

ORDINANCE #2018-3

CITY OF WATKINS  
MEEKER COUNTY, MINNESOTA

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF  
WATKINS, CHAPTER 90, SECTION 90.04 RELATING TO ANIMALS

The City Council of the City of Watkins ordains as follows:

SECTION 1. The City Council of Watkins hereby replaces Section 90.04 of the City Code in its entirety to read as follows:

**Section 90.04 FARM ANIMALS**

- A. Farm animals shall only be kept in an agricultural district of the city, or on a residential lot of at least ten acres in size provided that no animal shelter shall be within 300 feet of an adjoining piece of property. An exception shall be made to this section for those animals brought into the city as part of an operating zoo, veterinarian clinic, scientific research laboratory, or a licensed show or exhibition.  
(Ord 2001-3, passed - -)
- B. Backyard Chickens. Notwithstanding other provisions of this chapter, a person may keep up to eight (8) female chickens on a parcel they own that is less than ten acres in size. The keeping of domesticated chickens shall be permitted on single-family residential properties within all residential zoning districts, provided the owner obtains a backyard chicken permit from the City. No permit shall be issued except in compliance with this section.
  1. Definitions
    - a. Chicken means a farm bird that serves as a source of eggs or meat.
    - b. Coop means the structure for the keeping or housing of chickens permitted by the ordinance.
    - c. Hen means a female chicken.
    - d. Rooster means a male chicken.
    - e. Run means a fully-enclosed and covered area attached to a coop where the chickens can roam unsupervised.
  2. Any person wishing to keep chickens in the City of Watkins on a property zoned as residential shall first obtain a permit from the City. This shall be a one-time permit. A written application must be made to the City Clerk on a form provided by the City. The application must include a site plan that shows the location of the chicken coop including the distance of the coop from adjoining structures and property lines and the coop's dimensions. The city may revoke a permit for failure to comply with provisions of this section or any of the permit's conditions.
  3. The principal use of the property shall be single-family residential.
  4. The property shall contain one (1) detached single-family structure. Chickens shall not be permitted on vacant properties or those containing multi-family residential buildings including duplexes, townhomes and apartments.

5. No more than eight (8) hen chickens shall be permitted.
  6. No person shall keep a rooster.
  7. The use of chickens for cock fights is prohibited.
  8. Chickens shall not be kept inside the principal structure.
  9. No person shall slaughter chickens on-site except when in an area of the property not visible to the public.
  10. Chicken coops and attached exercise pens shall be provided for all chickens.
  11. Coops and pens shall be fully enclosed including overhead and constructed of durable materials.
  12. The floor area of the coop shall be a minimum of 2 square feet in area per chicken.
  13. The floor area of the attached run pen shall be a minimum of 4 square feet in area per chicken, with a maximum capacity of 120 square feet.
  14. Coops and pens shall meet all accessory structure setback requirements.
  15. Coops and pens shall be located in rear yards only.
  16. Chickens shall be kept in coops and/or pens at all times unless in fully fenced-in back yards while under supervision.
  17. All food stored for chickens shall be kept in rodent proof containers stored inside coops or other buildings.
  18. Any coop or run shall be set back at least 25 feet from a delineated wetland edge, the top of a bank of a pond, filtration basin, or infiltration basin.
  19. All premises in which chickens are kept or maintained, including coops and pens, shall be kept reasonably clean from filth, garbage and any substances which attract rodents. All feces shall be collected and properly disposed of on a regular basis.
- C. Chickens shall not be kept in such a manner as to constitute a public nuisance as defined by the City Code of Watkins.
- D. Dead chickens must be disposed of according to the Minnesota Board of Animal Health rules which require chicken carcasses to be disposed of as soon as possible after death, usually within forty-eight (48) to seventy-two (72) hours. Legal forms of chicken carcass disposal include burial, off-site incineration or rendering, or composting.
- E. The City may enter and inspect any property, including the coop and back yard, at any reasonable time for the purpose of investigating either an actual or suspected violation or to ascertain compliance or noncompliance with the City Code.

Passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Watkins, Minnesota this 9th day of August, 2018.

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Frank Eder, Mayor

Attest: (SEAL)

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Debra Kramer, Clerk