

EEHW COMMITTEE MEETING
January 16, 2013
5:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tim Dudley
Phil Hogan
Kevin Greenfield
Patty Cox

MEMBERS ABSENT

Kevin Meachum
Merv Jacobs
Jerry Potts

COUNTY PERSONNEL PRESENT

Mike Baggett, State's Attorney's Office
Kris Horton, Animal Control
Jennifer Hoffman, P&Z
Lt. Jeff Scheibly, Animal Control
Deb Garrett, Environmental Mgmt
Greg Collins, Veterans Administration
Jay Dunn, County Board Chairman
Jeannie Durham, County Board Office

The meeting was called to order by Chair Tim Dudley at the Macon County Office Building.

MINUTES

Patty Cox made a motion to approve the December 19, 2013 minutes, seconded by Kevin Greenfield, motion carried 4-0.

CLAIMS

Patty Cox made a motion to approve the claims as presented, seconded by Phil Hogan and motion carried 4-0.

ZONING

None

Subdivisions – None

REPORTS

Veterans Assistance

Greg Collins distributed an Honor Guard report for 2013.

Planning & Zoning

Macon County Board Resolution Adopting the Revised Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) System as a Land use Decision Making Tool

Jennifer Hoffman explained that this is the resolution that was presented last month and was tabled for further review by committee members. She said that Mr. Greenfield requested a change on the back page where it says greater than 175 points shall be considered suitable for agricultural use, he wants to take off the word "only". That is the only thing that has been brought up. She informed the committee that it is up at the State and she has gotten an email saying that they approve it. All it needs is approval from the County Board to adopt this.

Phil Hogan made a motion to take the resolution off the table for discussion, seconded by Patty Cox and motion carried 4-0.

Patty Cox made a motion to send to the full board with amendments and recommendation to approve with amendments, seconded by Phil Hogan, and motion carried 4-0.

Patty Cox questioned Jennifer on the status of the noise ordinance. Mike Baggett offered to address the issue. He informed the committee that he had been requested to look into the legality of enacting a noise ordinance and it is his opinion that the county does not have the power to enact a noise ordinance. Since the County does not enjoy home rule powers, it can only do what the state legislature has given it the power to do. He said he has reviewed the County Code and any subsidiary code that the power would be derived from. The State has not seen fit to give the counties the power to enact noise ordinances. That being said, Jennifer has brought it to Mike's attention that there are counties in this state which do have them. He said he was not sure whether or not they could be enforced in court. He said that in his opinion, the county does not have the authority to enact one.

Health Department

No report

Animal Control

Lt. Scheibly presented a summary report for the month of December which also showed the yearly totals.

He added that the Home for the Holidays program has finished up. They had 106 animals go out this year. Of that 106 that went out, 92 were adopted. Compared to last year's numbers, there were 115 that went out and 79 adopted. So the adoptions were up.

Current specials include 2 cats for \$125.

The next event is Feb 8 which is the annual Speed Event where they will be running ½ price specials as well.

Environmental Management

Deb Garrett informed the committee that the Holiday Light recycling program is wrapping up tonight. The County truck is parked in Central Park. The lights are being taken down and put into the back of the truck to recycle. She said that it is hopeful that they will get to 1,000 pounds again this year. The proceeds this year go directly to Red Cross and will be designated for the Washington and Gifford tornado victims. There is not a whole lot of money expected – probably between \$150 & \$175.

Regional Office of Education

No Report

Citizen's Remarks

Tom Grimes, II from Blue Mound addressed the committee in regard to an issue in Blue Mound regarding Jim Knierim's property. He said that Jim has a bunch of junk cars that he has had for a number of years. He said that he had just gotten involved in the situation in August. He said he had done a rundown on January 13 regarding what was on the premises. He said there is one tire, behind the building is one car, on the west side of the building is a gray car and a red truck, in front of the building are 4 trailers, one boat, one bicycle, 3 white trucks, 1 brown car, 1 blue car, 1 red car. He said he was able to make contact with Jay Dunn. He said he told him about the situation and he invited him to speak at this meeting this evening. He thanked him for the opportunity and said he wanted to find out from Jennifer how many cars Jim Knierim had removed from his premises since August.

