



CITY OF GERMANTOWN TENNESSEE

1930 South Germantown Road • Germantown, Tennessee 38138-2815
Phone (901) 757-7200 Fax (901) 757-7292 www.germantown-tn.gov

Environmental Commission Meeting

Thursday, March 14, 2019 – 6:00 p.m.

Public Works Building
7700 Southern Avenue

MINUTES

Present:

Chairman Joe Skelley
Jimmy Davis
Urania Erskine
Linda Kaplan
Francoise Mireles
Susan Threlkeld
Jayu Wagh

Staff:

Bo Mills
Joe Nunes
Kathy Cross

Absent:

Andy Foster
Alderman Rocky Janda
Paul Mosteller
Scott Schoefernacker

CALL TO ORDER:

Director Bo Mills called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum for the Environmental Commission meeting was established.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:

No guests.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the January meeting were approved.

COMMENTS BY CHAIRMAN:

ALDERMAN LIAISON REPORT:



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STAFF REPORTS:

Joe Nunes:

- Solid waste volumes were presented; recycle waste volumes are still down year to date. Household trash volume up slightly; approximately 3% year to date.
- Highlights from next year's Solid Waste Budget as presented to the Financial Advisory Commission and update on our current solid waste contractor, Waste Pro Management.
- Solid Waste Region Board met this past Monday; there should be a proposal presented to TDEC for a waste characterization study for Shelby County.

Director Bo Mills:

- Thank you for your input and support for the power-point presentation of the Elevated Water Tank to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen retreat and thank you to Mrs. Threlkeld for her presence at the meeting. It was well received by the Board and there was a lot of feedback.
- This week the State Inspector was onsite Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. The records and facilities were inspected and we anticipate our score in about three weeks. Our last score was 98 and we expect an excellent score this year as well. The only suggested area for improvement is our Cross Connection Program.
- The Greenway has been closed due to flooding. Mud and debris brought onto the trails by the risen water levels will have to be cleared before it will be reopened.

COMMISSION MEMBER REPORTS:

Jayu Wagh:

- Types of household plants that emit more oxygen and are easy to grow.

Francoise Mireles:

- Wall Street Journal reported statistics on how plastic waste has increased over the years and how much ends up in the oceans or lying around for over 400 years while breaking down naturally. China and India have reduced what plastics they will accept for recycling. Plastic has become extremely cheap to produce so there are fewer incentives to buy recycled plastics. New start-up companies are creating carts that include cameras that prompt an alert if items that contaminate the recyclables are put into the receptacle. More robots are being used to sort recyclables.



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Dr. Jimmy Davis:

- An alternative to reduce plastic waste would be to produce a "bio-plastic" made from wood cellulose or other biodegradable materials. Compostable plastics have to be composted in an industrial facility therefore creating a three bin system for household waste, recyclables and compostable. Most households have no connection to a compostable facility, so these items end up in the recyclables and cause contamination.
- Ten million metric tons of glass is disposed of in the USA every year; only 33% is recycled. In Europe 90% is recycled because they don't use single stream recycling.
- When added to ash and coal, certain types of microbes along with urea and calcium create a "bio-cement" material. This material is easier to contain and prevents leaching out of toxic materials.

Linda Kaplan:

- The Compost Fairy will provide a container to fill up with your compostable materials. Once a week, the Compost Fairy comes to your doorstep to collect your container and bring you a clean one. Twice a year, you will be provided with screened, finished compost to be used in your flowerbed, gardens or around trees and shrubs.

Urania Erskine:

- Sprouts Markets now have compostable plastic bags available for their fruits and vegetables in western North American states such as Nevada. If you don't have your own bags for your purchases, you can purchase bags; soon all plastic bags will be phased out.

Susan Threlkeld:

Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Sign up for Amnesty Day to take place April 27th, 2019. Joe Nunes will provide brochures about solid waste and hazardous waste disposal and will look into more directional signage. Habitat for Humanity will have handouts about their services.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.



Joe Skelley, Commission Chairman

