

**BOROUGH OF GROVE CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
July 27, 2021 AT 7PM**

CALL TO ORDER by Council President, Mary Kay Mattocks at 7:00 pm

MEETING ATTENDANCE / ROLL CALL

X if present	Council Member Name	X if present	Council Member Name	X if present	Other Name
X	Mattocks, Mary Kay (Pres)	X	Bonner, Timothy (Solicitor)	X	Oakes, Vance (Boro Manager)
X	Daley, Kathleen	X	DiStasi, Vincent	Absent	Pollard, Tanya (Boro Secretary)
X	Myers, Shawn	X	Riddle, Randy (Mayor)	X	Pokrant, Taylor (Zoning)
X	Henry, James	X	Bigley, Joel (Vice-Pres)		
X	Hodge, Jeffrey	Absent	Zimmerman, William		
X	Gallagher, Amy	Absent	Oakes, Alex (Jr. Council)		
X	Jaillet, Scott				

NEW BUSINESS

The Work Session Meeting was called for the purpose of discussion regarding a proposed ordinance change by Don Huntington of 315 Lincoln Ave regarding the keeping of chickens within the Borough.

Mr. Donald Huntington of 315 Lincoln Ave provided copies of his proposed ordinance and proposed plot plan as an example for how permitting would work if his ordinance was passed. Mr. Huntington detailed various restrictions within his ordinance including 3 square feet of coop per chicken, 10 square feet of enclosed run area per chicken and the requirement that a person has at least 1,000 square feet of usable backyard space to be eligible to keep chickens. He further detailed that a class would be required and that Agway has staff that have volunteered to teach this course. Councilman Jaillet noted that his proposal was well documented, but he had concerns regarding staffing requirements for current staff if a permitting regime was included with this ordinance. Mr. Huntington also detailed the support that he has received from the community, referencing the petition that he previously submitted to Council. Councilman Bigley stated that despite his petition that he has discussed this issue with many of his neighbors and has noted that the majority that he has spoke with are against it.

Mr. Lee Johnson of 435 Summitt Street requested to be heard before Council. Mr. Johnson questioned the fact that the Huntingtons were caught with chickens and are now asking for an ordinance change after they failed to inquire directly with the Borough regarding the legality of chickens in the Borough. Councilwoman Gallagher mentioned that the Borough was not here to litigate the Huntingtons specifically, as they are now in compliance with the ordinance, but rather consider changing the current ordinance to allow chickens. Mr. Johnson went on further to explain that the individuals that he has spoken with in his neighborhood are against the keeping of chickens.

Mr. Akileo Huntington of 308 Blaine Street spoke to the petitions that Mr. Donald Huntington circulated. Mr. Akileo Huntington stated that when he went door to door that most people found the keeping of chickens acceptable as long as roosters weren't going to be allowed. Councilman Jaillet provided background regarding experience that he has had with commercial chicken farms and the numerous required health inspections that commercial farmers are required to complete due to disease risks among flocks.

Mr. William Caldwell of 214 Franklin Place discussed his opposition to the keeping of chickens. Mr. Caldwell explained that many move to the city to escape farm animals. He also explained that regulations exist to protect others and that the current ordinance should be left in place to protect neighbors from negative impacts from the keeping of chickens.

Mr. Robert Gropp of 406 W Washington Blvd provided four points in opposition to the keeping of chickens. First, he questioned the assertions by Mr. Donald Huntington that overwhelming support exists and questioned the representativeness of Mr. Don Huntington's claims. Second, he believes that since Mr. Huntington collected signatures at Strawberry Days that many signatures may be from outside the Borough and that their support or opposition should not impact a decision that the Borough makes. Third, he believes that despite Mr. Donald Huntington citing the municipalities that allow chickens that there are many that do not allow the keeping of chickens for good reason. Fourth, he believes that Mr. Donald Huntington stating that he will keep attending meetings until something is done, should not be a reason to change the ordinance. He said that those that are opposed will also continue to come to meetings. Councilman DiStasi, Councilman Jaillet and Mayor Riddle provided support to the claim that a petition of around 750 does not constitute enough of sample to support the assertion that overwhelming support exists for the issue.

Mr. Vincent Anastasi of 420 McConnell Street asked Council to extend an olive branch to those that support the keeping of chickens. He suggested that Council consider allowing chickens on a probationary period. Mr. Anastasi said that he understood the petition issues, but commended Mr. Donald Huntington for the support that he has received thus far. Mr. Anastasi also brought up that sexually-oriented businesses are allowed in the Borough. Solicitor Bonner provided clarification that those are allowed because they are mandated by the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court and that the Borough has placed them in the Industrial District. If they were not placed in the Zoning Ordinance, they would be allowed anywhere in town. Councilman Henry stated that he had took Mr. Anastasi's advice at the last meeting and had spoken with his constituents regarding their support for the keeping of chickens. He found overwhelming opposition against the keeping of chickens. Councilman Bigley stated that he had spoken with his neighbors and had gotten the same response as Councilman Henry. Councilman DiStasi echoed this sentiment saying that his neighbors on Liberty Street were also against the keeping of chickens. Councilman Jaillet stated that from speaking with his neighbors that the majority are against changing the ordinance.

Sharon Gropp of 406 W Washington Blvd, stated that she moved from a rural area to town to escape farm animals and other nuisances and does not want to see Borough Council allow chickens.

Mr. Don Huntington requested to be heard again. Mr. Huntington reiterated that about 92% of the people that he asked signed his petition. He encouraged Council not to discount his efforts through petitioning as he asked many more people than a sampling of neighbors as many Council Members had mentioned. He encouraged Council to not limit his rights by not allowing chickens. Councilman Jaillet questioned Mr. Huntington regarding what he plans to do when his hens stop laying eggs and then begin to crow as roosters do. Mr. Huntington responded that this would be similar to a dog barking and also if they became a nuisance that he would have to butcher them.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully,

Taylor G. Pokrant
Zoning and Code Enforcement Officer