Jennifer said she did not have the exact number, but that they had been going out and tracking it. He has made progress and has been in contact with the office. He has been granted extensions because he is willing to comply with the county. Macon County's goal is compliance, not prosecution. That is what we are doing right now and if he doesn't comply, then it will be sent over to other ways.

Jim Grimes said that to him compared to the inventory that he just read, he could not see where absolutely anything has been done. There has been no progress that he could see. As a citizen of Blue Mound, he knows that new people do not want to move to Blue Mound when you've got a mess at the south end. Businesses cannot be attracted. He said he felt like that since August, nothing has been done and they are getting a run around. He stated that he would like to ask the Board's cooperation in taking action. Blue Mound needs to be cleaned up. He said that he is a taxpayer just like everybody in attendance this evening. It looks bad, very bad. He said that he is 68 years old and has lived in Blue Mound since he was 3 or 5 years old. The way Blue Mound looks right now is a disgrace and he is ashamed of his town. He said he thought that there is a need to quit talking and take immediate action. He said that there is a need to get wreckers down there, haul the junk away and clean up the property at once. He said he would like to see action taken this evening in solving the problem.

Kevin Greenfield asked if the vehicles are licensed. Mr. Grimes said he did not know, but that he wondered whether Mr. Knierim had insurance and whether the vehicles are operable. He said when he talked to Jay on Saturday, he was going to drive down and take pictures.

Jay said he did not make it down, but that Angie who works for Jennifer was there Monday morning. Tom said he heard that somebody was down and took pictures. He said that to him absolutely nothing has been done. He said he had spoken to Jennifer before and wanted to find out information, but was told it is under investigation. He said he would really like to know how many vehicles this guy has removed. He said that it looks like to him that none has been removed. He said he would like to see the committee take action immediately this evening in order to get something done because nothing has been done.

Kevin Greenfield stated that he assumed the property is not located within the Village of Blue Mound. Jennifer confirmed that it is on the edge, but the tax code is Macon County.

Chair Dudley stated that the vehicle ordinance was just passed a few months ago and that there are specific ways to handle this and according to the ordinance, it is being handled correctly. The property is observed for 7 days to insure that there are truly abandoned vehicles, send the landowner notice within 15 days to abate; extensions can be granted if they are trying to comply and as long as progress is being seen and good faith effort, there will be no turning over to the States Attorney because the goal is compliance not prosecution. He said that he had pictures from October, November and January and it can be seen from the pictures that there are cars gone. There has been progress made. He said that he understood that as a citizen, you don't feel like something is completely right, you can't get it fixed fast enough. Tomorrow is not soon enough. On the other hand, there is a property owner who feels like it is his constitutional right to have anything he wants on his property because he owns it and it is his. What we try to do as a county is try to balance those two things. We understand landowner's rights, but people don't really like to look at that either. We try to take that into consideration when we write these ordinances. He told Mr. Grimes that he has assurances from the County Board that this will be monitored with Jennifer and the ordinance will be followed step by step and it will get cleaned up. As long as the man is making progress, that is the way the ordinance reads.

Mr. Grimes asked what progress had been made. Mr. Dudley said that there have been cars taken off the property, even though it may not look like it to Mr. Grimes, and as long as he is making progress, it will take some time. He assured Mr. Grimes that the situation is being monitored and that it would continue to be monitored and it will get cleaned up in time just like the Ordinance says. We will follow it to the letter and if the man does not comply with it, it will go to the State's Attorney. He is making progress and that is what we want. We don't want to prosecute anybody. We just want them to do what we need for them to do. We assure you that we will make sure it gets done.

Mr. Grimes said that this situation has gone on for years and years and years. Tim Dudley said he understood that, but the ordinance just got passed a few months ago and we are just now getting where we can take care of it. Mr. Grimes said he felt like that if the person doesn't comply fast enough, they ought to be prosecuted. Mr. Dudley thanked him for his opinion and for coming down to let the committee know.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Greenfield said that last month, on the Regional Office of Education, they had discussed that perhaps Mr. Snyder could go back to sending out the sales tax reports. An email will be sent to Mr. Snyder requesting a new printout on the sales tax.

NEW BUSINESS

None

Closed Session

None needed

NEXT MEETING

Next regular meeting - Thursday, February 20, 2014

ADJOURNMENT

Patty Cox made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Phil Hogan, the motion carried 4-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Jeannie Durham
Macon County Board Office