

Animal Abuse Reported In Metcalf –

METCALF, IL. ([ECWd](#)) –

On January 11, 2014, the Edgar County Sheriff's Office was called to report possible animal abuse in Metcalf, Illinois. The report was made by the property owner.

The owner had entered into an owner financed sale of the house to "The former residents", who had apparently decided to move out without notifying anyone, and leaving their excess animals without food, water, or heat.

Neighbors had noticed water coming out of the house and called the owner. On further investigation, they found dead animals and a basement with almost 5 feet of water in it. This was a result of them moving without having the water shut off, causing the pipes to burst.

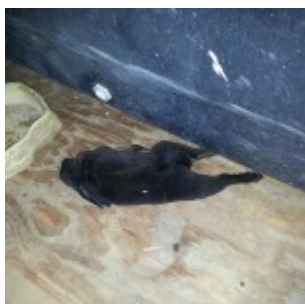
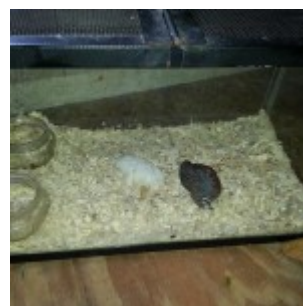
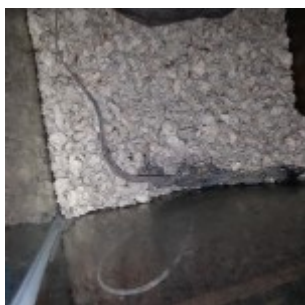
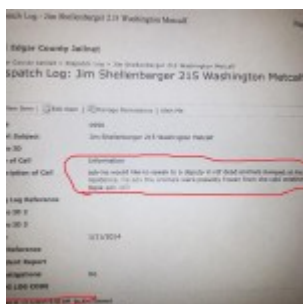
Abused-dead animals in Metcalf

- The 2 birds were in aquariums, nothing to perch on, no bird cage.
- The 5-6 ft snake is approximate in size. The 6 inches of tail was under the bowl and all meat and skin already gone leaving only the bone structure of vertebrae and tail. It must have been at least 10 inches in circumference in the center of the body.
- One rabbit was outside the large tub laying on its belly.
- The other rabbit was still in the tub between the side of tub and what looked like a litter box.
- A large lizard type reptile was in an aquarium barely big enough to house him and with no room to move around.
- The small lizard or snake was so far into decomposing that it was unsure what it actually was.

The Edgar County Animal Control officer was dispatched to the scene to assist in the clean-up of the dead animals.

Sheriff Dept. Call Here...
<http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/MetcalfAnimal911Call.mp3>

It is unclear what, if anything, the State's Attorney will do about this alleged animal abuse.



Docket #: 2011-1110: Dept of Ag re: Humane Association

The Illinois Department of Agriculture has finalized its report on the stolen dogs from a few months ago.

It is clear from this report that:

- Mel Elston knew where the dogs were taken.
- Mel Elston failed to get the dog scanned for a chip; funny that she followed the 7 day rule of Animal Control, but decided not to follow their scanning rule. She also failed to notify Animal Control that the dogs were “found”.
- Department of Agriculture informed her that she did not have the authority to pick up strays – that’s the job of Animal Control.
- Mel Elston knew who adopted the dogs and chose not to return them to the rightful owner.
- Department of Agriculture recommended the Humane Association be cited for failure to follow procedure and to take steps to return the dogs to the rightful owner.

To date the Edgar County Humane Association has refused to return the dogs to their owner, which now forces the owner to contemplate filing a civil suit.

One thing to keep in mind after this investigation – Mel Elston (Edgar County Humane Association), DOES NOT have the authority to take dogs, stray or not, and they certainly cannot make the decision on whether an owner gets their dogs

back – although they effectively did that in this case. There are words for people that do things like this, but I choose to keep the dirty language off of this website.

The final report can be viewed here: [ILDeptAg](#)

[Dogs again...](#)

The following are excerpts from an article in the Olney Daily Mail in Richland County showing the mentality of their county board – and another link in the disappearing dogs story. Stay with us, we'll eventually get to the bottom of it all.

This is PUBLIC information and the board thinks that they can keep it to themselves.

If there is no hidden agenda, release the info.

Who do you think you are?

