

**MINUTES**  
**ATCOG Solid Waste Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**August 17, 2017**  
**10:00 a.m.**  
**Mount Pleasant Public Library**  
**Mount Pleasant, Texas**

1. The Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) met on August 17, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. at the Mount Pleasant Public Library located at 601 N. Madison in Mount Pleasant, Texas. ATCOG SWAC Chairman, Mario Villarino, called the meeting to order.
2. Mario Villarino asked for approval of the minutes of the Regional Solid Waste Advisory Committee meeting held October 13, 2016. A motion to approve the minutes was submitted by Debbie Corbell and seconded by Wendell Davis. The motion carried.
3. Mario Villarino then opened the meeting up to discuss the success of the FY 2016/2017 solid waste pass-through grant program. Paul Prange provided details regarding the participants involved with the regional community cleanup events. Mr. Prange stated that each county conducted a cleanup event and all counties expended their total amount of funds provided by ATCOG and TCEQ. Mr. Prange also indicated that several counties provided matching funds while conducting their projects, although a couple of counties struggled to expend their funds prior to September. He then gave a brief overview of the past activities, indicating that recycling and community cleanup events have been the focus of the solid waste funding during the past few years. Mario Villarino and Wyvonne McDaniel provided a detailed account of the Hopkins County project to the SWAC and described how beautification committee and the county commissioners work together to educate the students enrolled in Hopkins County about littering and illegal dumping, despite TCEQ's policy of reducing the number of educational outreach items available for distribution. Mario also mentioned that Hopkins County was looking into the possibility of creating a facebook page to conduct outreach via social media, in an effort to reach more individuals. Mr. Prange then provided a brief update on the status of the Texas Legislature, as it pertains to potential funding increases during this legislative session. The general fund balance of solid waste funds in excess of \$133,000,000 currently, however, the TCEQ Commissioner is not requesting an increase in funding at this time. The Texas Association of Regional Councils (TARC) Executive Director, Ginny Lewis, has approached the legislature and asked for additional funding to be provided to all of the Cogs, specifically for a state-wide tire cleanup, focusing on the dangers of mosquito-borne illnesses such as zika. Mr. Prange mentioned that a couple of bills passed unanimously in their committees, but were vetoed by Governor Abbot, for an unknown reason. Therefore, no additional funds will be released to the COGs to address scrap tire issues during FY 2018/2019.
4. Mario Villarino then opened the meeting up for discussion, regarding funding priorities for the upcoming FY 2018/2019 solid waste pass-through grant program. Paul Prange explained to the committee that funding for the next biennium would be reduced from \$27,000 to approximately \$19,000 due to indirect rate changes at ATCOG. This would only allow each of the nine counties to receive approximately \$2,100.00 annually for cleanup events instead of \$3,000.00. Mr. Prange suggested to the SWAC that we could shift our focus from providing an outlet for the citizens to

dispose of their unwanted items at cleanup events, to providing tools to county environmental enforcement officers, in an effort to reduce the number of illegal dumpsites throughout the region. This included purchasing surveillance cameras and signs, which would be loaned out to each county for a designated period of time, after which, each county would be required to return the cameras and signs, and produce a report documenting the success of their illegal dumping enforcement efforts. Mr. Prange then mentioned that he had been researching cameras and he believes we could purchase a quality unit for around \$260.00. Discussion took place among the SWAC members and Mario referred back to the minutes from the last SWAC meeting and asked about purchasing trash/recycling receptacles that would encourage children not to litter. Wendell Davis mentioned that this strategy was employed in the State of Arkansas many years ago, and litter was practically non-existent at locations where these receptacles were present. Mr. Prange mentioned that TCEQ would not fund the purchase of these items because they did not promote landfill diversion strategies. Mr. Prange then stated, ironically, that TCEQ does allow funds to be used for the rental of roll-off trash containers, for the collection of waste, which is disposed of in permitted landfills. Then Gene stated that these types of receptacles were very expensive to purchase and maintain, and our available funding could not support the purchase of these items. Debbie stated that she liked the idea of purchasing surveillance cameras and signs, but the cameras must be of very high quality, in order to capture high resolution images of illegal dumpers. Josh, then mentioned that he would prefer quality surveillance cameras instead of game of trail cameras, even if they were somewhat more expensive. Mr. Prange then stated that he would look into comparing the features of different types of cameras, and produce this information to the committee at the next meeting, scheduled for October 19, 2017. Josh and Mario then began a discussion about making sure each county had the capability of prosecuting illegal dumpers, to ensure that our efforts to collect physical evidence are not in vain. Josh then provided the contact information for the Hunt County Homeland Security Agent, and mentioned that illegal dumping in Hunt County is heavily prosecuted. Mr. Prange stated that he would reach out to Mr. Hill, and ask him to provide helpful information that can be shared with our county prosecutors, in order to create a template for success. Debbie asked if it would be possible to contact the Wal-Mart corporate office and ask if they would be willing to require their vendors to place signage on their products, promoting proper disposal. Josh then stated that Wal-Mart highly encourages recycling and the proper disposal of all of the products that they carry. After much discussion, the committee decided to utilize the available FY 2018 solid waste funding to create a surveillance camera loan program, managed by ATCOG, to help reduce illegal dumping in all nine counties located within our region. The SWAC also agreed to utilize any remaining FY 2018 funds and the full amount of FY 2019 funds to conduct community cleanup events throughout the region. A motion was made by Josh Bray and seconded by Gene Keenon. The motion carried.

5. Mario Villarino then opened the meeting up for other business. Josh asked when the next scheduled meeting would be held, so the SWAC discussed possible dates. It was agreed upon that Thursday, October 19, 2017 would be acceptable. Debbie then confirmed that we could meet again, at the public library. Mr. Prange stated that he would collect additional information on various types of surveillance cameras and present the findings at the next SWAC meeting, before purchasing any cameras. Mario brought up the fact that Beth Wisenbaker's position on the committee has been vacant since her retirement, and proposed adding Mr. Jon Dalzell to the SWAC. Mario gave a brief biography of Mr. Dalzell's involvement with the Hopkins County

Beautification Committee, and the SWAC unanimously voted to allow Mr. Dalzell to serve on the committee. A motion was made by Gene Keenon and seconded by Debbie Corbell. The motion carried.

6. Mario Villarino then entered a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Wendell Davis. The motion carried.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Wendell Davis  
Mario Villarino  
Debbie Corbell  
Gene Keenon  
Wyvonne McDaniel  
Josh Bray

**REPRESENTING**

Red River Co. WSC  
Hopkins County  
City of Mount Pleasant  
Republic Services  
Hopkins County  
Sanitation Solutions

**ATCOG STAFF PRESENT**

Paul Prange, Environmental Resources Coordinator

ATCOG

**GUESTS**

Jon Dalzell

Hopkins County