

EEHW COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, January 21, 2016
5:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Linda Little, Vice Chair
Matt Brown
Kevin Bird
Gary Minich
Jerry Potts

MEMBERS ABSENT

Tim Dudley, Chair
Grant Noland

COUNTY PERSONNEL PRESENT

Jennifer Hoffman, P&Z
Dianna Heyer, Health Dept
Kathy Wade, Health Dept
Kathy Powless, VA
Sgt Lou Ann Hollon, Animal Control
Kris Horton, Animal Control
Deb Garrett, Env Mgmt
Paula Cross, Env Mgmt
Laurie Rasmus, Env Mgmt
Jeannie Durham, County Board Office

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Little at the Macon County Office Building.

MINUTES

Mr. Potts made a motion to approve the December 17, 2015 meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Brown and the motion carried 5-0.

CLAIMS

Mr. Potts made a motion to accept the report of the claims as presented, seconded by Mr. Brown and the motion carried 5-0.

ZONING –

Macon County Board Resolution Regarding Case R-02-01-16, a Petition for Rezoning Submitted by David Elliott

Ms. Hoffman explained that the petition is for rezoning on approximately 26.33 acres from A-1 Agricultural to RE-5 single family estate zoning. The Property is commonly located at 3882 Kraft Road in Mt. Zion Township. On January 6, 2016, a public ZBA hearing was held and they voted to recommend approval 5-0.

Mr. Minich made a motion to approve forwarding on to the full board with recommendation to approve, seconded by Mr. Brown, and the motion carried 5-0.

SUBDIVISIONS – None

REPORTS

Animal Control

Ms. Horton distributed a report showing numbers for last month and the same month last year. It also showed all of 2014 and all of 2015 numbers. Adoptions are up. Euthanasia is down. Return to owners are up. Calls for Service are up. Intakes are down. At this point, it is heading in a good direction.

Speed dating is coming up on February 13. That is also a PetSmart adoption weekend.

Mental Health-no report

Veterans Assistance –

Ms. Powless updated the committee members on the Emergency Assistance Program for the veterans. Four people have expressed interest. Two are eligible. \$700 will be paid on rent to keep them from being evicted. Ms. Powless said she has contacted the American Legion for one of them to see if he can get a little extra money to help with his electric bill. Right now the office is working with County Market to get gift cards rather than food vouchers. A food voucher has to all be spent in the same day. If it is a single vet that lives by himself, \$75 worth of groceries is too much to have to buy at one time. With a gift card, he can purchase in smaller amounts. She said she is also trying to get them coded so cigarettes, alcohol or candy cannot be purchased via a gift card. If they can't do it, she will check with Kroger to see if they can. She had a couple of applications with her that the members could look at if they'd like to see the requirements for assistance. She said they are also available in her office.

Historical Museum – no report

U of I Extension – no report

Planning & Zoning – No report

Regional Office of Education - no report

Environmental Management -

Ms. Cross updated the committee members on the grants program. About 2 weeks ago, the applications for the 2016 grants went out. There are already 3 applications returned for this year. They are really popular. The benefit is that it allows for residents to dispose of large items without having to get a dumpster. The hope is that illegal dumping is being reduced. Sometimes treasures are found and it becomes a swap meet.

There are two grant programs:

In 2015, the Spring Cleanups had 9 community townships apply. There was over 62,000 pounds or 31 tons of material recycled. Additionally, over 300,000 pounds or 150 tons was disposed of properly. Most of that weight is metal that is collected for recycling. There is a maximum of \$1,000 per township on this grant.

In 2015, there were three Community Sustainability Grants given. One went to Macon Resources to build a heated hoop house. They are attempting to grow part of their own food for the kitchens in their group homes. They train people in the program in landscaping, culinary arts and working with fresh fruits and vegetables. It gives some job training in the process.

The Good Samaritan Inn received the 2nd grant. A couple of years ago, they were assisted in getting started and then in 2015, they got another grant to continue their program. They do a

fantastic job there. They do lunch every day for the homeless and low income people for no charge. They use a lot of the crops from their gardens to supplement their kitchen so they don't have to use so many canned goods, frozen goods, etc... They've got some fresh fruits and vegetables to help feed everyone. It is also a part of a job training program.

The last one went to the Beautify Decatur Coalition. They asked for help in doing some low maintenance plantings in planters along the major streetscapes in Decatur. They had been planting annuals that did not last. They wanted perennials that would stay green all year. Mr. Potts asked who the Beautify Decatur Coalition is. Ms. Cross explained that it is a group of citizens that have come together and they work on the streetscapes and murals. They work with the business owners to make sure that they will help maintain them.

