

EEHW COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, February 19, 2015
5:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tim Dudley, Chair
Linda Little
Matt Brown
Merv Jacobs
Jerry Potts
Gary Minich
Kevin Bird

COUNTY PERSONNEL PRESENT

Kris Horton, Animal Control
Kathie Powless, Vet Administration
Deb Garrett, Environmental Mgmt
Jennifer Hoffman, P&Z
Laura Lents, County Board Office
Josh Tanner, Supervisor of Assessments

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jeannie Durham, County Board Office

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

MINUTES

Jerry Potts made a motion to approve the January 15, 2015 meeting minutes, seconded by Linda Little, motion carried 7-0.

CLAIMS

Linda Little made a motion to accept the report of the claims as presented, seconded by Jerry Potts and motion carried 7-0.

ZONING – None

SUBDIVISIONS – None

Citizen's Remarks -

Chair Dudley announced that the citizen's remarks would be moved up on the agenda because there were several people wishing to speak

George Virgil addressed the members about concerns to the water supply in Macon County. He reminded the members that he had spoken last summer about the Enbridge Pipeline and his concerns about putting the pipeline into the ground and the possible contamination to the water supply. He said his main reason for attending the meeting was to speak to the group about hazardous chemicals and how they can contaminate ground water as well as surface water and a possible means, which McLean County has already done by putting special permits into place through their ordinances so they can have local control over what goes into the ground so we don't have to worry about this anymore. The primary issue tonight is environmental protection. We want to protect our groundwater. Mr. Virgil explained his background of 30 years with Staley's where he ran the utilities that entailed miles and miles of pipeline above and below ground. He said they were repairing leaks that were due to environmental stress, mishaps, leakage, erosion, etc... all the time. Whatever the cause, pipes will leak. It only takes 1/16" hole in a pipe with 1,000 pounds of pressure, which is what Enbridge uses in their pipes when they are putting oil through it, to spew 1,000 gallons of liquid out of that 1/16" hole in a 24 hour period. If it goes undetected, in 10 days, there will be 10,000 gallons. Mr. Virgil explained that

fracking is basically putting a drill into the ground and running it horizontally. The casing around the vertical part is usually fine because it is pretty well encased in concrete as well as another steel casing around it. It is pretty environmentally safe, but once you run a horizontal line, in order to frack, you have to have holes in the pipeline. Then, when the liquids, along with all the hazardous & toxic chemicals in them to fracture the earth, are run through the line, there are holes all over that horizontal pipeline. If 100,000 gallons of water are put into that hole, only 40,000 gallons comes back out. The other 60,000 gallons with all the toxic chemicals are left in the ground. Some may leech back out when the oil & gas is extracted, but the majority of those hazardous chemicals are left in the ground, hopefully encased by the earth itself, but if there is a fissure from a previous earthquake that nobody knows exactly where it is, it is very easy for those chemicals to find the way into the ground water supply which may be only 200-500 foot deep. Once the well has been depleted as all oil wells will eventually do, the chemicals are left behind for future generations. Mr. Virgil urged the committee to have stringent disposal plans for the wastewater that does come back out of the ground. There are big lagoons to help handle that and that wastewater has all the hazardous chemicals in it plus residual toxic chemicals from the oil and gas. You have to have a very stringent operational plan from the county to make sure those chemicals are well handled and disposed of properly. Mr. Virgil said he was in charge of bringing lake water in and processing it so food grade products could be produced at Staleys. ADM has the same problem along with all of our restaurants. If the water in Lake Decatur and the ground water that feeds the lake from the Mahomet Aquifer is messed up, Decatur will be dead economically. All the industries will close down. We cannot contaminate our water. Local control of oil & gas development is important economically and our water has far more importance economically than any gas or water that we pull out of the ground.

Verlin Rosenberger explained that she had spoken to the committee and the whole board about 2 years ago regarding fracking. She said she knew enough at that time to talk intelligently, but has learned a whole lot more. She said she has a whole notebook of information she used when speaking to the IDNR representative a couple of summers ago to encourage them to listen and take some advice on writing rules for fracking. She said she wanted to talk to the committee about health, safety and well-being of the citizens of Illinois and Macon County particularly. Fracking and pipelines are not safe in any way. It may happen overnight, 10 years or longer from now, but it is not a safe situation. She said she is giving facts that scientifically based or incidents that have happened in all parts of the country that are well documented. When people's health is at stake, it ruins lives. Toxic water, air pollution, methane, airborne pollutants are horrible for people to breathe. She went on to describe possible illnesses that people have experienced. More problems she listed included noise pollution, light pollution that goes on all night long from flare stacks that burn off the unwanted gases and all the toxic emissions, heavy traffic and lots of equipment. She described safety issues that are also involved not only for people that live in the area, but also for the workers who have accidents, get sick and die from incidents that occur. She referred to articles from the National Parks Magazine about issues they've had for years regarding increases in arrests, more criminal activity, vehicle crashes, greater need for law enforcement, the doors to houses & cars are having to be locked when they never had to before, illegal dumping of waste water, etc.... So many of the workers come in and do their job and then leave. They don't care about the land or people that are left behind. Ms. Rosenberger also shared a special report from Food & Water

Watch that told about what is happening to farm animals. If it's happening to farm animals, what is it doing to people? She referenced examples from Pennsylvania, North Dakota, Louisiana and Wyoming where animals were having miscarriages, boils, skins rashes, stoppage of milk production for calves and dying and where water in creeks would not freeze at 40 below due to the chemicals in them.

