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(Neb.)-Chadron City Council Discusses More Particulars Of Chickens In Town  [Listen](#)



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 09/11/2013 09:55 AM

(CHADRON)-The reality of chickens legally living Chadron city limits is another step closer this week. At the Chadron city council meeting Monday night, the council spent a considerable amount of time listening to residents' concerns and voicing their own opinions over whether or not to allow chickens within city limits, and if so, which rules should apply, as proposed by the city's planning commission. All the residents who voiced their thoughts at the meeting were in favor of allowing the feathered critters. Some cited the benefit of farm fresh eggs, others the opportunity for their children to take an active role outdoors and learn responsibility with the animals either through 4-H, Future Farmers of America (FFA), or just as having them as a pet.

Police chief Tim Lordino expressed that he did not feel that allowing chickens within city limits would pose much of a problem in terms of extra work for law enforcement or additional animal control. He said current animal ordinances could be altered to add chickens relatively easily and that most people will probably not choose to have chickens in their backyards anyway.

Most council members mentioned that they had been approached by people on both sides of the fence when it comes to chickens in town. Council member Bill Barth said he had received both positive and concerned opinions from citizens. Council member Paris Fisher said he felt that with regulations in place, chickens could be a real benefit to residents who choose to responsibly own them. Council member John Gamby shared that he thinks the city often puts too many restrictions and regulations on property owners. He mentioned a recent study that shows 60 percent of area FFA members live in town, and as an animal and agricultural friendly community, he felt individuals who want chickens should be able them keep them.

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As for additional regulations, Gamby took a laid-back approach, saying animal ordinances should be enough if needed.

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Gamby said he would go so far as to say that if someone has room to keep a family cow in town, he wouldn't have a problem with that either. He said he remembered a time when city residents utilized a community pasture and took their cows home in the evening for milking. He said he realizes that this probably wouldn't work now due to traffic and other issues, but he did issue a reminder those in attendance that this is Northwest Nebraska and not downtown Los Angeles.

Vice mayor Levi Grant shared that he has mixed feelings regarding chickens in town. He said he lives in town so he doesn't have to live like he's in the country, and that residents shouldn't have to fight their neighbors for their piece of serenity. He says individuals have approached him with legitimate worries.

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Grant says he feels a bit conflicted, however, because he does feel that property owners even in town have certain rights.

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In the end, Grant explains that he and the other council members agreed that revisiting each permit on a yearly basis was probably the best way to go.

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In addition to agreeing that an annual permit might be the best way to go, the council also discussed the maximum number of chickens per property, proximity of chicken coops to property lines, and size of properties. The planning commission will take the council's suggestions and make additional revisions the Land Development Regulations before bringing it back to the council again.

The council had previously held a public hearing at their August 19th meeting to consider an amendment to the zoning regulations after a Chadron resident had expressed interest in changes being made to it allowing her to keep her chickens on her property within city limits. The council had handed it off to the planning commission for the necessary revisions.

Also at the meeting this week, budget discussions continued as the council works to finish up work on the budget for upcoming Fiscal Year 2013-2014. The council felt they were far enough along on it to cancel the special meeting they had scheduled this week, but will still plan on meeting next Monday, September 16th. The meeting will start at 6:00 p.m. and will address several items including the budget, discussion on a city employee salary increase for pensions, etc. The budget has to be finalized by Friday, September 20th, hence the need for a special meeting.

(Questions? Comments? E-mail news@chadrad.com.)

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