

**Kalamazoo County**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**January 4, 2006**

Present: Jeff Balkema, Fran Bell, Kathleen Buckham, Pat Krause, Mark Miller, Greg Nichols, Ann Nieuwenhuis, Margaret O'Brien, Dawn Potter-Williams, Jim Rutherford, Kyle Smith, John Taylor

Absent: Jeffrie Maddox

Environmental Health: Jim Drazo

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION	FOLLOW-UP
1. Citizens Comments	None		
2. Review of Minutes	Minutes from November 2, 2005 and December 5, 2005 were approved as submitted by Jim Rutherford, supported by Margaret O'Brien		
3. Review of Agenda	All in favor, no changes		
4. New Member Update	Pat Krause will be rejoining EHAC as member-at-large.		
5. Environmental Health Update	Jim R. reiterated the changes that have been taking place in the EH Bureau. The department is now using the new letterhead and business cards with the new department name on them (Health & Community Services Department). The EH Bureau has three divisions – the Planned Team, the Demand Team, and Household Hazardous Waste. HHW is still known as HHW, however the Planned Team has now become Food Service and Facilities Division and the Demand Team has become the Land, Water, Wastewater Division. Effective January 1 <sup>st</sup> , the fee schedule was revised and put into effect. There were no issues in getting this approved by the BOC, as most changes were cost of living, and the implementation of a few new fees associated with the Food Service & Facilities Division.	Sample of new letterhead & business cards were passed around for all to view.  A copy of the new fee schedule was distributed to all present.	
6. Agenda Items 2006	Jim R reviewed the list of Agenda items from 2005. The items on the list that were not dealt with (Purchasing Development Rights, Pollutions Prevention Regulation, Open Burning/Alternatives to yard waste, Brownfield Redevelopment Program, Introductory meeting of new Drain Commissioner) can be kept on list for upcoming year if committee so desires. One side of the CAFO issue was discussed in 2005. The committee may want to consider hearing the opposite side in 2006. Jim R. stated he would like to keep the EH Bureau Update Program on the list, and also noted that the HSD/EH Bureau Website Contents are currently being worked on and can be shown to the committee in February or March.		

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6. Agenda Items 2006	<p>Looking at the list for 2006, if you have additional items you would like to add to the agenda for 2006 please let Jim R. or Nancy know.</p> <p>Margaret O'Brien requested that the updates on the policy, how it's being implemented, the reporting of Meth labs, and how it's affecting the townships and cities be kept on the Agenda.</p> <p>Jim R. stated that it could be kept on as old business every month as long as is necessary.</p> <p>John T. inquired as to where the PDR group was meeting and the possibility of the EHAC committee getting together with them.</p> <p>Kathleen B. responded that there was not a PDR group, however there is a land use group that the committee may get together with. She offered to keep the committee up to date on the land use group.</p> <p>Jim R. suggested the committee contact Dale Shugars and see if they had someone they could send to give a presentation to the committee.</p> <p>Ann N. expressed an interest in alternative fuels. The ethanol plant is coming in fairly close to Kalamazoo, and if it is something with corn and soybeans, and there could be implications from a land use impact. The Corn Association may be interested in coming to talk to us.</p> <p>Margaret O'Brien inquired as to whether anyone had information on the new eco-village in Comstock. Jim Drazo mentioned that Sister Ginny Jones of Sisters of Nazareth was spearheading this development and has made presentations on it.</p> <p>Jim R. mentioned that another issue we would be looking at within the bureau in 2006 is the Sanitary Code, and updating it. It has not had a major revision since 1990. This will involve public hearings, drafts, going before the Board. A planning committee will have to be established including people from EHAC, installers, well drillers, people who are going to be impacted by the potential changes as a result of the rewrite. This will be a large undertaking, and will be a standing item on the agenda.</p>	<p>Jim R. to have a list of 2006 Agenda Items available at next meeting.</p>	
7. Meeting Schedule	<p>Jim R. shared results of survey. 100% participation in survey, however no clear-cut time choice. After discussion, of various times, group decided to reschedule meeting time from 3:30 pm on the first Wednesday of each month to 8:30 am on the first Wednesday of each month, effective with February 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.</p>	<p>Jim R to send out notice to all members.</p>	
8. Meth Update	<p>Jim R. updated the group on the Meth situation. Jim passed out the PowerPoint presentation he gave to the BOC, He also gave the presentation to REMAX Realtors, and will be presenting to GKAR on January 11<sup>th</sup>. He has made a request to Ron Commissaris to make a presentation to the township governing group, however that meeting has not be set yet. Correspondence was sent to all government municipalities letting them know the draft guidelines are on the front page of the county website, and that we have been granted approval for a public hearing on January 17<sup>th</sup>. We are soliciting as much support as possible.</p> <p>Margaret O'Brien mentioned that the Portage City Attorney is also reviewing the draft, not due to competition, but to make sure it doesn't create any problem or unintended consequences for their government and what they need to do.</p>		