Dawn Dannenbring from McLean County where this process was recently completed addressed the group next saying that Minor Run Company wanted to drill in McLean County and the Board was faced with the decision of whether or not to use the special use permitting process to give them a permit. She said it is important to know that the State had already issued a permit at the State level and as the County heard 19 hours of testimony over 5 days, they decided that the state really didn't have the best interest of the county at heart. The McLean County board is comprised of 12 Republicans and 8 Democrats and the vote was a bipartisan 15-3 to not give the Minor Run Oil Company a permit for drilling. The primary reason for their concern was the water. She had a document that was shared during the hearing, the Compendium of Scientific Medical and Media Findings Demonstrating the Risks and Harms of Fracking. This is a Compendium of concerned health professionals of New York and it is one of the documents that the Governor used in making the decision to ban fracking in the State of New York. Minor Run was not proposing to do high volume hydraulic fracking. They were proposing to do medium volume fracking which is not regulated by the State of Illinois. The new law that would regulate fracking only regulates high volume horizontal fracking. If you pay your money for a permit, all you have to do is to frack and then turn in a report afterwards and they don't monitor, test the water, test for radioactivity or anything. If there is a mess left to be cleaned up, it ends up getting cleaned up by the citizens. It is a very dangerous prospect. Dawn asked if there were any questions. There were none. She said that this is something, that if Macon does not already have it, it is something that should be considered. She told them that they have a right in the State Constitution to adopt an ordinance which is what McLean County did so that you have the right to make local decisions that affect you locally without having to accept what the State hands you on a platter.

REPORTS

Regional Office of Education – No report

Environmental Management

Deb Garrett presented a report on the Electronic Recycling & Reuse Act and informed the members that there is going to be an amendment introduced to the legislation in Springfield this session that she wanted to bring to their attention. The act took effect in January of 2010 and requires manufacturers of electronics who sell products in Illinois be responsible to provide recycling options for them. When this law passed, those manufacturers hired recyclers to take care of that need. They gave them fees for the amount that they were required to recycle. CED's (Covered Electronic Devices) that were banned from landfills included televisions & monitors, printers, computers, laptops, notebooks & desktops, keyboards & mice, fax machines, video recorders, cable & satellite receivers, etc... The IEPA designates the goal amount required to be paid for recycling for the manufacturers. This is based on the weight sold in Illinois the previous year. This year, when the manufacturers met all the goal amounts, they started withholding the fees to the recyclers. That trickled down to counties who already had

collection events scheduled and collection sites set up. Some counties have ongoing collection sites set up in their Township garage. They were affected in a huge way in terms of the costs the counties had to pay because they were coming in, but the supplemental fees were not. The law was implemented for various reasons, but mainly because there are 3.4 million tons of E-waste generated in 2012. They contain hazardous material which they know how to safely recycle. They also contain precious metals which can be extracted and used. A direct benefit is the thousands of jobs created. Currently, there are 25 states that have some sort of E-waste legislation on the books. The projection is that as technology devices continue to grow, they now become outdated in 2 to 4 years. The prediction is that by 2016, there will be 93.5 million tons of electronic waste in the US. Deb gave totals for Illinois & (accessible) Macon County. She said they did not have the numbers for Best Buy or for businesses who have to do their own numbers. There are currently no outlets in Macon County for broken TV's which becomes more and more of a problem as people dump them. Deb said they collect them at the highway department and end up paying quite a bit to have them taken care of. The new amendment that is going to be introduced wants to raise the goal amount for the manufacturers from 50% to 80%. Many states have goal amounts of 100% which would alleviate the problem we're having. Linda Little asked for the bill numbers. Deb told her they are SB797 & HB1455.

Animal Control

Kris Horton distributed the monthly report and explained that they had a big adoption event the past Saturday on Valentine's Day, Speed Dating. There were 33 adoptions on Saturday in less than 4 hours. That is an all-time record for one day in Macon County. Kris was asked if this was the first time they'd had this event. She said no, they have had it for the past few years, but just like the Home for the Holidays program, it just keeps getting bigger every year. She said it would be hard to top this one though. They were very busy.

Chair Dudley commented about Facebook postings he had seen and thanked Kris for the successful event.

Health Department – No report

Planning & Zoning – Jennifer Hoffman had no report

Veteran's Assistance – Kathie Powless had no report

Mental Health Board –No Report

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS – None

Closed Session – None Needed

NEXT MEETING Next regular meeting - Thursday, March 19, 2015

ADJOURNMENT

Jerry Potts made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Matt Brown, the motion carried 7-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 6 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Jeannie Durham