

EEHW COMMITTEE MEETING
February 28, 2019 5:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tim Dudley, Chair
Debra Kraft, Vice Chair
Matt Brown (Arrived 5:31 p.m.)
Linda Little
Jim Gresham
Laura Zimmerman

COUNTY PERSONNEL PRESENT

Tim Macken, Mental Health
Kathy Powless, Veterans Assistance
Sgt Matt Reynolds, Animal Control
Brandi Binkley, Health Dept
Laurie Rasmus, Env Mgmt
Jeannie Durham, County Board Office

MEMBERS ABSENT

Helena Buckner

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

MINUTES

Mr. Gresham made a motion to approve the 1/24/19 meeting minutes, seconded by Ms. Zimmerman and the motion carried 5-0.

CLAIMS

Ms. Little made a motion to accept the report of the claims as presented, seconded by Ms. Kraft and the motion carried 5-0

ZONING – None

SUBDIVISIONS – None

REPORTS

Planning & Zoning – No Report

Animal Control

Sgt. Reynolds distributed reports showing January statistics and explained that today's shelter population includes 77 cats and 37 dogs for a total of 114 animals. Next month's adoption special is called St. Pitties and Kitties Day.

Ms. Little asked about the Valentines Day adoption special. Sgt. Reynolds explained that it was called Speed Dating and adoptions were down with about 7 being adopted out that day.

Veteran's Assistance -

Ms. Powless reminded that their office is a flag drop off point if anyone has flags that are tattered or torn. She gave everyone a star with information on the back. She explained that people take the embroidered flags and make the stars and then bring them back for distribution

Health Department –

Ms. Binkley reported that the annual report for the Health Department has been published and posted on their website.

Environmental Management

Ms. Rasmus reported that she is grateful for the process in bringing the proposal for a new recycling center and compost facility through the committee. She said she has truly enjoyed the exchange of ideas from each & every member whether they were in support of the proposal or not. From here, the department will work towards increasing accessibility and expanding recycling services with the resources that they currently have. She said they would also look for ways they can generate additional revenue.

She drew attention to a handout about plastic bags and explained that a plastic bag tax has been in the news for the last couple of weeks and during his budget address, Governor Pritzker brought this up. In addition, both the Senate and House have introduced bills of their own. This is not the first year in which a bag tax has been introduced, but it certainly has generated a lot of discussion this year. It is estimated that the average American uses 300 plastic shopping bags per year. Governor Pritzker is estimating that a 5 cent bag tax will generate about \$20 million. Based on that projection, it appears that he is counting on the number of bags per person to be reduced to 36. Governor Pritzker wishes to utilize that revenue in the budget that he presented. In contrast, the Senate Bill, for 7 cents per bag and the House Bill for 10 cents per bag have ways of splitting up the revenue for such a tax. Both of these bills remit 3 cents from each bag to the counties. Per the bills, this revenue is to be used for specific recycling programs and services, primarily the collection of recycling bags, as well as containers like bottles and cans and household hazardous waste. So, if 36 bags per person were taxed, it would bring in \$108,000 to Macon County each year for the operation of those designated recycling programs because each the House Bill and the Senate Bill designate 3 cents per bag for the county. From here, Ms. Rasmus requested that these bills be tracked by the county and that the information be forwarded on to the Legislative Committee.

Ms. Zimmerman asked about Chicago and whether a reduction has been shown in their bag use. Ms. Rasmus explained that they have had their bag tax of 7 cents implemented since February, 2017 and they have seen a reduction, but Ms. Rasmus said she was not certain of what that number would be.

Chair Dudley asked if there was something in particular within the Environmental Management Department that the money would be earmarked for. Ms. Rasmus said it has to be used for recycling programs, but it is not specific. It goes to the county for recycling programs, but does not specify a certain person or department. It would be primarily for things that go in single stream recycling. So, that is both single use and more durable containers such as cups, bottles, bags, cardboard boxes and then they've thrown in household hazardous waste which is really important because most counties have no funding for that.

Mr. Gresham asked how the past Friday's event had gone. Ms. Rasmus explained that they had a pop-up electronics collection and had about 190 people come through. It went very well. The pop-up collections are learned about through social media, via the approximately 4,000 emails

that are sent out or word of mouth. People sign up pretty readily. This one did not completely fill up as Ms. Rasmus said she would have taken another 10 people or so, but she was really pleased with it.

