



May 2017

When looking at the prospect of the City of Peterborough permitting the allowance for hens (chickens) to be kept within the City limits, the Peterborough Humane Society acknowledges that the humane keeping of chickens although doable, comes at a cost, both figuratively to the greater community as a whole as well as literally to the Humane Society itself, beyond already existent operational expenses.

There are a number of considerations when it comes to being able to properly accommodate the humane animal welfare needs of such avian species of animal. There is a marked amount of biosecurity/infection control concerns (including zoonotic diseases) for PHS staff, volunteers and visitors as well as for the rest of our domestic animal population. To avoid cross contamination in to the centre, separate accommodations would have to be built and retro-fitted on to the current and future PHS grounds. Currently, there is not an appropriate location for such accommodations. The new PHS centre did not have such accommodations built in to its design plans. To include adequate and appropriate housing accommodations at this stage of the build project would require substantial site plan amendments and subsequent cost to the overall project budget.

Historically, chickens when picked up by our animal control or when brought in to the centre, have been contained and transported as best as possible using what resources were available. Accommodations were challenging and although adequate for temporary stay, were not ideally suited to provide the utmost in environmental setup for chickens; posing disruption and limitations on housing accommodations for a variety of other species of animals which could otherwise make use of such centre boarding space. For that reason, the centre was at the mercy of good samaritans and folks in the community to offer their personal farm accommodations for housing during a stray hold period (depending on which municipality the chickens came in from), longer-term boarding for matters with case involvement, foster care until an adoption could be arranged or to adopt outright to when possible. Without this availability within the community at times when chickens have come in to PHS, the centre has been hard-pressed to provide and meet all of the needs of such animals; upholding our standards of care to the highest levels of expectation. This would come at a financial cost to PHS if extended care were required. The availability of such farms isn't always a given as their populations and means to acquire additional animals fluctuates and they too, could have biosecurity restrictions that may not permit the acceptance of chickens should there be known or suspected avian disease(s) present within any one population of chickens being managed.

From firsthand experience of certain PHS staff members themselves, it is a notable challenge to properly care for chickens in a coop set-up within a rural area let alone within an urban environment. The smells, sightlines, and noises are all matters of reality that neighbouring Peterborough residents would have to contend with if chickens were openly welcomed in to the City limits.



This would put a greater demand on our animal control officers to fully respond to every complaint call that would come in to the PHS centre (especially if chickens were openly permitted and the population then grow in overall numbers of coops and chickens within the City).

With regards to the attraction of small rodents that are lured to such coop setups, this too could be seen by some as a nuisance and inconvenience as a neighbour to such chicken coop setup. Though these animals deserve the same humane care and consideration as any other animal, when lured in closer to residential areas, rodents will also take advantage of the surrounding homes which can lead to unwanted and problematic infestation (which often includes damage done to property, electrical wiring and the defecation and urine of said rodents being found within the home; at times of toxic nature to humans (i.e. Hantaviruses).

It should also be noted that if chickens are permitted within the City limits, there could be an increase issue of predatory animals such as coyotes and foxes that following their natural instincts, would take advantage of chickens as a food source. This not only poses a risk to the chickens themselves, it also poses a risk to citizens of Peterborough and the predatory animals themselves by having such predatorily animals tempted in to an urban environment they would not otherwise be so inclined to venture in to. These matters, though something OMAFRA (the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs) would be primarily expected to attend to, by their nature they would call upon our animal control officers if and when chickens or any owned or stray domestic animal(s) were to come in to contact with said predators.

The PHS recognizes that there are some municipalities which have chosen to allow chickens within their urban boundaries, in various capacities with varied types of oversights and services provided. That said, in order to soundly establish a wholesomely educated and informed community, it would be recommended the City consider the creation and oversight of public education and humane coop ownership/management programs in conjunction with the necessary administrative oversights and support systems for the community and such an (expanded) chicken population.

For all of the reasons noted, the position of the Peterborough Humane Society in regards to the consideration towards permitting chicken coops in the City boundaries is such that we feel we are not currently equipped to meet the demands and needs of such a population of animals. In order to fully and properly enforce, care and manage such a population of chickens in the City of Peterborough, subsequent and marked cost and training would be required for our centre and its staff. As the PHS is an advocate for the welfare and protection of all animals, we feel that these rural animals are best kept and cared for in a rural setting where they can most freely exist in more natural settings conducive to their innate nature.



The following represents additional costs to the Peterborough Humane Society in order to fully accommodate, properly care for and oversee from an animal control by-law enforcement and animal care position, the inclusion of chickens within the City limits; these figures being specific to costs pertaining to chickens and separate from the rest of the centre's already established operational expenses:

PHS Chicken Service	Annual Cost to PHS (\$)
Animal Care (Food and Board, Vet Care, Disposal, Heat/Hydro/AC)	\$10,000
Office and Administration (24 hr Emergency Services, Cell Phones, Licensing Supplies, Office Supplies)	\$2,500
Staffing (Animal Control, Administration, Animal Care, Training)	\$50,000
Other (Personal Protective Equipment, Bio Security Products, Safety Equipment, Vehicle Maintenance and Insurance)	\$3,500
Total	\$66,000

PHS Chicken Service	Start-Up Cost to PHS (\$)
Housing Costs (Build cost for appropriate chicken accommodations with staff accessibility)	\$15,000
Vehicle	\$20,000
Total	\$35,000



PHS Chicken Service (First Year)	Annual Revenue to PHS (\$)
Registration/Start-up Fee (\$100/Coop)	\$10,000
Grandfathering (Any Hen in Excess of 4 – estimation of 2 extra hens/coop) (\$10/Hen)	\$2000
Impound Fee (\$25/Hen)	\$200
Total	\$12,200

*(Estimation by the City puts the amount of coops within the City limits at approximately 200. Other than the Impound Fee, the revenue amounts are based off approximately 1/2 initial public compliance of the new bylaws with expected increase over time through public education and promotion of changes to the ownership of urban hens)

Thank you,

Peterborough Humane Society