

CITY OF TECUMSEH
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION
OCTOBER 6, 2014
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:30 P.M.

Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order.

Roll call was taken as follows:

Present: Mayor Johnson, Council members Baker, Naugle, Philo, VanAlstine, Wimple and Wright.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager Kevin Welch, City Clerk Mary Feight and City Attorney Scott Baker.

Motion VanAlstine and seconded Wimple, to accept the October 6, 2014 Study Session agenda.

During the public comment opportunity Lee Walsh of 606 W. Pottawatamie thanked Council for the study session to allow citizens the opportunity voice their opinions of allowing chickens within the City. Walsh reported that she was not in favor of an internal policy as suggested by staff. Remarking that an actual chicken ordinance was needed which could spell out the rights and responsibilities of the chicken owner, Furthermore, as a public record with structured guidelines an ordinance would avoid having to seek permission. Walsh also noted that items suggested by staff for a policy were too restrictive such as requiring inspections and neighbor approval. In conclusion Walsh suggested that Council review the Raisin Township Ordinance for guidelines.

Gary Fox of 114 E. Pottawatamie, Lee Ann Tripp of 4980 E. Monroe Rd. (within city limits), Jennie Bowman of 301 E. Chicago Blvd., Jessica Whitehouse of 128 Brown St. and Anne Walker of 109 S. Union St., all spoke in support of allowing chickens within the city. Vicki White of 505 Hickory Ridge and Orien Clayton of 517 Hickory Ridge expressed opposition of a potential chicken ordinance. During the discussion period comments included concerns with the proposed ordinance, consider requiring a certain amount of land for the chickens, learning opportunity for children, concerns of the effect on the value of homes and resale potential, smell, would attract rodents and raccoons, noise issues, proposed ordinance should be enforceable, include neighbor approval and require periodic inspections.

Manager Welch explained the study session was being held to discuss suggestions in his report and allow Council to provide direction to city staff. The Manager stated that no official decision would be made this evening. He reported that our current ordinance allows the Manager to approve farm animals. Currently the city has a policy for Potbelly pigs which is working well and suggested a similar policy could be designed for chickens. Noting it would be easier to change a policy than an ordinance.

Council member Wimple thanked guests for coming to the meeting and expressing their opinions. Mayor Johnson expressed concern that if allow chickens it would open the door for other animals. Council members VanAlstine and Wimple expressed that they were in favor of a policy. After a lengthy discussion, Council agreed that they needed time to review the materials and another study session before making any decisions.

Manager Welch reviewed the information he provided to Council on the restrictions of office use. He explained that if Council chose to have office restrictions an ordinance would need to be

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adopted. Noting that there are several levels of restrictions to consider such as; would a grandfather clause be included or would office space be determined by a percentage rate. Due to the limited time left for the study session, Kevin offered to have another study session to discuss more options. This would allow him to gather more information from other communities and discuss with the City's planner. After discussion, Council agreed that another study session was needed and requested the Manager gather more information.

Motion VanAlsitne and seconded Naugle, to adjourn the Study Session at 7:18 p.m.

Richard E. Johnson, Mayor

Mary Feight, City Clerk