

Palmer Township ESC – Meeting Minutes

Environmental Steering Committee

April 25, 2012

**Attendees:** Tom Ganssle, Rob Reese, Chris Briglia, Cindy Oatis, Tom Dittmar, John Balas, Denise Veres, John Olock, Bob Lammi, Nancy Nicholas

**Meeting opened:** 7:01 PM

**Guests:** Chris Caras (J. P. Mascaro), Matt Daniels (Greenstar), Richard Smith (Greenstar)

**Meeting Attendees:** Gerald Gamlin (Twp. Resident), Charlotte M. Mammanna (Twp. Resident), Walter L. Jones (Twp. Resident), John George (Twp. Resident), Donna George (Twp. Resident), Rose Marie Mellman (Twp. Resident), Beverly Hannah (Twp. Resident), James Kenney (Twp. Resident), Florence Lee (Twp. Resident), James W. Lee (Twp. Resident), Dave Baxter (Twp. Resident), James Riecel (Twp. Resident), Cheryl Nielsen (Twp. Resident), Shirley Stillo (Twp. Resident), Santo Stillo (Twp. Resident), Nancy Happer (Twp. Resident).

Tom G. started the public session and made an announcement that due to the nature and importance of this meeting and the fact that public input is expected, it would be recorded to ensure accuracy of the minutes. Upon approval of the meeting minutes the recording would be destroyed. Tom G. also explained the purpose of the Township ESC and the ESC public meeting schedule for the hauling contract renewal. He mentioned that the public is invited to attend for educational purposes. He thanked the attendees and professionals for attending this meeting. He gave brief mention of the ESC's primary "green" role in the Township.

ESC members introduced themselves. Professional guests and public attendees introduced themselves.

Tom G. mentioned that the City of Allentown is receiving a grant in the amount of \$260,000.00 for achieving a recycling volume rating of 28%. He said that Palmer Township is at 20%. He offered brochure materials for the public's use and encouraged the public to offer input. He then introduced Cindy O. and the presentation.

Cindy O. proceeded through her presentation and asked the public for questions and/or comments.

Public Question and Comment Session

1. How are we going to educate people to do this right because no one reads the advertisements and no one cares? Cindy O. explained that we have been educating the public for a long time.
2. A lot of people won't do what they should; will there be fines imposed? Cindy O. explained that the Township is all for education however under future regulations, fines will be imposed or the Township will not receive grant money. Tom G. said it will be difficult at first but as time goes on the system will become habit.
3. Cindy O. mentioned the rebate the Township could receive for our recycling efforts.
4. What if items are too large for the toter containers? Cindy O. said that the Township will make decisions as to the container size and pick-up concessions when we receive more input. There could be scheduled amnesty days or a "pay-to-pick-up" system for large items.
5. What about yard waste? Cindy O. mentioned the two (2) Township pick-up dates and regulations regarding yard waste in regular trash. She mentioned that the Hartley Avenue Recycling Center is available for small volume item drop-off and the Berks Street site for large volume items.
6. Why not have a "per – bag" fee? It would increase recycling and everyone would pay fairly. Cindy O. explained that not enough people agree that this is a good enough idea to implement. Tom G. said that the cost/bag method is a very unpopular idea and the issue was raised for about 15 years now. Rob R. mentioned that there would still be bags that animals could get into, debris, etc. Bob L. said it is not a good idea or practical although he agrees that it could be a good solution to recycling more.
7. [Public Comment] People from New Jersey and New York are a problem. Tom G. said he thinks they are a bit lax when they move here because where they are from the regulations are much more strict.
8. [Public Comment] The financial aspect is difficult to see or realize practically because we'll still pay the same or more taxes. Cindy O. that the money saved will help keep taxes down.
9. What plastics will they take? Cindy O. said all but #6.
10. What program does Easton have? Cindy O. mentioned the Recycle Bank.
11. [Public Comment] Educate the children to make things better.
12. I only have a small amount of trash and recycling; isn't a 96 gal. container too big? Cindy O. said size options will have to be decided. She said the trucks will be able to pick up all sizes of toter containers.
13. [Public Comment] There are pick-up problems with Mascaro.
14. [Public Comment] There are going to be pick-up problems with parked cars.
15. What if cans are too big for the garage? Cindy O. said storing on the side of the house is fine.

