

**Kalamazoo County  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL  
August 2, 2006**

Present: Francis Bell, Kathleen Buckham, Pat Krause, Jeffrie Maddox, Greg Nichols, Ann Nieuwenhuis, Dawn Potter-Williams, Kyle Smith

Environmental Health: Jim Draze, Carolyn Hobbs Kreiger, Jim Rutherford

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION	FOLLOW-UP
1. Citizen Comments	None		
2. Review of Minutes	P. Krause moved that the word formulated be removed from the minutes under item 4, sixth sentence, currently reads, "The group has formulated organized as a LLC for financial reasons....", instead to be "The group has organized as a LLC..."	Correction made, minutes approved with change.	
3. Review of Agenda	Jim R. proposed adding discussion of the Environmental Health Mid Year Budget as item number 6 and follow with the CAFO presentation. Ann N. proposed also including a brief discussion on the upcoming mileage vote as item number 7.	Both proposals were seconded and approved to be included on the agenda.	
4. Emerald Ash Borer Update	Many calls have been received by Cooperative Extension, which has lead to the ability to promote diversification of tree types with individuals. The press coverage from the Gazette, local television and the radio has been very positive. The informational meeting at Milham Park generated a large turnout. An inquiry was made as to the availability of the mapping of ash trees. The Cities of Kalamazoo and Portage have done site confirmations. The MDA provides a broad overview of affected tree populations, but do not show actual areas or counts. Inquires can be referred to the website, and to Master Gardeners, who have been trained to assist with answering questions and disseminating information.		
5. Meth Update	The funding for the methamphetamine coordinator position has coalesced with funds coming from the Cities of Kalamazoo and Portage, an EPA grant, along with monies from the Kalamazoo County Substance Abuse group and from the Rotary Club.  An inquiry was made as to the status of the funding issue and	The suggestion was	

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	<p>attempts to obtain funding from foundation sources. Local foundations indicated they would be willing to assist with funding for this program and others if the county could address issues regarding the equal opportunity clauses currently in place. The county policy is an attempt in the right direction to allow access to any individual without any possible exclusion based on gender, race, etc. Arcus Foundation is very supportive of anything that puts everyone on a level playing field regardless of sexual orientation. Jim R. commented that he is of the understanding that the county is looking into changing the policies. It was noted that this is an item of interest to other foundations as well, and the county needs to act. It is not just the Arcus Foundation, the Kalamazoo Foundation and others are looking for changes as well, and this has an impact on funding sources the county can utilize. Fran mentioned that he has experienced an issue with regards to some school districts. Children should be able to go to school and feel safe being in school. Unfortunately many of the school districts have not developed a policy that does protect anybody from abuse for any particular reason. This is the crux of what the Arcus foundation is looking for. During a meeting with foundation officials they shared information with regarding their expectations and to the direction the foundation takes. The simple addition of a few words will open up a larger funding source for the county. The inclusion of the words sexual preference are the two words the Arcus Foundation and the Kalamazoo Foundation want added to the county equal opportunity clause. It was also brought to the attention of the committee that this is also what the Community Foundation wants added. Human Resources is in favor of this change, along with the Substance Abuse Office.</p> <p>We are able to hire a person for a .9 FTE position. This position should be up and running approximately September 1<sup>st</sup>. There has been money set aside in the MDCH fiscal year budget of \$175,000.00 to go to local health departments. It is anticipated that Kalamazoo County should be able to garner a portion of this money as well. The meth bust numbers have dropped, this may possibly be attributed to the moving of necessary products for production being put behind the counters of pharmacies.</p>	<p>made for the committee to send a letter to Dale Hein or county administration relaying the contents of the meeting with the Arcus Foundation, inquire as to where the county stands on the issue, and that we support the initiative because it will open up additional potential funding sources.</p>	

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	<p>However, there are still a numerous telephone calls relating to previous busts. The County Attorney, has indicated the county is interested in going back to all of the 150 homes in the county that have had exposure via meth lab busts and insure that they are cleaned up and in compliance. We have received some remediation plans of varying quality for a few homes that have experienced busts. Some have been fantastic; others are in need of improvement. Homeowners are responsible for the testing and clean up, which will be done by local contractors. The County's role is strictly regulatory. The State of Michigan has requested a copy of our county regulations. They are looking at using the guidelines as a starting point for state regulations.</p>		
<p>6. Environmental Health Budget Mid Year</p>	<p>There has been a considerable decrease in the number of permits issued, of approximately 35%. Also the number of housing starts has had a dramatic decrease. This may be a result of the Kalamazoo Promise, as most new housing subdivisions seem to be concentrated where municipal services are available, particularly in the City of Kalamazoo. The department is looking at a \$50,000 difference, which will have to be addressed.</p>		
<p>7. Mileage Proposal on Ballot</p>	<p>Reminder for everyone to vote next Tuesday, August 8<sup>th</sup>. This is an important ballot issue. The building of a new juvenile home is on it. If you want to see the current juvenile home, or talk with personnel there, they will be happy to assist.</p>		
<p>8. CAFO Presentation</p>	<p>Bill Bickert is with Cooperative Extension Service at Michigan State University since 1972, in dairy farming and in profitability area, and manure management. Natalie Rector is also with the Cooperative Extension Service at Michigan State University. Her area of expertise is field crops and new ways to work with manure. Natalie handed out copies of the current regulations to provide more in-depth details. The presentation disseminated information regarding current regulations, and how to approach the issue on a local and state level. The Department of Environmental Quality currently has three permits available in the state for livestock farms. They are good for five years. These first permits that were issued are good until July of 2007. Currently there are federal CAFO regulations out for public comment, so things may be changing, but the future permits in Michigan will be very similar to what is currently in the handouts</p>		

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	<p>provided. 20 years ago, Michigan began with Right to Farm Guidelines. This was a voluntary program that was complaint driven. Smaller farms were not regulated unless a complaint was received, and it was found that they were not following the right to farm guidelines. The large CAFO's now are officially regulated, however, all farms can be put in this category and be regulated. The EPA has categorized a CAFO as someone who is confining and feeding animals for over 45 days in any twelve-month period. It doesn't matter what size you are. The terminology has changed to make a large CAFO as any farm have 750 dairy cows, 2500 pigs over 55 lbs etc. New CAFO's go under a public hearing. Currently the MDA and the DEQ are involved in the regulation and inspections of CAFO'S. The question arose as the how the DEQ was going to inspect every farm and make sure they are in compliance. If this program is going to be self policed, then will it be complaint driven, and how a citizen can impact the regulations being enforced. There may need to be procedural changes as to how the problems can be dealt with, how DEQ handles the CAFO's that are problematic. We need to understand the linkage between the environment, the quality of life, and the cost of food, and the state economy. A task force needs to be implemented at the state level. Ideally it would be a three-tiered task force based on sound science, effective policies and regulations, and implementation of new technology. The current sources of complaints are odors and run-off into streams and wetlands. Some issues that can be addressed are the number of animals per acre, and the implementation of a comprehensive manure management plan on farms.</p>		
9. Members Comments	None		