<http://www.olneydailymail.com/news/x363498391/Richland-County-Board-talks-Animal-Control-Letter-to-county-board-members-makes-some-people-barking-mad>

Board Member Melinda Hunt said the board had copies of a letter written by Mike Dawson, who also writes an animal column for the Daily Mail, raising questions about where the animals at the pound are taken, also alluding to questions about whether or not animals there are being sold.

Hunt said the board was supplied information about where the animals are taken. Animal Control officer Sandy Millman said later in the meeting the animals are taken to a network of animal rescues and humane societies in the northern part of the state.

Hunt said she also spoke with Millman, Dawson and State's Attorney David Hyde, and ultimately felt it was an issue between them. She also said Hyde thought the list of places to which the animals are taken should not be made public now due to the ramifications that the entities may face.

The board then heard from Richard Eckiss, who said he is responsible for delivering animals and bringing back feed.

Eckiss said the board has a list of kennels, addresses and phone numbers, but if the information is mishandled it could be detrimental to the whole program and the pound could go back to its formerly high rate of euthanasia. He said that if the places were made public, they could begin getting calls from people here and they may decide not to take the county's animals. "These people will not tolerate being harassed," he said.

There was also this story in Disclosure Magazine Online:

<http://www.disclosurenewsonline.com/2011/11/18/we-can-only-hope-this-is-for-real>

We have an update on the stolen Bassetts from Edgar County – the Illinois Department of Agriculture is still investigating this case. We will be notified as soon as the investigation is complete.

Illegal Animal Control Funds Transfers?

Does the County Board think that just because they make a resolution it makes it legal?

Below is information on potential illegal transfers of funds from Animal Control to the county general fund.

This happened at a county board meeting in September 2011.

It has come to my attention that the Edgar County Board has, in September of this year, transferred funds in the amount of **\$10,000** from the "Animal Control Rabies Fund".

A. I believe this to be a violation of the Animal Control Act for the two following reasons:

1. It's not the first Monday in March – the only date in which transfers are authorized.

2. Transferring to the General Fund will not put the money to use for **"other costs of the program as set forth in the Animal Control Act"**.

3. The county has no ordinance (that can be located) establishing a schedule for damages reflecting the current market value.

B. It has also come to my attention that the Edgar County Board has transferred funds in the amount of **\$5000** from the "Dog Fund", which I think would be this Pet Population Control Fund stated below.

(510 ILCS 92/45)

Sec. 45. Pet Population Control Fund. The Pet Population Control Fund is established as a special fund in the State treasury. The moneys generated from the public safety fines collected as provided in the Animal Control Act, from Pet Friendly license plates under Section 3-653 of the Illinois Vehicle Code, from Section 507EE of the Illinois Income Tax Act, and from voluntary contributions **must be kept in the Fund and**

shall be used only to sterilize and vaccinate dogs and cats in this State pursuant to the program, to promote the sterilization program, to educate the public about the importance of spaying and neutering, and for reasonable administrative and personnel costs related to the Fund.

(Source: P.A. 94-639, eff. 8-22-05.)

Animal Control Act:

The County Treasurer shall, **on the first Monday in March of each calendar year**, pay to the owner of the animals or poultry the amount of damages to which he or she is entitled. The county board, **by ordinance**, shall establish a schedule for damages reflecting the current market value.

If there are funds in excess of amounts paid for such claims for damage in that portion of the Animal Control Fund set aside for this purpose, **this excess shall be used for other costs of the program as set forth in this Act.**

(Source: P.A. 93-548, eff. 8-19-03.)

<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=1704&ChapterID=41>

Email response I received from the treasurer when I questioned the transfers:

The transfers were as follows:

Animal Control Rabies Fund #814 to General Fund in the amount of \$10,000.00

Dog Fund #813 to General Fund in the amount of \$5,000.00.

The board authorized it by resolution is the only way I know to answer the "by what authority".

As to defining "other costs,etc." , I do not know the Board's interpretation of the Act or the justification/intent of the transferred monies.

Thanks,

When I talked to Mark Earnst, State Veterinarian, Bureau of

Animal health and Welfare,

Illinois Department Of Agriculture about these transfers, he stated his opinion that transfers

of these funds into the county general fund were not lawfull according to the Animal Welfare Act,

Animal Control Act, and the Humane Care for Animals Act.

