Good evening,

One of my neighbors, Tami Leckliter, will be speaking at a city council meeting on July 13th regarding backyard chickens. **I would like to support Tami and encourage the city of Olathe to amend its animal regulations (ordinance 18.50.030) in regards to for backyard chickens. Please ALLOW families to have a small number of backyard hens without extensive application procedures or large fees.** I have attached a few documents to this e-mail regarding health, safety, and how similar cities have handled backyard chickens.

Under the current ordinance, residents on 3 acres or less pay a $375 fee to own chickens (up to four hens). There are also many application steps required, including: sending letters of intent to approximately 60 closest neighbors, drafting a detailed yard diagram and sending it to approximately 20 neighbors, posting a zoning sign in the front yard, and holding a neighborhood meeting to discuss chicken concerns.

*In comparison, Olathe residents who would like to adopt a spayed/neutered dog or cat pay a $10 license fee and fill out an online form. A "Dangerous Dog License" is $150, which is less than half the chicken permit fee.*

Prairie Village recently voted 8-4 in favor of taking steps towards allowing residents to own backyard chickens. Mission, Roeland Park, and Overland Park also allow backyard chickens, within certain guidelines.

Health concerns are of course legitimate, and the CDC has an entire section on their website dedicated to backyard poultry. They have simple ways for maintaining, "healthy poultry, healthy people" when raising backyard poultry. One of the documents I attached is from their "healthy people" page. [https://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pets/farm-animals/backyard-poultry.html](https://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pets/farm-animals/backyard-poultry.html)

I’m definitely not qualified to write new policies, but here are two examples of how an updated to ordinance 18.50.030 would better serve neighbors like Tami:

**IDEA 1:** Remove the word "chickens" from the "farm animal" category in ordinance 18.50.030B. Add "hens" or "female chickens" to the "pets" category. This would allow households to include female chickens in their 4-animal "pet" total.

**OR**

**IDEA 2.** Keep chickens in the "farm animal" category, but add the following amendment under the "where/how permitted" column: "Residents allowed up to four female backyard chickens without a special permit."

++Chickens would still be subject to all current noise, nuisance, stray animal, and coop rules, as well as all animal rules/guidelines under Title 8 of the Municipal Code. For the safety of both animals and people, it may be advisable to add a short addendum to Title 8 requiring owners to follow CDC guidelines for backyard poultry.

I do think regulations are a good idea, just as there are regulations for dogs and cats in Olathe. Which is why we are asking the council to only amend the fees and procedures, not any safety guidelines. We do not want any disease-spreading giant egg farms in our neighborhood any more than the next person! There are studies showing that unregulated backyard chickens can lead to a health risk. However, very small flocks, properly housed, are no more dangerous than dogs, cats, or other backyard pets. Interestingly, the science even shows, "Making sure that we have the right to small flocks of backyard chickens is a way to protect ourselves and our communities from the diseases that proliferate in large scale commercial operations where tens of thousands of birds are concentrated together in a very small space."* An article from American Veterinarian even reports that chickens can repel malaria-causing mosquitoes.**


I have attached the guidelines adopted by Larimer county in Colorado regarding backyard chickens. It's a similar demographic and similar neighborhoods to ours. They distinguish the difference between "backyard chickens" and "commercial poultry farm" and have clearly defined rules for both. Neighborhoods such as ours would allow backyard chickens, but not commercial poultry farms. Also, backyard chickens do NOT require all the special fees and application procedures that a commercial poultry farm would in Larimer county.

I am more than happy to discuss poultry concerns regarding smell, disease, noise etc. I'm always available via Zoom, and could potentially meet in-person as well.

Thank you,
Lynnora Stary
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