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Footnotes Issue #62: July 31st, 2012

There's Something Besides TSPLOST on my Ballot?



As everyone is suffering from T-SPLOST fatigue (okay, I'll at least speak for myself), let's look at the other critically important statewide election taking place tomorrow in the GOP primary. Many Georgians have never given a thought to the **Georgia Public Service Commission**, which regulates telecommunications, transportation, electric and natural gas services, yet what they do touches our lives more than almost anything else our government does.

Two of our five Commissioners, Stan Wise (R) and Chuck Eaton (R), are up for election this year, and both have drawn primary opponents. Pam Davidson, who nearly beat Lauren "Bubba" McDonald in the 2008 GOP primary is challenging Stan Wise, and Matt Reid, an electrical engineer, is taking on Chuck Eaton. One of the few news stories about the election appeared in the [Marietta Daily Journal](#) last week, detailing campaign contributions of \$10,000 made by Georgia Power's attorneys two days before Commissioner Wise voted to pass \$3.2 million of costs to consumers in June.

This is an especially important election, because Georgia Power will be filing their next Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) in January. This plan will detail how the company plans to meet expected demand for the next 20 years. Many of Georgia's aging coal-fired power plant fleet will be retired in coming years, and the question before the Public Service Commission will be whether those retiring plants will be replaced primarily with natural gas or whether we take this opportunity to really invest in efficiency, solar and wind.

While natural gas seems like much less of an evil, as it is enjoying historically low rates and is cleaner than coal, it contributes to global warming and using fracking to release the gas threatens water supplies in New York, Pennsylvania, and even up the road in North Carolina. **We have the opportunity to demand best-in-class energy efficiency and a true commitment to renewables, and we can do it with a Public Service Commission that takes the long view.**

Georgia has what's known as an "open primary" which means that voters in Georgia do not register by party affiliation. If you haven't already voted and you go tomorrow, **you can select either a Democratic, Republican or Nonpartisan Ballot** – and that choice is not limited in any way by the ballots you have selected in previous elections. Whatever you do, make your voice heard! Get out there and vote!

Quick Links

If you just can't help yourself and need a little more T-SPLOST before you go vote, check out [our video](#) on the Metro Atlanta T-SPLOST.



Sierra Club Meetings

Smart Energy Team Meeting, Monday, August 6, 7:00 p.m.
Seth Gunning - Staff, seth.gunning@sierraclub.org

Atlanta Inner City Outings (ICO), Tuesday, August 14, 7:30 p.m.
Naomi Bock - Chair, atlantaico@gmail.com

Wildlands Committee Meeting, Tuesday, August 21, 7:00 p.m.
Mike Murdock - Chair, murdock1@mindspring.com

Fundraising Committee, Wednesday, August 22, 7:00 p.m.
Clay Tucker - Chair, tuckerwf12@aol.com

RAIL, Monday, August 27, 7:00 p.m.
David Emory - Chair, david.emory@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

August 2 – Shoal Creek Hike

Join Bob Springfield explore the area in Dawson Forest where the proposed Shoal Creek Reservoir is located from 8:30 a.m. to lunch time. Private companies and the Etowah Water and Sewer Authority in Dawson County want to construct a 2,000-acre reservoir in the Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area (WMA), a 10,000-acre tract of land owned by the City of Atlanta's Airport Authority. Once the possible site of Atlanta's second airport, the property is now leased to Georgia's Department of Natural Resources. Maintained as a WMA, the property attracts thousands of hikers, bikers, horseback riders, anglers, hunters and boaters each year. Click [here](#) to register.



August 6 and 7 – Women's Action for New Directions Hiroshima Day(s)



On Monday, August 6th in Atlanta at 7pm at the Universalist Unitarian Church, and Tuesday, August 7th at 7pm in Augusta at Payne College, Jeff Patterson, MD, will present a free lecture on the negative aspects of nuclear power. Following a short PowerPoint presentation, there will be a question/answer segment for audience participation. Go to WAND's webstie for more informantion

August 21 - Movie Night! In Organic We Trust

We can no longer stomach our food system. It's killing more and more Americans and costing billions in health care. 78% of Americans eat organic food, because they think it's healthier. But is organic really better for us or is it just a marketing scam? Join ImagineAtlanta at the Midtown Art Cinema on the free, one-time screening of '[In Organic We Trust](#).' Register for your ticket [here](#).





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