The maximum grant amount is \$5,000 which is a 70% match with 30% coming from the organization.

Health Department-

Ms. Wade explained that she was there to further explain and clarify about the Cottage Food & Cupcake Law after some individuals had attended last month's EEHW meeting about this issue. Chair Little addressed the visitors who had requested being able to speak prior to a vote on this saying that there is nothing to vote on this evening. She asked Ms. Wade to give an overview, but Chair Dudley is very interested in this subject so instead of having to replay everything at the next meeting, she said she would prefer not to spend lots and lots of time on it.

Ms. Wade said that the handout she had distributed explains the Cottage Food vs Cupcake Law. Cottage Food is farmer's market only while the Cupcake is more in depth than that. Suggestions from the Macon County Health Department have been included. Pike County was the most recent to do a survey to see how many other health departments in the State of Illinois have adopted such an ordinance. Only 8 counties have adopted an ordinance allowing the cupcake law in the State of Illinois. Fifty nine counties have not and 18 did not respond.

Ms. Heyer wanted to address the committee saying that the mission of the health department is to promote the health of Macon County residents. She said they have mandated programs that they are required to implement and then there are others where they try to keep their mission in mind. Does that program protect the health of the public? Through the environmental health programs, they are required to assure food safety for the public. The Cupcake Law, in their opinion, does not allow them to do that. This law states that the home baker is exempt from inspections and requirements for training and business registration. She went on to say that they already inspect 700 establishments to insure food safety making sure that they cook, store and handle all of the foods properly and that the employees are receiving training. The law states that the home baker can make up to \$1000 a month in sales. She asked who would monitor that and said that the health department does not have the capability to do that. There are certain items such as custard pies, cheesecake, pastries, etc... that they are not allowed to sell. She asked who would assure that those things are not being sold. The law states that these foods have to be labeled with potential allergens. If there is no authority over the home bakers who will monitor this? Potential allergens can cause life threatening situations. This law creates a liability for both the home baker and the health department. By developing this

ordinance, we would be stating that we endorse this and we do not. There is no way to assure food safety unless you are aware of those safe food handling practices. Poor personal hygiene and improper hand washing is one of the most common types of food contamination. Lastly, with the 700 current food establishments being monitored and the budget impasse the way it is, she said they are not getting paid and they do not have the resources to devote to this ordinance. Because of these reasons, the Board of Health has chosen not to develop this ordinance. The law creates unacceptable risk of possibly increasing the number of food borne illnesses in Macon County from unsafe food practices. She said they realize that not every home baker has unsafe food practices but they feel that the liability is too high to develop this ordinance at the health department level.

Citizen's Remarks –

Luke Stout, 2373 North Summit, Decatur, IL addressed the group saying that he has been an accountant and CFO in Decatur for 10 years. You have heard the Health Department make all kinds of comments regarding reasons why the Cupcake Law should not be passed. He said he deals with numbers every day as an accountant and he said he knows how someone can make them work in their favor. He said he had come prepared to defend against the Health Department's statements on not having enough man hours and resources to monitor home bakers. That is just twisting stories and fighting politics. He said he would, instead, talk about real life and real people; not just what looks good on paper. There is a home baker who wants to make a few wedding cakes. The Health Department will not allow this because of manpower, finances and unwillingness to support someone trying to survive regulation and red tape to bake a cake. He said he understands how many finances and manpower it would take. He asked all the public present who really care about pursuing home baking to stand. He went on to say that the 2 people standing live in the same home. As stated by the Health Department, there has been zero interest in the Cottage Food Law in 2015. Only 6 home bakers have received letters and been put out of business. That is not quite the empire it is put out to be. He asked who all was tired of the way Washington is run with the politics and unwillingness to work together and asked them to not let that happen in Macon County as well. He requested they cut the red tape and give the little people a chance.

He explained that one other statement was made by the Health Department concerning home kitchens not having a grease trap and their claim that it would decimate the sewer system. He said it was funny, but very true that this excuse was used. He said he had never heard of deep frying a cake.

He thanked the committee for considering this and said it is important to their livelihood.

OLD BUSINESS – none

NEW BUSINESS – none

Closed Session – none needed

NEXT MEETING Next regular meeting - Thursday, February 18, 2016

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Little adjourned the meeting 5:50 p.m. *Minutes submitted by Jeannie Durham*