



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Monday, August 20, 2012

4:30 PM

210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room 103A (City-County Building)
Meets the 3rd Monday of the month.

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

- Present:** 6 -
Anita Weier; Steven M. Fix; Patricia A. Lasky; Dan Melton; James P. Bennett and Reginald N. Weide
- Absent:** 1 -
Patricia J. Gadow
- Excused:** 1 -
Jennifer L. Giegerich

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Melton, seconded by Lasky, to Approve the Minutes.
The motion passed by voice vote/other.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

1. [27408](#) Discussion of rubber crumb mulch use at playgrounds

Jeff Lafferty (Health) and Charlie Romines (Parks) both spoke on research that has been done thus far on impacts (health and environmental) of rubber crumb mulch. Public Health's summary report on the issue highlights that there is leaching of zinc from the rubber, but not nearly high enough to have a negative impact on groundwater.

Parks staff reviewed some 60 studies that have looked at the effects of rubber crumb mulch, and feel confident that it is a better choice long term than any of the other options (gravel or mulch). Gravel is not considered ADA compliant. Mulch breaks down quickly and must be replaced. Injuries at playgrounds are usually from falls. Rubber mulch greatly reduces injuries from falls compared to other materials. Parks now uses a poly-coated mulch, which reduces the chance of any leaching and of VOC emissions. Studies have shown VOC levels are comparable to carpet padding and they tend to be higher immediately after installation. Parks has switched to a tan rubber (from black), which minimizes VOC levels further since it doesn't get as hot. A question was raised about possible allergies. There is no latex in the rubber that is used. While City Parks doesn't have a factsheet available online, staff will answer any questions and meet with groups to discuss playground material options.

2. [18528](#) Discussion of Environmental Impacts of Fireworks Residue

Brynn Bemis, City Engineering, and Jim Bennett reported that water samples have been taken and analyzed. Also soil and plant samples have been taken and will be analyzed by two different labs. Results should be back sometime in September, depending on the workload at the lab.

Brynn went over the water results, which showed a spike of perchlorate following the fireworks event. It dropped quickly in subsequent samples, but the reason is not entirely clear. It may have been diluted, dissipated, or broke down. COE plans to discuss further fireworks analysis at the next meeting, as there are funds remaining in the budget.

There were questions as to why perchlorate (or chloride or chlorine) were not analyzed in the sediment samples. Brynn reported that previous studies suggest that perchlorate breaks down quickly in anoxic environments and the chloride impacts from road salt would be an order of magnitude higher, which would completely cancel out any effects from the fireworks.

3. [08477](#) REPORT FROM BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

None

4. [08478](#) REPORT FROM WATER UTILITY BOARD:

1. Over 30 citizens have attended the past several meetings to speak on the new smart meters being installed.
2. A sentinel well will be installed near Elmside Blvd (between Well 8 and Kipp site) with the intention of detecting contaminant migration.
3. Soil vapor tests will be discussed at a public meeting tonight
4. Chris Gellash, a Ph.D. candidate, has shown that chloride from water softener salt may have a larger impact on drinking water than from road salt. He also has suggested that the Eau Claire shale aquitard may be more porous than previously thought. Finally, his work has indicated 60-80% of groundwater flow is through fractures (super fast), not super slow, pore to pore movement through sandstone, which has been the general understanding.

5. [08479](#) REPORT FROM SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

None

6. [14746](#) REPORT FROM BOARD OF HEALTH FOR MADISON AND DANE COUNTY:

Board continues to discuss the Kipp site, private well issues, and well/ septic permit applications. Clean Sweep is moving from Public Health to Public Works.

7. [13375](#) STAFF REPORT

Greg Fries mentioned that Chapter 37 of Madison General Ordinances (stormwater and erosion control) will be updated to reflect changes at the county and state level.

8. [19947](#) Discussion of Future Items

Suggested items for future agendas included an update on the organics collection pilot, beach enclosure pilot project results, an organized trash collection effort, and a report on what the material is that is used for the "bike boxes" at certain intersections.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Melton, seconded by Bennett, to Approve the Minutes. The motion passed by voice vote/other.