
Comments to the KUB Board of Directors December 17, 2009

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The Tennessee Clean Water Network's mission is to empower Tennesseans to claim their right to clean water and healthy communities.

To this end, I think our comments to the KUB board are in line with our mission, though the subject does not involve water.

In the past couple of weeks, members have been calling to complain about the tree trimming and the inability to get access to key KUB employees that could possibly help them out. They turned to me because of the previous lawsuit in hopes that I could help them out. I informed them that we could not sue on this issue, but they pushed for me to help them out regardless.

I immediately directed them to the KUB website where I learned that there was no information about who to call about what. At first I was skeptical. I recall that we had some conversations about the website during the negotiations, but looking through the consent order I did not find any reference to requiring KUB to have a more transparent website.

I went to the website to help the members navigate to find someone who would be helpful. I found no information on staff, executive staff or board members on the site. I

looked everywhere and I'm pretty website savvy. I did find a standardized form that I could register my complaint. Just so you know, nothing says "I don't care enough about you to give you a name and a number", than a standardized form. What you're telling the public is that KUB decides, if and when the complaint is answered and who will be doing the answering. The customer is left feeling frustrated and our members made that point to me.

I thought that perhaps opening an account would give me the staff and board information. I must have made about 8 attempts to get a password that the system would accept and I was denied access the entire time. No worries, I thought I would just inform the webmaster. Then I realized that there is no webmaster available to the public either.

So, I told Wayne Loveday since I had his email address. The site is fixed now as I just created my own account before coming here.

I have access to the executives at KUB and when I pointed out our members complaints they graciously gave me permission to give out their emails. But I don't think that's the best use of their time either when another staff person could easily answer those questions.

Just to give you a heads up. Some members are contemplating a run at the Charter and they have mentioned to me that they are considering seeking an injunction against KUB regarding trees on their private property. It's starting to heat up. Members have asked about PACE10 being a forum for the tree trimming appeals. I know that the city has a resolution requesting a tree trimming appeals board. Perhaps PACE10 would be appropriate since it is already been meeting for 5 years and has brought up this issue before.

These are some thoughts from my attempts to assist TCWN members and I'm happy to work on a solution that provides better understanding, more transparency as well as a more aesthetically pleasing solution to the current tree trimming problem.