

Morgantown Green Team: Minutes of the June 1, 2015 Meeting

Attending: Lisa Lagana (Chair), Trevor Lloyd (Recycling Committee), Amanda Stoner (Recycling Intern), Pam Cubberly (Green Nights), Jim Kotcon (Energy Committee), Holly Purpura (Friends of Deckers Creek), and Jeff Hays (Republic Services)

Old Business

None.

I. New Business

- A. Recycling.** Jeff Hays of Republic Services had asked to attend the June meeting in order to discuss recycling in Morgantown with the Green Team. He first announced that, on July 1, recycling would be available at the local WalMart every Saturday, accepting the same items collected within the city, that is, 1–7 plastics, glass, and paper.

He then summarized answers to various questions on recycling that had been submitted by residents attending the April Green Households Fair. Several had asked why Republic Services didn't collect recycling in the county too. He noted that recycling does not pay for itself and is paid for through fees paid by residents to Republic Services for both trash and recycling. The gas, driver, and other costs of sending a truck to Greenstar in Pittsburgh are six times greater than what Greenstar pays (\$10–\$12 a ton) Republic Services for the materials delivered by the trucks. So, there are few incentives for Republic Services to expand their services.

He noted that there are real problems with recycling containers being contaminated with nonrecyclable materials. Republic drivers are trained to check the recycling containers when they collect trash. If they see nonrecyclable materials, they will throw the entire contents into the trash truck. If it looks clean, they leave the container for the recycling truck that comes later. He noted that Republic has had to stop recycling in certain areas of town where 9 of 10 containers are contaminated.

The team then discussed a range of questions with Mr. Hays, in particular, what could be done to educate residents to reduce contamination. It was noted that everyone needs to step up to the plate to reduce the level of contamination and increase the amount of “clean” recycling in the waste stream:

- Republic Service needs to expand its education of customers—e.g., labels on containers, brochures, and flyers in bills to customers that indicate what is recyclable and what isn't.
- The city needs to enforce policies that already exist on citizen responsibility to recycle correctly.
- Residents need to do their part by sorting their recycling correctly.

Mr. Hays especially wished that students would receive better information and incentives to recycle and to recycle right. The team discussed a number of ideas on how this might be done.

Mr. Hays then left the meeting and the team continued to discuss the issues raised. Amanda Stoner will be presenting her final report on recycling to the City Council at the end of June.

- B. Morgantown Solar Co-op.** Pam Cubberly gave a brief report on the current status of the solar co-op. Of the 90 plus households that had applied to WV SUN, 50 or more had qualified roofs. WV SUN was to issue an RFP that week to solar installers in the area. A meeting was set for July 13 for the co-op selection committee to discuss the bids submitted by that date.
- C. Urban agriculture ordinance revisions.** Lisa Lagana gave a brief update on progress on updating the city's urban agriculture ordinance. The proposed changes have moved through the Planning Commission and reached the City Council. It must go through three readings before the council will vote on the proposed changes.
- D. Green Nights 2015-16.** Discussion of ideas for Green Nights for fall of 2015 and winter-spring of 2016 was deferred to the July meeting.
- E. Introduction.** Holly Purpura, new executive director of Friends of Decker's Creek, introduced herself. She is looking forward to working with the Green Team on issues of mutual interest.

II. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm. Minutes submitted by Pam Cubberly, June 16, 2015.

Next meeting: July 6, 5:30pm to 7:00pm, in City Council Chambers, 389 Spruce Street.