16. Will the money the Township saves be reverted back to our refuse bill as a credit? Cindy O. said the Township will offer the improved service with no increase in the price.
17. Is Hartley Avenue Recycle Center still open? Cindy O. answered yes.
18. Are the toter containers free? Cindy O. answered yes.
19. What about areas that would be difficult for toters? Cindy O. said that there will be a percentage of the Township that you can not collect with an automated system and will remain manually collected.
20. At the switch-over, will the old recycling containers be collected? Cindy O. said yes and the details are being worked out. She also said that there will be two (2) different containers; one for recycling and one for trash.
21. Does Mascaro have trucks for automated pick-up? Cindy O. said yes and that South Whitehall is a good example of their service. Chris C. suggests driving through South Whitehall to see how it looks. Tom G. mentioned that Phillipsburg would also be a good example.
22. Tom D. mentioned a neighborhood that increased recycling by 167% in one year. He made mention of the present landfill dilemma and DEP regulations. He said that it is relatively easy to attain 50% - 60% recycling rates.
23. Are we accepting landfill from other states? Yes.
24. Rich Smith of Greenstar explained the philosophy behind single stream recycling.
25. Does grant money go into education? Yes, a portion of the money does.
26. Tom D. announced upcoming recycling events and that on Saturday from 10am-2pm, the DEA will collect medication at Giant.

End Public Q&A Session 8:15pm, Continue Regular Meeting 8:28pm:

**Approval Of Minutes:** Mar. 28, 2012 minutes approved with revision.

**Hauler Report:** (1) Chris Caras there are presently no issues and that a yard waste pick-up is scheduled for May 7th. He mentioned that he will bring the new supervisor, Adam to the next ESC meeting and introduce him. He mentioned that Adam will most likely come to the ESC meetings from then on.

**Recycling Coordinator Report:** (1) Cindy O. suggested car trash bags as a Community Days giveaway. The idea was accepted. (2) Cindy O. said that the recycling and disposal bid specifications are done. She said the hauling bid specifications need limits applied. (3) Cindy O. mentioned the amnesty program; one or two days where oversized items can be trashed curbside. John O. suggested a Spring and Fall cleanup day. (4) Rob R. recommends that a slide be added to the presentation devoted to education. Cindy O. said she will consider it. (5) The ESC made a motion to schedule amnesty (cleanup) days twice per year.. (6) The ESC made a motion to assign a fee for large item pickup. The fee amount will be determined upon award of the new contract. (7) Cindy O. and Tom D. attended a 902 grant workshop. DEP grant priorities would favor toter containers before expanding the Recycling Center. Considering the two choices, Cindy O. said the Recycling Center expansion will be a priority. (8) 904 grant money is decreasing. Chris C. discussed cracking down on enforcement and that the DEP wants to see proof of enforcement and education to get the money. (9) Cindy O. suggested that when fire inspections are conducted for commercial and industrial businesses, perhaps a recycling inspection should be done at the same time. She will present this to the Board of Supervisors and Chris C. (10) It was suggested that a grass clipping fee be included in the bid specifications. (11) A small battery drop-off at the recycling center would not be feasible because it is hazardous waste.

**Old Business:** (1) The recycling center steps have been ordered. (2) Regarding the Great PA Cleanup, Tom G. suggested making it a yearly initiative from now on.

**New Business:** (1) Tom G. tables the ESC year's initiatives 2012. He suggested looking over the proposed initiatives prior to the next ESC meeting.

**Announcements:** (1) Tom D. mentioned the Ecycling event on May 19th. Please show up at 8:00am. He also mentioned a medication pick-up at the Forks and Palmer Giant and Target. (2) Bob Lammi mentioned the removal of dams on the Lehigh River for shad. He mentioned the chain dam and Allentown dam as examples.

**Adjournment:** 9:10pm motion to adjourn meeting.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting is scheduled for May 23, 2012 at 7:00 PM at the Township Library conference room.

Minutes submitted by Chris Briglia May 22, 2012.