Minutes of the Human Services Committee
Monday June 7, 2010
7:00 P.M.
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center
Council Chambers

PRESENT: Jane Grover, Mark Tendam, Lionel Jean-Baptiste, Judy Fiske

PRESIDING Judy Fiske

ABSENT: Delores Holmes

STAFF PRESENT: Tom Anger, Assistant City Attorney, Richard Eddington, Police Chief; Sergeant Angela Heartsglass, Police Dept; Carl Caneva, Supervisor Environmental Health; Bob Dorneker, Recreation Superintendent; Mary Johns, Library Director, Linda Teckler, Chief Animal Warden; Doug Gaynor, Director Parks, Recreation and Community Services and Nicola Whyte, Health Dept.

TOWNSHIP OF EVANSTON: Rosemary Jean-Paul, Town of the City of Evanston Director; Pat Vance Town Supervisor/Treasurer; Bonnie Wilson, Township Assessor;

GUESTS: Rodney Greene, Ellen King, Hugh Bartling, Debbie Hillman, Betty Sue Ester, Madelyn Ducre, Robert Barry, Joshua Barney, Susan Besson, Aharan Solomon, Marcelo Ferrer, Fernando Ferrer, Cian Gerfind

CALL TO ORDER
Alderman Fiske called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Chief Eddington recognized Chief Animal Warden Linda Teckler’s 35 years of service to the Evanston community; she was presented with a service award certificate and a pen.

Approval of the May 3, 2010 Minutes:
*Ald. Grover moved approval, Ald. Tendam seconded; approved 4-0.

Library Sidewalk Poetry Selection
*Ald. Grover moved approval, Ald. Tendam seconded; approved 4-0.

Joshua Barney, Chair of the Public Art Committee, read the five poems selected to be imprinted onto the new entrance ramp at the Evanston Library on Orrington Avenue. All entrants were Evanston residents.

Emerson Street YMCA Public Art photo exhibit, as proposed by the McGraw YMCA and Shorefront
*Ald. Grover moved approval, Ald. Jean-Baptiste seconded; approved 4-0.

MONTHLY TOWNSHIP BILLS
*Ald. Jean-Baptiste moved approval, Alderman Tendam seconded; approved 4-0.

Ordinance 21-O-10 Proposed Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Town Purposes, For Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2011
*Ald. Jean-Baptiste moved approval, Ald. Grover seconded; approved 4-0.
Pat Vance, Bonnie Wilson and Rosemary Jean-Paul answered various question for further clarity of the proposed budget for the committee.

*A motion was not taken, Held in Committee.

Ald. Fiske read a letter into record from Donald R. Sander 1235 Dewey Ave, who was unable to attend; Mr. Sander does not support the proposed ordinance.

Rodney Green, 2016 Brown Ave, voiced his concerns with the diseases that are linked to backyard chicken keeping; Mr. Green does not support the proposed ordinance.

Helen King, 843 Ridge Ave, Chair of the Backyard Chicken Committee, quoted The Wall Street Journal “Chickens suffer from a PR problem. People think they are dirty, noisy and smelly, the truth, a few cared for hens are cleaner and quieter than one big dog or the tree neighborhood cats that poop in the flower bed. Plus you get eggs....” Ms. King supports the proposed ordinance.

Hugh Bartling, 1807 Madison, is a professor at DePaul University. In his Green Urban Policy class, his students surveyed 23 different cities that either recently allowed chickens in their jurisdiction or have had chickens. Eight questions were asked and the results are as follows: chickens getting loose was not a problem; violations ranged from 0 to 20; chicken complaints varied from 0-115; there isn’t any uniformity amongst the various ordinance; three cities had information for the public on care of chickens etc; four cities have made amendments to their ordinances to restrict chickens to single-family homes and on lots containing up to four housing units; the majority of the reaction to the ordinance has been positive; and no unanticipated issues have arise since the ordinance adoption.

Debbie Hillman 1100 Sherman Ave, founder and co-chair of the Evanston Food Policy Council mentions CPAP, which is promoting sustainable food systems, which is one of their 12 goals. Ms. Hillman reported the Extension Office in Illinois will shortly have a master chicken keeper.

Chief Teckler is concerned with the potential increase of rats that the dropping of chicken food would bring; also the animal facility is not equipped to handle chickens. She suggested micro-chipping the chickens and to forfeit a resident’s right to keep chickens if there are more than two complaints against them.