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8. Meth Update	<p>She stated she shared with them that she didn't really see a conflict of interest or any negative consequences, and mentioned that the next Portage meeting is on January 10<sup>th</sup> if anyone wanted to discuss or share the issue before then just let her know.</p> <p>Ann N. contributed that Jeff Fink, the Co-Chair of the Meth Task Force has been in touch with City Managers regarding the public hearings as well, and her impression was that he didn't think there was opposition.</p> <p>Jim R. stated that he has written support from both Portage and Kalamazoo. He would like to get some more support from the townships. Fran Bell has suggested that the townships need to get a little more information, and some clarification on their concerns, especially re assurances that the county is not overstepping their bounds.</p> <p>Jim R. stated that at this point in time he does not see any other way to ensure that the clean up for these sites get accomplished. The County Sanitary Code gives us the enforcement ability to respond to these situations. The state is not going to do anything about this in the near future. The DEQ is cutting back on programs due to funding issues.</p> <p>Ann N. added that the Task Force is trying to get different people from different entities to come in and speak to the task force as to where they are at, and to give their perspective on this important issue. There are a lot of people who are coming to the task force and saying this is a problem, they need something done. At this point the state is not stepping up to the plate and doing something about this. Whether that should be the DEQ or not, someone needs to do something.</p> <p>Jim R commented that we need to look beyond the public health perspective, he receives calls from real estate agents, banks calling wanting to know what they should do with a piece of property, and whether or not it is safe to occupy. This ordinance would help resolve these issues. There are seven different nationally recognized standards for clean-up. Our regulations have been heavily influenced by the standards for the State of Colorado, which seem to be the strongest. If anyone is interested they can get more information from the internet by googling Colorado State or stop by Jim R's office for a list of all seven different regulations. There are business and community issues that go beyond public health concerns.</p> <p>John Taylor stated he had additional questions concerning the liability of the county for the standards and which ones to use. He subsequently spoke with Tom Canny, who told him that would not be an issue. He also inquired as to the DEQ's reaction to the county going ahead with their own standards.</p> <p>Jim R. told him he speaks with the DEQ on a weekly basis. He also stated that he can not see that they will come up with the funding that would be necessary to implement this state wide. Once mandated, they would have to fund the communities that get involved with it, otherwise it is an unfounded mandate. The state is cutting programs, and there is no staff for them to do that. They will act as consultants, along with the Department of Community Health, but they do not want to get involved in this. Program.</p> <p>Dawn Potter-Williams, inquired as to whether the DEQ would still be involved as to sending out the letters (which Alamo Township is currently receiving on busts) telling the township to clean up the properties. Jim R. responded that he has spoken with Township attorneys, advising them, that once they receive the letters, they should respond to the DEQ advising them that they are not participating in the program. The county would be the one</p>		

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8. Meth Update	<p>overseeing the program, condemning the property etc. The township would not have to deal with these issues.</p> <p>Ann N. mentioned that if the guidelines are in place, there may be federal monies in the form of grants to help offset the costs.</p> <p>Fran B. inquired as to the authority of the County to enforce this regulation.</p> <p>Pat K. responded that the authority comes from the Public Health Code, which gives the health department the authority to promulgate legislation such as this, it has been in there since 1978, it is not a new addition.</p>		
9. Chairperson & Vice-Chairperson Appointments	<p>Fran B and Kathleen B. have surveyed the members. Dawn Potter Williams indicated she would be willing to serve as Chair once again, and Margaret O'Brien indicated she would be willing to serve as Vice-Chair. At next month's meeting, anyone can make a nomination from the floor.</p>		
Members Comments	<p>Jim R. stated that time of sale/point of sale issues can be put on the agenda for an issue to discuss.</p> <p>Ann N. noted that the MSU Cooperative Extension Office has moved into the Nazareth Complex. She invited all to go up for a visit.</p> <p>Jim R. offered copies of the Kalamazoo County Growth Plan to all who were interested.</p>		