

LAW & LEGAL

FEBRUARY 2, 2026

The Law & Legal Committee held its monthly meeting on Monday, February 2, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the McDonough County Courthouse, 3rd Floor, Law Library. Committee Members present included Committee Chair Joe Erlandson, Vice Chair Ken Durkin, Clayton Cook, Travis Hiel, and Terry Thompson. Other persons in attendance were Kyle Lester, Ric Smart, Deborah Cousins, Darcy Shinberger, Jim Percey, Sheriff Nick Petitgout, County Chair Eric Blakeley, and County Clerk Jeremy Benson. Members absent were Ryan Litchfield, Roger Ward, and Jack Lowderman.

Chair Erlandson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Review & Approve January, 2026 Minutes

Member Durkin moved with a second by Member Thompson to approve the minutes as submitted. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Waste Management Update

Kyle Lester gave the report. Due to the fee increases for waste dumping in Knox County landfill, some waste will be coming to McDonough County.

Tri-County Recycling

Report received and filed.

Veteran's Assistance and Van Report

Ric Smart gave the report. 9 Veterans were given assistance in January. Total assistance amounted to \$2,208.00. Ric and Jim Percey discussed a 2023 statute requiring a VAO (Veterans Assistance Officer) in the Veterans Assistance Commission office. McDonough County does not currently have a full-time Veterans Assistance Officer, as required by the statute. Ric and Jim also discussed the possibility of dissolving the commission. If the county's Veterans Assistance Commission was adopted through the VFW and the American Legion, the commission may be dissolved. A records search will be conducted to determine how the Veterans Assistance Commission was formed in McDonough County.

Sheriff's Report

Sheriff Nick Petitgout gave the report. The Mary Davis Home is closing. Costs will increase due to transporting individuals to further locations.

Assessor's Office Update

Assessor Deborah Cousins gave the report.

Claims Review and Approval

Member Thompson moved with a second by Member Hiel to approve the claims as submitted. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Other Items as Needed

Joe informed the committee that the new Tri-county agreement is still in the works, but progress is being made. A solid waste plan will also have to be made.

Eric Blakeley and Joe Erlandson attended a meeting in regards to wind, solar and other ordinances. Only zoned counties can have ordinances on energy storage. The new state statute will require the county to rework our current ordinance.

Executive Session

None.

Public Comment

None.

County Board Chair Comments

Eric Blakeley and CAD will talk about the new generator and elevator project for the final inspection.

Adjourn

Member Cook moved with a second by Member Durkin to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m. Motion carried on a voice vote.