The following is a summary of answers to questions asked by the committee;

1. Currently the animal warden receives approximately 5 calls annually regarding chickens that are spotted roaming the streets.
2. The animal warden felt keeping chickens indoors would eliminate the lure of small critters and wildlife looking for food.
3. The winters are cold in Chicago and chicken owners would have to choose a species of chicken that could withstand the Chicago winters or heat the chicken coops. The minimum requirement of two chickens is so they can huddle for warmth.
4. Even though the chickens would be producing eggs they would also be considered a pet, i.e., a dog is sometimes kept for protection but it is also loved as part of the family as the family pet.

5. A chicken can produce eggs for three to four years, but a happy chicken can produce eggs for sometimes up to five years.

6. Delia Lamore 1200 block of Darrow Ave, an egg buyer, stated in a commercial chicken setting they are put through a controlled light cycle which allows them to produce one egg for eight days due to 16 hours of nonstop light; a break is taken on the ninth day. In a commercial setting a chicken can produce eggs up to 100 weeks.

7. Two locations in Chicago will humanely butcher a chicken for $10.00; John’s Live Poultry and Egg Market, 5955 W. Fullerton and Chicago Live Poultry House, 2601 S. Ridgeway.

8. Humane butchering is done by using a sharp ax to remove the chicken’s head or cut it with a knife and allow to bleed out.

9. Chicken feces mixed with compost are a very good fertilizer for your garden.

10. The location of the coop from the home would not cause a health concern; the issues arise from the maintenance and handling of the chickens and personal hygiene after handing the chickens.

Ald. Jean-Baptiste pointed out penalties were not outlined in the proposed ordinance.

Warden Teckler mentioned Michigan has a stipulation that requires your neighbor’s approval to keep backyard chickens. Warden Teckler asked if any penalties/procedures need to be included in the amendment for hen cruelty.

If this ordinance is passed the Health, Building, and the Animal Warden would be responsible for enforcing the code. The supervisor of Environmental Health, Carl Caneva stated approximately one hour would be spent on inspections/fieldwork plus time for paperwork and administrative work.

Ald. Fiske read into record the Center for Disease Control (CDC) steps to reducing the risks to people after handling or being around chickens that are not maintained, which was enclosed in the meetings’ packet.

Ald. Tendam pointed out neighboring municipalities have chickens and people should be concerned with the hormones injected into mass produced chickens. He felt backyard chickens contribute to many of Evanston’s strategic goals. He felt there is no evidence to support some of the things stated from various agencies that have a negative view of raising backyard chickens.

Ald. Grover felt this discussion is reminiscent to those that came up with keeping of bees. There are many city codes that regulate pets and animals and felt that those who chose to keep backyard chickens will take care of them. She suggested putting in place an ordinance that will address all aspects of keeping backyard chickens in Evanston.

Ald. Jean-Baptiste agreed with Ald. Tendam that the CDC has made some errors in the past but as a person that has been exposed to the consequence of having backyard chickens he would like the residents to be informed and welcome their input/concerns and ideas. Even though we want to support the movement to raise our own food there are issues that needs that should be addressed such as consequences to staff.
The following items remained unanswered.

1. **What is the penalty for not maintaining backyard chickens up to code?**
2. **What are the fees for licensing backyard chickens/coops?**
3. **What are the costs to the City of Evanston with three departments regulating the keeping of backyard chickens?**
4. **What is the zoning requirement for the setback from home, side yard and neighboring property from the chicken coop?**
5. **Is there a direct correlation between cities that have complaints and the setback from adjacent residents?**
6. **What should be done for the chickens in the winter?**

**Ordinance 35-O-10 Amending Title 9, “Public Safety,” Section 5, “General Offenses, ‘of the City Code of the City of Evanston Paragraph 11, “Public Nudity; Urinating or Defecating in Public”**
Ald. Grover moved approval, Ald. Tendam seconded, approved 4-0.

Betty Sue Ester, 2031 Church St., felt the proposed amendment is dictating how citizens should wear their clothes.

Madelyn Ducre, an Evanston resident, asked if the proposed amendment was promoting discrimination between men and women, she felt it was and questioned the proposed regulations.

Ald. Jean-Baptiste requests a provision for beachwear at the beach.
Tom Anger replied that beachwear was not encapsulated in the proposed amendment.

Ald. Grover stated the proposed amendment is regulating what body parts you need to cover not how you cover those parts. She would like the amendment to cover nudity at the beaches.

Chief Eddington felt this proposed amendment will give clarity and help with enforcement of the City’s Code.

**UPDATE OF CITIZEN REVIEW OF POLICE COMPLAINTS**
Ald. Jean-Baptiste requested the citizen’s review of police complaints include notes from investigating officer.

Chief Eddington will include the notes in the August 2010 batch of reports.

Chief Eddington recognized Sergeant Angela Heartsglass’s efforts in cutting the backlog of reports.

**ADJOURNMENT**
The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9.24p.m.