600 gallons per minute. David Thorpe – Is there any federal assistance for this infrastructure? Bo – Not on this project but we will receive federal assistance on roadways. Mr. Mills announced that the Johnson Road Water Plant expansion is on schedule with the completion of the roof and scheduled completion date for the expansion of October 5th. The tennis courts were opened today, September 3rd. Mr. Mills announced that the City has requested that all divisions create a C.O.O.P. (Continuity Of Operations Plan) for the anticipation of a H1N1 outbreak. Patrick Lawton, City Administrator and a St. Jude nurse held a presentation for City staff with tips and advice on how to avoid the flu and instructions on how to prepare our C.O.O.P. plan. Mr. Mills advised that the Commission would be very involved with the storm water fee. The new legislation requires that we need to focus not only on the quality of water but the quantity. The law requires that we protect water from fertilizers, fecal waste, etc. This storm water fee will be approximately \$3/month per household and will fund a lot of P.S. work as well as the work that Tim Bierdz does. Credits will be allowed for citizens. The goal for this fee is January 2010. The Commission will serve to educate

the Board of Mayor and Alderman and the community. Some of the education practices will be “The Six Best Management Practices and Ordinances”. The current staff will handle everything for the time being. This fee is based on impervious surfaces.

Pam Beasley and Michelle McDonnell:

Ms. McDonnell announced that on September 19th there will be many events in Germantown: Pops in the Park Concert and Perfect Picnic Competition, Germantown Heritage Day and Living Green in Germantown Outdoor Expo. The Environmental Commission is invited to attend and participate in these events. There is no cost for vendors and we provide the table and space but there is a 2 hour commitment. The current list of vendors is pretty exciting and it should be a really informative and fun event. The Parks Department will be there promoting the trails and bike events and the Tree Board will have a table as well.

Ms. Beasley discussed a couple more events approaching this Fall. The Delta Fair has designated a “Green” day on Sunday, September 13th from 12:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. that Pam is participating in and requested volunteers from the Commission.

The Neighborhood Summit is being held in October and the Senior Expo is in November.

Ms. Beasley presented some research and brochures she had gotten on “Green” cities that have done a good job promoting and educating the public. Seattle has done a great job and sends out large packets to residents with all kinds of material regarding sanitation, recycling, water conservation and many other events and programs.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

David Thorpe – Air Quality:

Mr. Thorpe reported that the Health Department is still waiting on approval of attainment status from the EPA. This has been a mild summer which helps and the ozone standard was reduced this year from 86 ppb (parts per billion) to 75 ppb. We have come very close to meeting the 75 ppb year to date. Next month the EPA will be conducting a study on the DOC emission from barges. As barges pass they will detect emissions coming off each barge. This should be a 3 week project.

Susan Threlkeld – Composting/Xeriscape:

Mrs. Threlkeld commented on her experience as a volunteer for the Fourth of July recycling program.

Mrs. Threlkeld also stated that she will be working with Brandy on the sign-up for the schools.

Jimmy Davis – Research:

Dr. Davis updated the Commission on the H1N1 virus. The CDC has released numbers as of the end of August and there are 8,843 hospitalized cases, 556 deaths and 50 states and territories reporting. Our Jackson campus has had some cases reported and some during the summer camps.

Clyde Davidson – Storms/Wetlands/Sanitary Sewer:

Mr. Davidson had nothing to report.

Is swine flu spread by swine? Jimmy explained that pigs are not infecting humans and that it is a bigger risk for pigs to catch the flu from humans than the other way around.

Craig Lazarov – Storms/Wetlands/Sanitary Sewer:

Mr. Lazarov announced an event on September 11- September 13 in Holly Springs, MS called Hummingbird Migration which is a really neat nature exhibit.

Sandra Hayne – Neighborhood Preservation Commission Liaison:

Ms. Hayne announced that the Neighborhood Preservation will participate in Living Green in Germantown Outdoor Expo and they will be accepting donations for the Germantown School for the Deaf which has an ongoing need funds to purchase devices to monitor the progress and assist the children in speaking. The goal is to raise \$7,000 which would purchase one. They only own one currently.

The Neighborhood Summit is being held Thursday, October 22nd from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Registration will be available on the City’s website.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Skelley informed the Commission of Goldsmith’s Botanical Garden which has a display on ways to change your garden and recycle. Admission is free on Wednesday between 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

A sign-up sheet for Amnesty Day, Living Green in Germantown Expo and the Senior Expo was circulated to Commission members

ADJOURNMENT:

7:05 p.m.