

Environmental Commission Meeting

Thursday, June 10, 2021 – 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Chairman Joe Skelley
Jimmy Davis
Urania Erskine
Terri Johnson
Francoise Mireles
Susan Threlkeld
Scott Schoefernacker

STAFF:

Tiffany Howlett
Joe Nunes
Bo Mills
Alderman McCreery

ABSENT:

Claudio Meier
Gene Phillips
Jayu Wagh

GUEST:

Gary Blumenthal

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Skelley called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum for the Environmental Commission meeting was established.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

A motion was made to accept the Minutes from the May 13, 2021 meeting by Urania Erskine and seconded by Susan Threlkeld.

ROLL CALL:

Skelley-yes, Davis-yes, Johnson-yes, Mireles-yes, Schoefernacker-yes.
Motion approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Alderman McCreery:

- Alderman McCreery briefly discussed stormwater funding and its importance.

Bo Mills:

- Bo introduced new Administrative Assistant for the Public Works Department, Tiffany Howlett. Bo also informed the commission about Andy Sanders transitioning from Public Works to the newly formed Engineering Department where he will serve as the City Engineer.
- Bo showed stormwater management fee marketing video and received positive feedback from commission members. The Environmental Commission serves as a conduit for channeling information to citizens.

Joe Nunes:

- Joe shared a portion of a new solid waste collection brochure with the commission. In full, there will be 12 pages regarding household waste, recycling, and yard waste.

- Dr. Davis asked about recycling rejection percentage and Germantown is fortunate to not have been hit by contamination fees that other municipalities have. Joe thinks about 20% ends up in landfill, system wide.
- Recycling is still down slightly. Trash collection volume is still up from 2020. Household trash has increased by 25% while yard waste is down about 25%.
- City of Germantown will begin new disposal contract on July 1. Trash and yard waste will be taken to Quad County Landfill.
- Alderman McCreery asked about the future of recycling. Joe says the cost to process our recycling is reducing from \$100 to \$65 ton.
- Joe asked commission members for marketing recommendations. Suggestions included a refrigerator magnet, print on trash can, and an app. Joe mentioned they are looking into Waste Wizard app.
- Alderman McCreery would like to see repeating information two pages at a time instead of a 12 page once.

COMMISSION MEMBER REPORTS:

Scott Schoefnacker:

- Scott discussed the creation of a joint observation well to be funded by City of Germantown and Collierville. It will be built near Bailey Station Elementary and will allow for testing of water quality and water levels of the Memphis Aquifer. Dr. Davis previously mentioned the Byhalia Pipeline, and asked Scott if he would discuss. Scott presented research to the MLGW Board confirming a breach to the west of Davis Wellfield as well as supporting evidence of helium in Memphis water.

Francoise Mireles:

- Francoise touched on food scrap recycling. She spoke about a research study in Tokyo where food scraps were turned into building materials using vacuum drying process to convert foods such as pumpkin and Chinese cabbage into a powder to make building materials. These materials tested to be just as strong as concrete.

Susan Threlkeld:

- Susan thanked Joe Nunes for the recycling information shared. She also discussed the dangers of placing garden hoses and lawn mower blades in the recycling bin.

Joe Skelley:

- Chariman Skelley passed around a biodegradable diaper that often is another prohibited item that appears in recycling bins. As an alternative, compostable and biodegradable diapers made of materials such as bamboo should be considered for use.

Urania Erskine:

- Urania asked about a second aquifer breach at Allen Steam Plant.

Teri Johnson:

- After last month's meeting, Teri researched micro plastics and found the best way to reduce indigestion of micro plastics is to recycle. She also read about micro robots that will grab and breakdown micro plastics in the ocean.

GUEST REPORTS:

Gary Blumenthal:

- Gary Blumenthal touched on his experience as an Environmental Risk Analyst and the Byhalia Pipeline. He went on to share his belief that if something were to happen to the pipeline in South Memphis – it will ultimately impact our property values in Germantown. He used Flint Michigan as an example of this.

OLD BUSINESS:

Urania Erskine, Bo Mills, and Alderman McCreery: **Urania** asked about the new water tank installation and use of the small water tank. **Bo** explained approval for the new water tank from all commissions had taken place and that final specifications were being made to put the project out to bid early next month. The commission will evaluate the use of the small water tank next month. **Alderman McCreery** asked that after an evaluation of the small water tank, the commission bring forward information to the BMA for recommendation.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Skelley recognized Public Works contribution to the Germantown Charity Horse Show.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made to adjourn by Jimmy Davis, seconded by Susan Threlkeld.

ROLL CALL:

Skelley-yes, Erskine-yes, Johnson-yes, Mireles-yes, Schofernacker-yes.
Motion approved.

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



Joe Skelley, Commission Chairman