The only remaining question is what do we do about it?

Stolen Dogs?

This story is becoming all too common in Paris and Edgar County, as a matter of fact is has become a common occurrence in Richland and Crawford Counties also. This organization has gone completely off the deep end and the sad thing is that they think they can keep getting by with illegally taking peoples dogs.

This story, and more like it that will follow in the next few days, will make you ask this simple question – **Why** would the Animal Control Board even consider contracting with this particular not-for-profit organization (or anyone associated with it) for care and control of dogs in Edgar County?

If anyone knows of other cases of stolen dogs, please drop us an [email](#)!

Remember: **Edgar County Animal Shelter** – is an entity of the Edgar County Government and **DOES NOT operate a webpage or a facebook page**, etc.

There are not-for-profit groups in the county that are trying to blur the lines and present the illusion that they are the Edgar County Animal Shelter when, in fact, they are not.

Keep in mind that the **Edgar County Humane Association**, The Edgar County Homeless Pets, or any other Humane or Rescue Organization in Paris and Edgar County **DOES NOT have the authority step onto your property or to take control of your dog without your permission. They cannot fine you either, that is for the Animal Control Officer to do.**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines “stealing” as theft of the dog, or using **threats** or **intimidation** to take a dog away from the owner.

The Illinois Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Animal Health and Welfare issues licenses and also **investigates formal complaints**. The phone number to file a formal complaint is 217-524-3006. It must be a first-hand complaint (the owner of the stolen dog) for them to take action.

Now for the first story:

After talking to the owners of these dogs:

A beagle and a basset (with a chip) were **taken from a driveway** in south eastern Edgar County, right off of the Lower Terre Haute Road, on approx. Aug 29, 2011.

The owners immediately took an ad out in the Terre Haute Tribune (since they live so close to Indiana) and nobody called about the dog. Then, while searching online, they happened to find a craigslist ad (Aug 31) that had the basset up for adoption by Judy @ 217-465-8727. The pictures are also up on “edgar county homeless pets” facebook page.

Phone call after phone call revealed lie after lie about how the dogs were found, where they were taken to, and the date they were adopted out.

-Val (also works at Wal-Mart) told her the Animal Control Warden scanned it – how could he scan it when it was never taken to the county shelter?

-Mel Elston told her the dog was not scanned for a chip and called the owner an irresponsible pet owner.

-There are many more lies, but I think you get the point by now.

Keep in mind, that the “re-homing fee” to adopt a dog is usually \$150.00

If anyone knows the location of these dogs, please let us know.



The second story:

Will come in a few days and is about a litter of Pug puppies stolen out of a fenced yard.

Intimidation? How low will they go?

After attending an [Animal Control meeting](#) and a [District 95 School Board](#) meeting, three people – two BoE board members and another “prominant” (term used loosely) person, contacted my employers and told them that I should not be attending “their” meetings.

After attending an [Animal Control meeting](#) at a later date (Oct 3, 2011) , another phone call was made to my employer informing them that I was in attendance at the meeting and that they were “concerned” that I might get violent. Please watch that video to see if you can detect any hint of “violence”. This was yet another tactic to keep people, that don’t agree with them, away from these meetings. This type of intimidation is uncalled for and is illegal.

These are the types of people (and the organizations they represent) that are allowed to volunteer at the shelter.

I know that the Animal Control board members did not make the call, so watch the videos ([animal control in particular](#)) and make your own educated guess.

Below is the video from the short Animal Control meeting on Oct 5, 2011.

Animal Control Meeting Oct 3, 2011

Below is the Edgar County Animal Shelter committee meeting video from Oct 3, 2011. Below that is the proposal made by Terry Elston. So, if your taxes for owning a dog increase, make sure you give him a call to say "thank you".

