Athens City Environment and Sustainability Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Athens City Code Enforcement Office
Tuesday May 6, 2014

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1. Call to order:

Cliff Hamilton called the meeting to order at 5:21 PM. Members present include Cliff Hamilton, Lori Burchett, Jennifer Cochran (council rep), and Paul Logue. Guests include Tess Phinney, Myke Linscott and Meredith Price-Mullins. Ed Newman was absent.

2. Disposition of Minutes:

Lori moved to approve the minutes. Jennifer seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

3. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for June 3 at 5:15 PM at City Hall.

4. Old Business

a. Commission Membership—Tess Phinney introduced herself. She is a second year grad student in environmental sciences. Meredith Price-Mullins is a former high school science and biology teacher and is interested in sustainability issues. Both are interested in serving in the vacant seats on the commission. Tess and Meredith will email brief bios to Paul to forward to Council for appointments.

b. Compost pilot—Cliff has permission from OU for Ray Leard to use their scales to weigh his truck before/after compost collection for 3 months. Paul will notify Ray and Ray can coordinate with Cliff on this. Jennifer will check with Ray regarding any more questions regarding pilot. Cliff talked with Roger at solid waste. Roger says food waste is 12% of solid waste district wide.

c. Sustainability/Climate action plan—This will be on the agenda for the June meeting. Lori summarized the CAP and Sustainability planning process for the guests. City has baseline info on city buildings with respect to greenhouse gasses. Outlines and survey draft will be sent to new members and Jennifer.

5. New Business

a. Plastic bag ordinance—Jennifer is interested in pursuing this on a city level through council. Chicago recently passed an ordinance on this. Several CA communities and Washington DC have also done this. There are several models out there. Some use carrots and others use sticks. Marketing on this would be crucial. Bag exchanges were suggested at stores. Some ordinances exclude restaurants and other type businesses. Goal is to change behavior and reduce demand for plastic bags. Good source of info is banthebag.org. The commission will contribute some thoughts on ordinance language.

b. Georgetown University Energy Prize—Lori presented on this. Athens County has entered into this program. The competition is for small to mid-size communities in the US. This requires development of a plan and implementation with a focus on government and residential buildings. One community will be awarded $5MM for additional implementation. Athens County is taking the lead on this and is looking for more local partners including the city to help move this forward. GU is looking for replicable innovative strategies. Paul thinks that Mayor Wiehl would likely be able to provide a letter of support. The commission would as well and is interesting in being involved with the planning aspects.

6. Updates

a. Recycling changes—tabled for June.

7. Adjournment

With no other business on the agenda, Lori moved to adjourn the meeting. Cliff seconded the motion. All agreed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:25.