

## Collierville Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes

July 14, 2015

The July meeting for 2015 was called to order at 6:35 PM. Commission members present were: Sheila Bentley, Albert Grobmyer, Bill Looney, Gary Siebenschuh, and Crystal Warren. The Town of Collierville representative was Emily Harrell. Commission members absent were Wayne Kneipp and Courtney Gillespie.

Sheila moved to accept the minutes from last meeting with no corrections. Bill seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Commission members started the meeting by discussing the items that had been purchased in the remaining months of the fiscal year. Items purchased included tent panels, a table, and two chairs for events and fans and frisbees as giveaways. The majority of the money remaining in the budget was spent on these items.

Crystal emailed the Master Gardener's Association to see if someone could lead a class on composting. A time and location had not been decided yet. The Halle Room at the library and the Morton Museum were discussed as possible venues. Potential times include a Thursday evening or Saturday morning. Sheila suggested asking Carl Wayne Hardeman to teach the class, since he is actively involved in gardening, etc., in Collierville. Emily had the idea of hosting an environmental series to educate the public on various topics, with the composting class starting the series. Classes could be hosted on a quarterly basis and cover topics such as Introduction to Green Infrastructure, Rain Barrels, Rain Gardens, Integrated Pest Management, and Indigenous Plants. Emily requested the Commission to be a sponsor of the event; however, the classes would be mostly funded through an educational grant, if Collierville were the recipient of the grant.

Sheila stated that the trees in the Johnson Park Arboretum are not labelled appropriately, per TUFC requirements. Although the Commission no longer is in charge of the Arboretum, Commission members decided that it would be appropriate to write a letter to the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts Department about this issue. Sheila volunteered to draft the letter.

Emily explained that the Public Information Office is working to create a Guide to Collierville, which will be a quarterly guide to events that are happening in Collierville. The Guide will be available to the public in digital format. Emily stated that there will be an "Environment" section, and the Commission can utilize this space to advertise upcoming events. Topic/events for the fall must be submitted by Friday, July 24<sup>th</sup>.

The Commission discussed hosting a tree planting event in the fall, in addition to the event in the spring. The purpose of the fall planting event would be to educate the public that the best time to plant trees is while trees are dormant. Sources of money to purchase the trees may include TUFC (50/50 match grants) and the Town's Parks and Rec Department (tree mitigation fund).

The Commission discussed potential places that the group would be interested in touring. The Commission expressed interest in touring Norman Brown's E-plex to learn more about his recycling efforts and the Solar Panel farm at the Agricenter. Crystal stated that she would set up tours for these events in the fall. Al stated that he had toured the Bonsai farm in Olive Branch, and he found that tour to be interesting. He stated that he would find out more information for members that were interested in participating in this tour.

The Commission discussed the future of the Commission. Crystal stated that part of the mission of the Commission is to educate the BMA on educational topics, but the Commission has only met with the BMA once in over five years. Shelia suggested planning an annual meeting with the BMA to discuss the Commission's accomplishments and work to build a relationship with them. Crystal suggested that members be required to volunteer a certain number of hours to Commission related- or sponsored-events in the future. Other members expressed concern over the requirement of volunteer hours and instead suggested making it a recommendation, because the required hours would be difficult to enforce. Crystal stated that she would work on verbiage to include in the Commission's ordinances. Other ideas were to work with John Duncan (Economic Development Director) to see how the Commission could contribute to the future of the Town and creating a CEC Award for businesses to acknowledge businesses who utilize eco-friendly practices.

Shelia shared information about the Literacy Council's upcoming events promoting the community wide reading of the book, Spare Parts. One of the events is a Recycle, Upcycle, or Repurpose Contest. Sheila asked the Commission members to volunteer as judges for the contest and donate money for prizes. Bill moved to pass a motion to support the contest financially up to \$200, and the motion was seconded by Gary. The motion then passed unanimously.

Emily provided updates from the Town. She stated that she would find out this week if Collierville was awarded the educational grant that she had submitted for. The grant is for \$20,000 over a two-year period. Public Services updates include that ~76% of Town residences recycled over the past month, which is a significant increase from past numbers. Additionally, tonnage is expected to double that of last year's numbers. Public Services is currently renegotiating their contract with ReCommunity over the prices of recycled material.

Gary motioned to adjourn the meeting. Sheila seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.