

Record of the Proceedings of the Governing Body

SPECIAL MEETING

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October 30, 2024

SPECIAL MEETING:

The La Cygne City Council met on Wednesday, October 30, 2024 at the La Cygne Community Building. Council Members present were: Thomas Capp; David Brenneman; Ed Smith; Jerome Mitzner, Keith Stoker (left at 7:38pm); and Mayor Debra Wilson.

Others in attendance included, but not limited to: City Clerk (CC) Jodi Wade; Police Chief Zachary Mathies; Linn County Newspaper, Tony Furse; Linn County Journal, Roger Sims.

CALL SPECIAL MEETING TO ORDER (6:30 P.M.)

Pledge of Allegiance – Mayor Debra Wilson

MAYOR COMMENTS:

Mayor Wilson welcomed the patrons in attendance and reminded everyone of the process for town hall meetings. The council called for a town hall meeting to allow the community an opportunity to discuss the modified regulations the council is considering for keeping chickens on personal property.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR:

Nikki Hale had reviewed the proposed regulations and shared her insight on raising chickens. Nikki had concerns regarding the established size for the coop. Nikki shared information pertaining to the square footage necessary for various breeds of chickens. Nikki asked the council if they would allow the property owner to determine the coop size based upon the sizes of the chicken and to consider allowing roosters.

Mellie Smith addressed her concerns with the regulations to include: allowing only chickens; limiting it to only 5 chickens (current regs allow a property owner to have 5 dogs with no limitation on the size of their property); cities larger than La Cygne allow 10 chickens. Mellie expressed her rights as a property owner and the role of the governing body in determining the use of personal property. Mellie stated she understood the governing body must be sure the actions of one property are not affecting the abutting (neighboring) property. Mellie shared her knowledge of the chicken species expressing points of fact (e.g. chickens are flock animals, they are prey animals, 3 chickens is the minimum amount to have to allow them to survive in good health). Mellie stated the expense for the coop and feed and asked if the council would consider allowing neighbors to coop together to share the cost.

Mayor Wilson expressed the importance when building regulation to not create more expense upon the city. The governing body must consider the best interests for the entire community. Points brought forth of concern included: chickens at large; increase in predator; odor nuisance from chicken manure; complaints of noise from the chickens. Council Member Mitzner stated "we do the rules for those who choose not to follow the rules". He followed up with "starting too big too fast will cause resistance".

Council Members shared comments received through discussion with patrons. Council Member Brenneman stated his neighbors did not realize there were limitations on the keeping of chickens. Council Member Mitzner stated the only negative comments about keeping chickens were on roosters.

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Mayor Wilson facilitated the discussion to focus on the number of chickens and the size of the coop. Nikki Hale and Mellie Smith suggested 5 chickens for ½ acre or less of land and 10-16 chickens allowed for those with over ½ acre of land. In regards to the coop sizes, Mellie and Nikki suggested 2-3 sq ft. for Bantam and 5-8 sq ft for larger chickens. Nikki asked again about Roosters and stated without rooster the need to cycle chickens which means having more helps with that matter. Mellie was of the opinion to all have the number of chickens based on the lot size which in turn would establish the coop size.

Council Member Mitzner had reviewed the parcel map and said the smallest lots in La Cygne were approximately 5,000 square feet. He suggested one chicken per 1,000 sq ft with a cap of 20 chickens. He shared his lot is 26,000 sq ft which would amount to 26 chickens but he would only be allowed 20 due to the cap. Council Member Smith stated he liked the sliding scale.

Next the conversation alluded to size of the coop and run. Discussion was held regarding information pertaining to the amount of space needed for chickens. The council proposed some minimum sizes to include: 4 sq ft per chicken for the coop; 10 sq ft per chicken for the run; and 3 sq ft per chicken for the tractor.

Most of the council was still in favor of no roosters allowed.

Council Member Mitzner and Police Chief Mathies proceeded with a discussion concerning baby chicks and chickens in the house. Concerns regarding fire hazards related to incubators and heat lamps in the home was discussed.

Police Chief Mathies will make the requested modifications to the draft Article 3. Keeping Chickens to present at the next council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

❖ Motion

Council Member Capp moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Council Member Smith, voted on, passed 4-0. 8:04p.m.

I, _____ La Cygne City Clerk, do hereby declare
(Jodi Wade) the above to be true and correct, to the best of my knowledge, and do hereby subscribe my name on this 30th day of October 2024.