



## Collierville Environmental Commission

### Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2017

#### *Attendees:*

Crystal Warren

Courtney Gillespie

Julie Furr

Sheila Bentley

Joshua Balentine

John Fox (Town Liason)

Bill Looney

Susan Savage

Absent: Swetha Manivannan

The meeting was held at 500 Keogh Rd, Collierville, TN and began at 6:35 pm.

1. Approval of minutes: Joshua moved to accept the minutes with a few minor revisions. Bill seconded the motion. All were in favor.
2. Guest Speaker: Shawn Posey from the Tennessee Division of Forestry attended to update the Commission on state news as well as give us information about our role as the Tree Board.
  - a. In the near future, a packet of information will be provided to the Tree Board about an invasive insect species called the Emerald Ash Borer that could possibly move into our area causing damage to local trees. Our job will be to help educate the public (possibly at Fair on the Square) about this insect that is known to cause costly damage across the state.
  - b. We will be communicating with the mayor's office to decide on a day to commemorate Arbor Day by planting a tree at Town Hall. Mr. Posey suggested a Black Gum Tree (Black Tupelo) as an option due to its beautiful fall colors and hardiness in our climate. Julie moved to spend up to \$300 on a Black Gum Tree for Arbor Day. Courtney seconded the motion. All were in favor. John will order the tree and have it planted.
  - c. As a Tree Board, our main job is education and outreach within our community. Mr. Posey suggested the following as ideas to focus our efforts: improving riparian areas and education and outreach. Specific areas of focus for education and outreach include tree identification, providing lists of recommended and non-recommended ornamental plants, and properly mulching, and proper tree pruning.
3. Discussion of goals and projects for 2017:
  - a. Recycling in the Parks: John updated the Commission on the pilot recycling programs in public venues. New recycling carts have been added to the program so that recycling is

now available at each Collierville municipal school, Cox park, and the Collierville Schools administrative building. The recycling carts have been about one-half to three-quarters full and have had very little contamination. The pilot program will continue so that costs and usage can be assessed.

- b. The Great Backyard Bird Count (February 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>): Sheila and Courtney distributed posters and informational packets to each school, and Sheila emailed specific teachers at the schools as well. Sheila will also contact the newspaper and the town to get the information published on the website.
- c. The 100K Tree-Planting Event (Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>): Our request to plant at Hinton Park was denied, and we were informed we may plant at Halle Park again this year. The trees have not been successful at this location, so the Commission agreed to abstain from participating in this event this year. We will explore other options for next year.
- d. Arbor Day (March 3<sup>rd</sup>): During our discussion with Shawn Posey, we motioned to purchase a tree to plant. We will find a day to plant that tree after coordinating with the mayor's office.
- e. Earth Day (Saturday, April 22): We will sponsor the Repurpose and Upcycle Contest this year at the Morton Museum. The dates are: Thursday 4/27 (project drop-off), Friday 4/28 (judging), and Saturday 4/29 (Awards). We still need volunteer judges for the Upcycle Art portion of the contest. Courtney will distribute the information to schools. The Commission will also look into holding another Electronics Recycling Event in April. Crystal will contact the company and update the Commission at the next meeting.
- f. Fair on the Square (May 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>): We will need to pay our booth fee as well as decide on items to order. We discussed narrowing our focus for this event to reusable bags, tree information, Emerald Ash Borer information, water quality, and household hazardous waste.
- g. Bluebird Boxes: The bluebird boxes have been painted and installed in Johnson Park, and a dedication ceremony will be held in the near future.
- h. Collierville Forward: We need to establish our mission and goals for this program as well as deciding when the awards ceremony will be held, judging criteria, categories, etc. We discussed having the applications due in September and the awards banquet in October. Categories could include the Mayor's Award, Healthy Community Award, Environmental Education Award, and others. We will continue working on this project at our next meeting.
- i. Diminishing Use of Plastic Bags: An on-going discussion among the commission members has been diminishing use of plastic bags among residents. We could include

a card or brochure with tips to reduce plastic bags to distribute with reusable bags at Fair on the Square. Susan will work on this.

- j. Waste Reduction Awareness Program: After meeting with our student member as well as school administrators, we have decided that there is not a huge need for unused food recycling at our schools. The way the school cafeterias operate, the food is not prepackaged and could not be used later. Courtney will discuss the option of starting a composting program with the agriculture department at the high school.
  - k. Green Schools: We will try to work with the Collierville Schools Board in the future to ensure that they are considering green initiatives for the new high school
  - l. Collaboration with Parks: We still need to meet with the Parks department to discuss some of our common goals including recycling in parks and educational signs at Wolf River and Nonconnah Creek.
  - m. Tree Board: Since we are the Town of Collierville's Tree Board, we will seek opportunities to help with the revision of the town's tree ordinances and implement the ideas that Shawn Posey suggested.
  - n. Pharmaceutical Take Back Program: TDEC – Office of Sustainable Practices has a program in which a free, secured bin is provided to local police stations for residents to drop off expired or unneeded prescription drugs, but the Collierville Police Department has declined to take advantage of this free program in the past. Medications should not be flushed down the toilet and can even leech into ground water when disposed of in the landfill, so the Commission hopes to establish a pharmaceutical take back plan or promote the DEA's Prescription Drug Take Back Day. We will collect information to present to the BMA.
4. We have \$1712 left in our budget that needs to be spent by the end of May. Our new budget will begin on July 1.
  5. Sheila motioned to adjourn our meeting at 9:09 pm. Courtney seconded the motion. All were in favor.