TOWN OF SPIRIT RIVER	SECTION:	COUNCIL
POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL	POLICY:	5
	EFFECTIVE:	February 16, 2021
	RESOLUTION:	21-029

POLICY:

URBAN HEN POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT:

As per the Town of Spirit River Animal Control Bylaw no. 930, Section 12, this is a policy to set guidelines for applications for Council approval regarding urban hens.

OBJECTIVES:

1. General Guidelines

    a. Urban Hens will be a two-year pilot project with a limit of five (5) permits to be reviewed each year.
    b. Coops shall be permitted in fenced, secure backyards only. There is no minimum fence height requirement but should protect against predation.
    c. Chickens cannot be slaughtered or disposed of on a residential property.
    d. The sale of eggs, meat & manure is prohibited. Urban hens are to be kept as pets and/or for personal egg consumption. They are not intended to be used for commercial purposes.
    e. Anyone keeping urban hens must comply with all Provincial regulations around the keeping of hens. The Province of Alberta requires all owners of poultry (including small urban flocks) to register their flocks into the provincial database and obtain a Premise Identification (PID) Number.
    f. Anyone keeping urban hens is required to complete a chicken education course listed in Schedule B or other course approved by Administration.

2. Application Process

    A person seeking an Urban Hen License must complete the following process:

    a. The applicant must complete the Urban Hen License Application attached hereto as Schedule "A" and pay an application fee in the amount of $25.00. An application is not complete without the requested site plan indicating the actual dimensions of the rear yard of the property and the proposed location and dimensions of the coop.
    b. An inspection of the proposed location and area may be required.

c. Comments from adjacent landowners must be requested and responses can be submitted directly to the Town Office.
d. The application will then be submitted to Council for approval.
e. Council may at their sole discretion approve an Urban Hen License, with or without conditions, or refuse to issue an Urban Hen License.
f. If the application is approved by Council, the applicant may then set up the coop and must notify the Town Office immediately upon completion for the purpose of arranging a post-site inspection to ensure compliance.
g. Failure to comply with an Urban Hen License issued pursuant to this policy, or any condition thereof, is an offence under the Town of Spirit River Bylaw No. 930.
h. Nothing in this policy relieves from the requirement to apply for and obtain a development permit pursuant to the Town's Land Use Bylaw, if so required, or to obtain any other required approvals or licenses whether federal, provincial, or municipal.

3. Site Requirements and Coop Standards

a. Coops may only be located in backyards of properties that are completely fenced and secured. Chain link fencing may be required to have privacy slats installed on one or more sides of the fencing based on consultation with neighboring properties desires. Coop sites should take into consideration backyard locations that would minimize impact on adjacent landowners (away from any windows, furthest point from the building, etc.).
b. The henhouse is made of both a coop (indoor space) and a run (enclosed outdoor space). An approved site may house only one coop and outdoor enclosure and they must be located:
    i. a minimum of 10 feet from a dwelling.
    ii. a minimum of 3 feet from side or rear property line, and
    iii. a minimum of 10 feet from any window.
    iv. a coop may be attached, abutted, or part of an accessory building.
c. The maximum coop size cannot exceed 100 ft^2 without a development permit for an accessory building. Minimum indoor coop floor size is 4 ft^2 per hen and 10 ft^2 per hen of outdoor enclosure.
d. Height of coop should not exceed fence height, if part of an accessory building, that portion of the accessory building cannot exceed fence height.
e. All coops must contain sufficient perch locations, nest boxes, have adequate ventilation and be weather & predator proof. Coops do not need to be insulated unless over-wintering and then should have an adequate, approved heat source.
f. The coop and outdoor enclosure must be fully enclosed (i.e., fencing, chicken wire, roof covering) to provide hens secure access to exercise, sunlight, earth, and vegetation. It is to be constructed to prevent escape and prevent entry by intruders/predators.

g. All hens must remain in the coop or in the outdoor enclosure unless directly supervised by a person at least 14 years of age and they must stay on the permitted property while under such supervision.

4. Number of Hens

a. No more than four (4) hens are permitted per residential property.
b. Roosters are not permitted.

5. Care of Hens

a. Consideration shall be given to which breeds of hens are best suited for the local climate.
b. Hen waste can be bagged and disposed of along with your weekly household garbage.
c. Manure that is intended for backyard composting or fertilizing must be kept within a fully enclosed structure or compost bin and no more than three cubic feet (0.085 m^3) of manure can be stored at a time.
d. Proper care and feeding practices must be followed to ensure the well-being of the hens. This includes providing each hen with food, water, shelter, light, ventilation, veterinary care, and opportunities for essential behaviors such as scratching, dustbathing, and roosting.
e. Thorough, complete cleaning of walls and perches, removal of all bedding and disinfecting of coop and furnishings should be done at least once a year to reduce presence of unwanted pests.
f. All feed is to be kept in airtight, rodent-proof containers and any spilled/uneaten food must be removed; hens should be kept in their coop between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. to help with both noise mitigation and keeping the hens safe.

SCHEDULE "A"
Urban Hen Permit Application

Applicants must be 18 years of age or older
Application fee is non-refundable

Applicant(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Civic Address: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____ Work: _____

E-Mail: _____

Do you own the home: Yes ☐ No ☐ *If no, a signed permission letter from owner is required (Attach)*

Number of Hens? _____ (Maximum is 4)

PID included? Yes ☐ No ☐ Submitted to Alberta Agriculture? Yes ☐ No ☐

Lot Size: _____ ft^2 Fenced Yard? Yes ☐ No ☐ Fence Height: _____

Have privacy slats been requested in chain link fence by neighbor? Yes / No

If yes, which side(s) _____

Provide a site plan of intended Coop location and description/photo of intended Coop including size of Coop and Outdoor Enclosure

_____

_____

_____

Coop Size: _____ Outdoor Enclosure Size: _____ Total Square Footage: _____

Application Fee ($25.00) paid by _____

Any personal information on this form is collected under the authority of Section 33(c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act for the purpose of participation in the Urban Hen Policy. If you have any questions about the collection, use and protection of this information, please call the Town Administration Office at 780-864-3998.

☐ I have read this policy and agree with its contents.

_____
Signature of Applicant/Landowner

SCHEDULE "B"
Urban Hen Education Courses

Chickens 101 Course:
River City Chickens Collective
http://www.rivercitychickens.org/

Backyard Hens 101 Course:
Grande Prairie Urban Hens
Facebook @ GPUrbanHens
gpurbanhens@gmail.com