

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING
February 5, 2009 6 PM
MUNICIPAL CENTER

MINUTES

Present

Chairman Joe Skelley
David Thorpe
Craig Lazarov
Susan Threlkeld
Clyde Davidson

Linda Kaplan
Tim Sauter
Alderman Palazzolo
Hayne, Sandra

Staff

Bo Mills
Juanita Bell
Joe Nunes
Tim Bierdz

Absent: Jimmy Davis, Andy Foster and Brandy Miller

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Skelley called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. A quorum was declared present.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS AND GUESTS:

The Commission welcomes Ms. Sandra Hayne, Neighborhood Preservation Commission Liaison, to the Commission and Alderman Mike Palazzolo. The Commission also welcomes Mr. Ken Adams as a visitor. Mr. Adams relocated from Portland, Oregon. He is passionate about recycling and has volunteered over 80 hours in "Master Recyclers".

MINUTES APPROVAL:

The minutes of the January 8, 2009 meeting of the Environmental Commission were unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Joe Nunes:

Mr. Nunes reported 242 tons of recycled collection for the month of January 2009 which was down one ton from last year. Due to the collection of cardboard the numbers were expected to rise but have remained in line with past years. MURF (Recycling Facility) will now be charging a fee for the acceptance of material. There has not been an update on those prices as of today but it has been proposed to be in the neighborhood of \$45,000 which is equal to that of landfill dumping. Next year's fiscal budget will have about \$95,000 added to cover the recycling charge. Collection fees are set by contract and there is a forecast of 3% rise in cost.

In response to a question from Joe Skelley, Mr. Nunes stated that the charge expected from the recycling company can be anywhere from \$5/ton to \$50/ton.

In response to a question from Linda Kaplan, Mr. Nunes stated that we have one year contract and an option year that keeps pricing under control for landfill costs.

Mr. Nunes circulated an article from "Waste and Recycling News" on commodity pricing. Plastics have shown an increase in January. Disposal fees are significantly down which has been tied to Consumer Price Index.

Bo Mills:

Mr. Mills acknowledged Mayor Goldsworthy for her consideration of the environment with a new footer that is required on all city personnel's outgoing emails. This footer says "Please consider the environment before printing this email."

Mr. Mills commented on the City's ability to reuse materials. One of those venues is GovDeals.com which is a website that allows bidding and sales of some of the City's older equipment.

He also explained that the used oil collection center which is located at the Public Services Complex continues to average a collection of over 350 gallons per month.

A discussion followed on assistance with construction of Wolf River Blvd from the Autobahn International. They are still participating and the City continues to look for ways to make construction "green".

Alderman Palazzolo complimented the Shelby County Household Waste Facility.

Tim Bierdz:

Mr. Bierdz reports that the Storm Water Utility Fee which was proposed in last month's meeting has been delayed from presentation to the Board of Mayor and Alderman until this month.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Tim Sauter – Water Conservation:

Nothing to report

David Thorpe – Air Quality:

David Thorpe announced his new position at the Tennessee Valley Authority Allen Steam Plant as the Environmental Program Administrator. In a response to a question by Joe Nunes, David reports that the Allen Steam Plant does not have the same ash build-up as Kingston.

On February 16th there will be a public hearing on Shelby County ozone attainment. Graphs were passed out that showed NOX levels have gone down therefore Shelby County should be reclassified as in attainment. The ozone standards were recently lowered which could cause Shelby County to drop back out of attainment.

Susan Threlkeld – Composting/Xeriscape:

Ms. Threlkeld reported she will be attending Master Gardens again in April to discuss Water Wise Gardening.

Ms. Threlkeld attended a community meeting regarding the Norfolk Southern Railroad Inter-Mobile Transportation Yard in Moscow this past Sunday. The community is very much against the Railroad coming in and building because the Railroad doesn't have to do any kind of environmental studies nor do they need permits to build because it is considered an extension. At this point, the Community is trying to consider options to create revenue so that they can block the Railroad from coming through. One of those considerations is a toll road.

Linda Kaplan – Think Green:

Ms. Kaplan reported on the benefits of substituting one roll per family per year of toilet tissue with recycled toilet tissue. This substitution would save 423,900 trees, one million cubic feet of landfill space and 153 million gallons of water per family. Recycled toilet tissue is widely available.

Craig Lazarov – Storms/Wetlands/Sanitary Sewer:

Nothing to report. Chairman Skelley suggested Mr. Lazarov work with Clyde Davidson on the Storms/Wetlands/Sanitary Sewer.

Alderman Palazzolo:

Alderman Palazzolo attended a Tennessee Municipal League meeting in Ripley, TN with the Mayor. A discussion followed on Environmental Sustainability. Portland, Oregon will host a national conference on "Going Green" of which Alderman Palazzolo hopes to attend. Alderman Palazzolo recommended a book to the Commission called "Flat, Hot and Crowded" by Tom Freeman.

Clyde Davidson – Storms/Wetlands/Sanitary Sewer:

Nothing to report. Mr. Davidson did commend the Public Services Division for assisting him in locating his sewer cleanout.

NEW BUSINESS:

Joe Nunes reported that Mulch Day has not been scheduled but will be in the latter part of March.

Bo Mills reported that that Business Expo is Thursday, April 23rd. If the Commission does elect to attend and present, we will have to share a booth.

Sandra Hayne of the Neighborhood Preservation Committee reported that her Commission has two major events approaching. The first is the Home Tour of Remodels. This tour is April 26th and always has a very positive and encouraging outcome. Cameras are welcome and the goal is to have between 8 to 10 homes. The Neighborhood Preservation Committee has elected not to participate in this year's Senior Expo and possibly to have a Caring/Library Outreach in its place. The Neighborhood Preservation Committee's second event is October 29th and that's the Neighborhood Leadership Conference which is held in the Great Hall.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to be brought before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.