

## **LAW & LEGAL**

### **January 6, 2025**

The Law & Legal Committee held its monthly meeting on Monday, January 6, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the McDonough County Courthouse, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Law Library. Committee Members present included Committee Chair Joe Erlandson, Vice Chair Ken Durkin, Clayton Cook, Ryan Litchfield, Terra Litchfield, Jack Lowderman, and Terry Thompson, Member Travis Hiel was absent. Other persons in attendance were Dave Schaab, Ric Smart, Deborah Cousins, Public Defender Scott Terry, Rick Stewart, Sheriff Nick Petitgout, County Chair Eric Blakeley, County Board Secretary Sara Kluthe, and County Clerk Jeremy Benson.

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

#### **Review & Approve December 9, 2024 Minutes**

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

#### **Waste Management Update**

Dave Schaab gave the report.

#### **Tri-County Recycling**

Report received and filed. County Chair Blakeley informed the Committee that he has talked to them and they discussed the need for a new contract. Blakeley suggested that paying a flat fee as opposed to paying based off of the population might be a good idea.

#### **Veteran's Assistance and Van Report**

Ric Smart gave the report. Eight Veterans were given assistance in December. Total assistance amounted to \$1,821.00. Smart informed the Committee that he recently lost six drivers and he has put an ad in the paper for replacements.

#### **Sheriff's Report**

Sheriff Nick Petitgout gave the report.

#### **Assessor's Office Update**

Assessor Deborah Cousins gave the report. Cousins discussed the various property tax exemptions available and provided details on requirements. County Chair Blakeley informed the Committee that Clarke Kelso has resigned from the Board of Review, Cousins also stated that we will need another replacement next year.

#### **Executive Session**

Member Durkin moved with a second by Member T. Litchfield to enter into Executive Session at 7:20 p.m. pursuant to Chapter 5, Illinois Compiled Statutes Section 120/2 c (1). Motion carried with a roll call vote of 7 yeas, 0 nays, 0 pass and 1 absent.

Member Durkin made a motion to exit Executive Session moved with a second by Member T. Litchfield at 7:58 p.m. with no action taken. Motion carried with a roll call vote of 7 yeas, 0 nays, 0 pass and 1 absent.

### **Approve Solar Ordinance**

A large discussion was held regarding solar projects that are already getting started, and at what point in the process would they be exempt from the fees. There are several solar companies that are under the impression that we do not have an ordinance, County Chair Blakeley stated that an email will be sent to those who have received the letter that states we do not have a Solar Ordinance. It was also discussed that a Code Administrator is required for the Ordinance and that the County Engineer serves as the Code Administrator. Due to the recent resignation of County Engineer Megan Crook, a discussion will be held with the interim County Engineer regarding the increased work load. A Code Administrator can also be hired out if the Interim Engineer is unable to take over this roll as well.

Member Thompson moved with a second by Member T. Litchfield to approve the Solar Ordinance and send it to full Board. Motion carried on a voice vote.

### **Discuss Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Ordinance**

County Chair Blakeley informed the Committee that he went to the Farm Bureau Agency to discuss the pending Solar Ordinance, and a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Ordinance. They have a new manager, she will talk to her boss and get back with him when she has more information. It was discussed that it would be a lot easier to start working with them and RWE now, as opposed to later. If the Solar Ordinance passes at the full Board meeting, Chair Erlandson and County Chair Blakeley will go talk to the City of Macomb.

### **Claims Review and Approval**

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

### **Other Items as Needed**

None.

### **Public Comment**

Member T. Litchfield discussed a solar farm that is to be built in an area that is within the 1.5 mile zoning buffer that surrounds the City of Macomb. She was not happy with the lack of notification from the City of Macomb.

### **County Board Chair Comments**

County Chair Blakeley informed the Committee that appointments for the MDH Board are on the full Board agenda for approval.

### **Adjourn**

Member T. Litchfield moved with a second by Member Thompson to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 p.m. Motion carried on a voice vote.