Ms. Zimmerman asked about something she recently read about Amazon mailers gumming up the works the way the plastic bags do. She asked if they were referring to the envelopes with the plastic in the middle. Ms. Rasmus said Amazon has gone with plastic envelopes and some of them do have bubble wrap in them and some don't, but they are gumming up machines. Ms. Zimmerman asked if there is anywhere those can be taken to like they can the plastic bags. Ms. Rasmus explained that there are several places that take the plastic bags, but what they actually accept and do not accept is very difficult to know and is dependent on who they are working with at that time. Basically, what they want is clean plastic bags and that is it. The other films are recyclable, it is just that they not collected locally in single stream or by the grocery stores.

Regional Office of Education - no report

Mental Health –

Mr. Macken reported that the Mental Health Board has been conducting mental health needs identification activities forever. This is that triennial year and he said that they would be putting their focus on a future event to help identify the unmet needs for behavioral health which include intellectual development, disabilities, mental illness and substance use. That event is scheduled for March 12th at the Mount Zion Convention Center. He distributed flyers. The survey process has been completed and had 630 responses, which is a tremendous response, to the survey. If compared to people that attended the past all day events; there were 166 people at the last event. This is a significant increase in the number of people that actually helped identify the unmet needs. This year, in lieu of the all day event, it will start at 10 a.m. and go to about 11:45 a.m. The results of that survey will be reported. Then, at 1:00 p.m., a guest speaker, Kevin Hines who is in the less than 1% of the people who jumped off the Golden Gate Bridge and survived. While we have been really focused as a nation, suicide has become much more of an epidemic. Looking at statistics from 2014 – 2016, half or 25 of the states have had an increase of over 30%. Every state in the union has had an increase in suicide rates with the highest being about 60% in South Dakota to the lowest being about 6% in Delaware. We hear bits and pieces about this when celebrities commit suicide. It's on the news for a couple of weeks and then it goes away. This needs to be talked about more. The Board is helping getting more people trained in Mental Health First Aid. This is part of the awareness responsibility. So, Mr. Macken said they are bringing in someone that is very impactful. Only a handful of people actually survive jumping off that bridge. This man has made a life's mission of spreading hope and helping people get into recovery from mental illness and are thinking of committing suicide. He speaks all over the world and has been in two movies. One Netflix movie is called The Bridge and is about a group and organization that was founded by his father that was attempting to get the City of San Francisco to put a net under the bridge to stop the suicide attempts. Someone jumps off that bridge every 10 days. There have been over 2,000 that they know of, but they know the number is probably closer to 4,000 because of the tides and currents and they just don't find the people. It is a bad problem. The other movie is called Suicide, The Ripple Effect and Kevin Hines was the producer of that movie. They do a good job of pointing out what this problem is about. Mr. Macken said they are excited to have him

speak. People can sign up for the presentation of the data, to hear Kevin speak or for both at the Mental Health website (www.mcmhb.com). This is a 3 hour period of time which will be well worth the effort. It is free, so there is no cost except time. He said he hopes to have a large crowd.

Historical Museum - No report

U of I Extension No report

CITIZEN'S REMARKS –

Reed Sutman, 319 S. Woodale Ave, Decatur, IL 62522

Mr. Sutman explained that he had come to the Justice Committee meeting earlier that day to bring forward a concern about the Chairman's ability to keep items off the agenda if that is something he chooses to do even if the Board is not in favor of it. He said the Chairman had informed him in regard to the recycling center that there are budgetary concerns and that the recycling center has been delayed and that it is something that may possibly happen if the budget concerns are resolved. Mr. Sutman said he wants the recycling center to be built. It seems like a very good project, but most of all, he said he feels that sometime in the near future, it needs to go to a full vote of the County Board rather than being decided by a single individual. He said he is curious about what this committee can do to make sure that there is more effort on this front. Chair Dudley explained that the members of the committee do not respond to the citizen's remarks, but they will get back with him. He said that this committee (EEHW) has already voted on it and it passed 4-2. He said that they, as a committee, have done all they can do as far as moving it forward.

OLD BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS – none

Closed Session – None needed

NEXT MEETING Next regular meeting –3/28/19

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Little, seconded by Mr. Brown, the motion carried 6-0 and Chair Dudley adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Jeannie Durham, Macon County Board Office