

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING
June 3, 2010 6 PM
MUNICIPAL CENTER

MINUTES

Present		Staff	Visitor
Chairman Joe Skelley	David Thorpe	Bo Mills	Ken Adams
Susan Threlkeld		Joe Nunes	
Dr. Jimmy Davis		Juanita Bell	
Clyde Davidson		Tim Bierdz	

Absent: Brandy Miller, Urania Erskine, Judith Goden, Andy Foster, Linda Kaplan

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Joe Skelley called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum was not present. The meeting was officially adjourned.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS AND GUESTS:

The Commission welcomed Ken Adams as a recurring visitor.

MINUTES APPROVAL: Deferred until the July 1st meeting.

STAFF REPORTS:

Bo Mills:

Mr. Mills thanked Susan and Linda for participating in our meeting this past Tuesday regarding the financial sustainability of our City. Patrick has requested that the Environmental Commission attend the September meeting. It will be similar to the Vision 20/20 meetings from a couple of years ago.

The City has set-up a Green Council which will focus on green initiatives. Mr. Mills reported that Public Services has listed the ways in which it conserves and is impressed with the measures already taken.

Joe Nunes:

Mr. Nunes discussed an article in the Commercial Appeal regarding MLGW raising the cost of their curbside service which exceeds the cost of Germantown's back door trash service.

Mr. Nunes reported that the recycle volume continues to decrease and is down approximately 4% across the board. We will be looking at ways to create awareness. Mr. Nunes presented an article from Greenville, NC announcing that they had increased their recycling and he would be speaking to them for ideas and insight.

Mr. Thorpe inquired if solid waste gone down?

Mr. Nunes responded that it seems to be about the same.

City of Germantown will be implementing a new office recycling program to collect bottles, cans and paper. The pilot program will begin in July. There are funds in the FY11 budget to cover these costs.

Tim Bierdz:

Mr. Bierdz announced that the stormwater fee will be on June's utility bill. Last week, Tim met with the West Regional Storm Water Association meeting. There are new storm water guidelines by the EPA that will need to be implemented.

Mr. Bierdz presented brochures that are available at the front desk of City Hall regarding storm water permits and Water Sheds.

Mr. Bierdz is working with Urania on the 3x5 index cards promoting cleaning of animal discharge.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

David Thorpe – Air Quality:

Mr. Thorpe announced that Germantown had its first ozone exceedance last Friday, May 28th.

Susan Threlkeld – Composting/Xeriscape:

Ms. Threlkeld reported that there was some concern about the continued recycling education program in area schools. Staff changes so much that email addresses are hard to attain. Bo said he would be meeting with the Principals during a meeting in June or July and would attempt to obtain information then.

Clyde Davidson:

Mr. Davidson had nothing to report.

Jimmy Davis – Research:

Dr. Davis reported on the Gulf Oil Spill. The spill, which began on April 20th, is now estimated at 108 million gallons which is ten times that of Valdez. The gulf is 5,000 feet deep and the oil is 10,000 feet below that. The

oil on the surface is red in color because the 5,000 foot journey to the surface favors the formation of oil-water emulsion which is red in color. There are three basic tools to clean up surface oil spills. The first is polyethylene moplike pads called skimmers. As of May 10th, the skimmers had recovered 3.6 million gallons of the oil-water mixture. The second tool is In situ burns which corrals oil slicks with fire resistant booms and igniting them removing 90% of the oil but it very dependent on calm weather conditions. There have been two May 5th burns which removed 43,000 gallons of water. The third tool is a dispersant called Corexit which is a mixture of surfactants and solvents which are sprayed on surface of oil and breaks it into smaller droplets that fall from the surface into water columns. Microbes can degrade them or ocean currents carry droplets further out into sea. Dispersants do not work well with oil-water emulsions. One downfall of dispersants is that it increases exposure of marine life in the water column. One other concern is cleaning the wetlands which is a very fragile ecosystem. Clean-up crews often rely on indigenous microbes to digest oil. They're spraying the wetlands with a dilute solution of nitrate and phosphate based fertilizers to coax microbes to grow faster. In 2006, a Louisiana refinery tank leaked into the wetlands and within months this method successfully lowered amounts of oil below hazard levels.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Commission adjourned at 6:45 p.m.