Proposal made by Terry Elston:

Edgar County Quick Facts

1. Approximately 1,000 dogs registered
2. 1,800 (70%) spayed/or neutered. 1,100 (88%) intact
3. Approximately 700 dogs (18%) are registered, but have not paid registration fees for 2011.
4. Estimating that approximately 700 dogs have never been registered in county that should be registered
5. 95% of dogs in the shelter and in foster homes have not been spayed/or neutered. Intact dogs are the problem.
6. Payroll 2009 \$44,887 = (1 full time employee)
 Payroll 2011 \$41,586 = (1 fulltime, 1 part time employee) Bob \$15,281 Larry \$14,565
 You collected \$41,179 in registration and fee money in 2008. This topped 2011, you are on time for \$14,000 - \$5,444 less in revenue = a direct result from reducing staffing and payroll.
7. Animal Control Fund transfer to General Fund: 2009-\$19,000, 2010 - \$24,180, 2011-\$29,800 (since 2009 = \$29,470)

We Propose:

1. Raising intact fee from \$20 to \$35

$$500 \times 15 = \$7,500 \text{ added revenue}$$

2. With 2 fulltime employees they can make phone calls to 700 citizens who have not paid - anticipate 80% will pay -

$$400 \times 18 = \$7,200$$

$$150 \times 35 = \$5,250$$

$$150 \times 15 = \$2,250 \text{ -- pet population fund}$$

$$\$14,700 \text{ added revenue}$$

\$8 fee for spayed/or neutered
 \$35 fee for intact dogs of which \$10 goes to pet population fund

3. With 2 full time employees they can step up the enforcement of dogs not registered - expect 700 more dogs to be seen bringing total to 1,400 dogs.

$$50\% spayed/neutered 50% intact*$$

$$700 \times 15 = \$10,500$$

$$700 \times 18 = \$12,600$$

$$700 \times 10 = \$7,000 \text{ -- pet population fund}$$

$$\$20,100 \text{ added revenue}$$

\$8 fee for spayed/or neutered

\$35 fee for intact dogs of which

\$10 goes to pet population fund

*Assuming a higher percent of dogs intact that have never been registered.

4. Late fee of \$3 on late payment of registration after 30 days -- estimate 100 (20%) will be late.

\$3 x 750 = \$2,250 Added Revenue

5. With two full time employees - increase fines collected back to \$500 - 2007 level of \$17,000 vs. 2010 level of \$4,500

\$1,000 Added Revenue

6. County takes over adoption procedure with dogs in shelters and collects revenue - can use voucher program -

Estimate profit of \$60 per dog (adoption amount \$250 per dog adoption fee) x \$40 (20 dogs/month) = \$10,000 Added Revenue

County Revenue

Line 1 = \$14,000

Line 2 = \$3,234

\$1,000

Line 3 = \$2,850

\$8,750

Line 4 = \$2,340

Line 5 = \$3,000

Line 6 = \$25,600

\$52,700

Total Increase in Revenue

Net Registration Fund

\$1,570

\$1,000

\$2,570

Any business in Edge County would jump at the chance to hire a part-time positioned employee to a full-time employee with benefits - it means increasing overall revenue by over \$50,000 per year. In addition, doing so would allow more hours at the shelter and also allowing for flexibility with sick days, vacations, terminations, or someone leaving the job to pursue another opportunity. This is a field related position - 40 hour work week.

Our proposal -

Each employee will work 37.5 hours, (see sample work schedule) with 1.5 hours per week built in for after-hour calls. The 1.5 hour lunch would be staggered between the employees so that the shelter is always open during working hours. The following week, the work schedule can flip - thus giving the employees latitude to work out schedules to meet their personal needs. Each employee will work every other Saturday.

Example of Employee Work Schedule:

Employee 1

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
8:30am - 4pm	8:30am - 4pm	8:30am - 4pm	8:30am - 4pm	8:30am - 4pm	1.5 On Call hours

Employee 2

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
8:30am - 4pm	8:30am - 4pm	8:30am - 4pm	9:30am - 4pm	9:30am - 4pm	9am - 12:30pm	1.5 On Call hours

Good News!

The proposal allows the shelter to better serve our community and its animals.

The shelter goes from being open a mere 35 hours per week while being closed for lunch, to 41.5 hours per week while being open during lunch hours and open Saturdays.

This means that the shelter will be open 666 hours more to serve the taxpayers of Edge County - the equivalent of 4 1/2 months more than the current 35 hour schedule and will increase revenue to the County over \$50,000. A WIN WIN!!

The Shelter would now be open:

- Monday/Wednesday/Friday = 8:30am to 4pm
- Tuesday/Thursday = 8:30am to 4pm
- Saturday = 9am to 12:30pm

Animal Control Meeting 9-12-2011

Video from the Edgar County Animal Shelter meeting.