

**Committee for a Better Environment
Council Chambers
City Hall, College Park
September 23, 2013
7:00 PM**

<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Suchitra Balachandran	X	
Gemma Evans	X	
Alan Hew	X	
Stephen Jascourt		X
Benjamin Mellman	X	
Janis Oppelt		X
Kennis Termini		X
Ballard Troy		X
Donna Weene	X	
Macrina Xavier		X

Guests Present: Terry Schum, City Liaison, Denise M. Palmer, Contract Secretary

Ms. Evans called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

1. Review minutes of August 26th meeting

The minutes from the August 26, 2013 meeting were tabled until a quorum is present to approve them. There was one correction by Ms. Schum.

2. Review financial report

Ms. Schum reported that CBE has spent \$331 thus far in this fiscal year. It was suggested that the committee review the budget and financial report and entertain any questions. There were no questions for Ms. Schum

3. Staff/Committee Liaison update

Ms. Evans introduced Terry Schum who will be acting City liaison until a replacement to Mr. Brown, the previous liaison, is found. She will get up to speed on the projects that CBE is currently undertaking. The City of College Park has not advertised for the position as of yet. She thinks it will be more of a community development planner and she will be redefining the position before advertising it.

4. Discussion:

a. Council worksession 9/3/13

A number of CBE committee members were present at the Council worksession. Ms. Evans went over the highlights of the session.

i. Requests voiced by Councilmembers

One of the major points was how to attract more volunteers. Ms. Weene suggested that we need to work together as a group. Mr. Hew suggested more direction and goals, more focus on what the community wants and what workshops they are interested in attending; he also suggested follow-up on grants. Mr. Hew indicated that it takes a lot of time to find speakers for workshop topics chosen.

ii. Recruiting volunteers – ideas and opportunities

Some of the problems with hiring interns are that they can only work 15 hours a week. If interns are hired, they would have to be supervised by the staff liaison. They can be used, however, to follow up on workshops, etc. Ms. Evans suggested Catherine McGraf, who is on the Council staff, as someone that she will follow up with to discuss interns. Mr. Mellman offered to circulate emails on campus to see if there are students interested in joining CBE. Moving forward, it was suggested that CBE receive emails of minutes from the Council to stay abreast of current developments and keeping the lines of communication open.

b. Sustainability Coordinator – update from Terry Schum

Ms. Schum updated CBE on the meeting to be held on September 24 with the President of the University of Maryland to discuss creating a position for a Sustainability Project Manager and the cost to be split between the two entities. She had a general list of projects that she read to the committee to be discussed with the President. Budget implications will not kick in until July, 2015 which will be FY 15. There is a city partnership (CPC) which is already in place. She will report back to the CBE on the President's response.

c. Hens

CBE has prepared a letter for Council. Mr. Mellman reports that it looks good and Ms. Oppelt assisted with it and it requests that Council consider relaxing the rules around the backyard hens. The letter would come from Ms. Evans to Mayor and Council. Ms. Schum suggested putting the letter in their mailbag and if it catches their attention they may want to put it on a work session or deliver it thru the City liaison directly to Council. She suggested that the letter be clear that CBE is requesting action. The letter would go to the Council for them to send to Prince George's government. Ms. Evans thought that it would not get voted on before the City election, which is in a few weeks. Mr. Mellman volunteered to take care of this.

d. Strategic planning

This idea came from former City liaison, Jonathan Brown, and a group of committee members who met with him. Ms. Schum thinks it is a good idea to hire someone. Ms. Evans has a contact with Maryland recycling who may be a good candidate. The committee agreed to discuss it at a later time in a group setting.

5. Events:

a. Recap –

i. Canning and preserves workshop Sept. 7

Canning and preserves workshop was updated by Ms. Weene. She indicated there was a good turn out with a good mix of people. It was all hands on, very nicely done and laid back. There were suggestions to have another one in November. There were 13 people in attendance and everyone participated. There is a waiting list for the next workshop.

ii. Environmental Film Series – 1st film screening 9/16 (Dirt! The Movie) Purchase of Community Screening Rights?

It was reported that the first of the environmental film series was great. Ms. Oppelt asked CBE to vote on purchasing the screening rights for the film which is \$100.

b. Upcoming -

i. College Park Day 10/19

Mr. Hew had a poster that will be used for College Park day which will be in the bags that will be sent to each resident. Mr. Hew will send an electronic copy to Mr. Mellman to disseminate and he has reserved a table for the event.

ii. Schools

Ms. Weene discussed the project for the schools and suggested a vote to see if the project can be ready for College Park Day, but absent a quorum, the committee discussed whether another venue at a later time would be best. The consensus was that there is not enough time to have this ready for College Park Day. It was agreed to put the project on hold, and it will be discussed at a later meeting. However, Ms. Weene was asked and will do the planting again at North Hollywood. Ms. Weene asked if we can broaden the committee to have a student on CBE. Ms. Schum will check and Ms. Weene indicated that they are, of course, welcome to come to attend as guests.

6. Other old business

On the CBE website, it was suggested that more material is needed. The content pages have been completed and Ms. Schum thinks the website should be ready soon.

7. New business

a. Upcoming meeting dates and locations – 11/25 and 12/23 meetings

Ms. Evans brought up the November and December meetings. Should they be moved up or cancelled? She will set up something online for everyone to fill in their preferences. She questioned if anyone would like to hold upcoming meetings at Davis Hall. It was suggested that if so, we should give the Clerk's office two weeks' notice, and it was agreed that CBE hold the October 28 meeting at Davis Hall.

Ms. Weene suggested a gift card for Mr. and Mrs. Jascourt on the arrival of their new son. She also suggested a get well card for Ms. Termini and will have everyone sign. Ms. Evans will follow up.

There being no further business for discussion, Ms. Evans made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m. Ms. Weene seconded and the motion was unanimous. The next meeting is scheduled for October 28, 2013 at Davis Hall.

Minutes prepared by Denise M. Palmer, Contract Secretary