

CITY OF LOCKPORT
COMMON COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
October 25th, 2023
6:30 P.M.

6:00 P.M. Committee of the Whole Meeting

6:30 P.M. Common Council Meeting

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES **Beakman:** Approve Common Council minutes from 102523.1 October 11th, 2023

PUBLIC HEARING Proposed 2024 Budget

PUBLIC HEARING Re-levy of unpaid refuse and recycling bills

PUBLIC HEARING Amend Water rents

PUBLIC HEARING Local Law to amend Sewer rents

COMMUNICATIONS

**MOTIONS &
RESOLUTIONS**

xxxxx: Lockport Community Farmers Market
102523.2

xxxx: Value Systems Contract Resolution
102523.3

xxxx: Garbage Relevy
102523.4

xxxx: Call for Public Hearing Re: Special Use
102523.5 Permit - 100 Irving St.

xxxx: Code Blue
102523.6

xxxx: Light Up Lockport
102523.7

ADJOURNMENT **Beakman:** Adjourn meeting to November 8th, 2023
102523.8

CITY OF LOCKPORT
CORPORATION PROCEEDINGS

Lockport Municipal Building

Regular Meeting
Official Record

October 25th, 2023
6:30 P.M.

Mayor Michelle M. Roman called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

The following Common Council members answered the roll call:
Aldermen Beakman, Devine, Fogle, Swanson-Gellerson, Kantor, and Lupo.

INVOCATION

RECESS

Recess for public input.

102523.1

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion of Alderman Beakman, seconded by Alderman _____, the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 11th, 2023 are hereby approved as printed in the Journal of Proceedings. Ayes _____. Carried.

PUBLIC HEARING

The Mayor announced a public hearing relative to the 2024 tax budget.

The Mayor asked the City Clerk if any petitions or communications relative to said to the proposed 2023 tax budget have been received.

Recess for public input.

The Mayor closed the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING

The Mayor announced a public hearing on confirming Refuse & Recycling Re-levy.

The Mayor asked the City Clerk if any petitions or communications relative to said Re-levy have been received.

Recess for public input.

The Mayor closed the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING

The Mayor announced a public hearing relative to adjusting water rents.

The Mayor asked the City Clerk if any petitions or communications relative to said proposed rent adjustments have been received.

Recess for public input.

The Mayor closed the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING

The Mayor announced a public hearing on a proposed local law to amend the City of Lockport, "Schedule of Sewer Rents and Other Charges."

The Mayor asked the City Clerk if any petitions or communications relative to said proposed local law have been received.

Recess for public input.

The Mayor closed the public hearing.

FROM THE MAYOR

Appointments:

10/18/2023 Marietta Schrader, 32 Gaffney Road, Lockport, NY has been appointed to the Human Relations Commission. Said term expires July 15, 2026.

10/19/2023 Connor J. McCarthy, 163 Monroe Street, Lockport, NY has been appointed to Building Inspector for the City of Lockport Building Inspection Department effective August 9, 2023. Said appointment is provisional and subject to the City of Lockport Municipal Civil Service rules and regulations.

10/20/2023 Steven D. O'Mara, 197 Jackson Street, Lockport, NY has been appointed to the Human Relations Commission. Said term expires July 15, 2025.

10/20/2023 Jon D. Wiley, 39 Harrison Avenue, Lockport, NY has been appointed to the Human Relations Commission. Said term expires July 15, 2023.

FROM THE CITY CLERK

The Clerk submitted payrolls, bills for services and expenses, and reported that the Department Heads submitted reports of labor performed in their departments. Reviewed by the Finance Committee.

Communications (which have been referred to the appropriate City officials)

10/3/2023 Notification from Michael Davidson, 14809 Alta Canyon 4, Rio Nido, CA of his application to the NYS Office Cannabis Management for an adult-use retail dispensary to be located at 76 East Avenue, Lockport, NY.

10/6/2023 Notification from Morris Oiring of his application to NYS Office of Cannabis Management for an adult-use retail dispensary to be located at 1001 Lincoln Avenue, Lockport, NY.

10/18/2023 Ammendment of notification from 5/15/2023. Amy Castle and Jonathan George provided notification of the application to the NYS Office of Cannabis Management of their intent to open an adult use retail dispensary at 55 Lock Street, Lockport, NY. Originally the address was 20 Lock Street, Lockport, NY.

MOTIONS & RESOLUTIONS

102523.2

By Alderman: _____

Whereas resolution #022223.10, adopted by the Common Council at their February 22, 2023 meeting, gave permission to Lockport Main Street, Inc. (hereafter, 'LMS') to hold a series of events throughout the year; and

Whereas permission was granted to LMS to conduct the Lockport Community Farmers Market on Saturday's from 9 am – 2 pm through Saturday, October 28th;

Whereas LMS would like to add November 4th, 11th and 18th to continue the Farmers Market outdoors

Whereas LMS has already provided the City Clerk's office with a Certificate of Insurance, naming the City of Lockport as additional insured, for its 2023 events; now therefore, be it

Resolved that LMS is hereby granted to extend the Farmers Market by three weeks.

Seconded by Alderman _____ and adopted. Ayes _____.

102523.3

By Alderman: _____

Whereas the Treasurer's Office had to employ the services of a third-party vendor to assist with collection of all fees and/or taxes paid by credit card through a convenience fee payment processing service; and

Whereas the Treasurer's Office conducted a survey of available, competent vendors to perform this service to the City; and

Whereas following its investigation into the subject, the Treasurer's Office identified the most competent vendor to be Value Payment Systems, LLC, a limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of Tennessee; and

Whereas the Treasurer's Office sought input from the Corporation Counsel's Office regarding the terms of said Contract, in 2021, and successfully obtained modifications that were recommended by the Corporation Counsel's Office; and

Whereas the Agreement with Value Payment Services, LLC, has been executed by the Mayor and Value Payment Services, LLC on February 17, 2021 for a two-year term with the

contract automatically renewing for successive one (1) year periods, unless either party provides written notice to terminate within thirty (30) days of notice thereof from the other party; and

Now therefore be it resolved that Mayor is authorized to continue the Contract with Value Payment Services, including the automatic renewal for successive one (1) year periods per the Agreement, with the termination option per the Contract.

Seconded by Alderman _____ and adopted. Ayes ____.

102523.4

By Alderman _____:

Whereas the City Treasurer submitted to the Common Council all delinquent assessments, penalties, charges or fees and any other amounts to be added to taxes; and

Whereas the Common Council conducted a public hearing on October 25, 2023 at 6:30 P.M. in the Common Council Chambers, Lockport Municipal Building, One Locks Plaza, Lockport, New York in accordance with section 155-7 A (Solid Waste) of Chapter 158 of the City Code to confirm the delinquent accounts to re-levy; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the following delinquent accounts totaling \$_____ are hereby confirmed and shall be inserted in the annual tax rolls and be a part of the annual tax upon said parcels against which such amounts are charged and shall be subject to all the provisions of the City Charter.

<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Refuse	\$174,876.21
Relevy Late Fees	\$ 14,970.00
Total Relevy	\$189,846.21

Seconded by Alderman _____ and adopted. Ayes ____.

102523.5

By Alderman: _____

Resolved, that a public hearing be held at the Common Council meeting on November 11, starting at 6:30PM in council chambers, Lockport Municipal Building, One Locks Plaza, Lockport, NY, relative to a request for a Special Use Permit by Keli and Robert Worden of 100 Irving Street, Lockport, NY 14094 to harbor chickens and quail on the property. And be it further

Resolved that the City Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to advertise notice of said public hearing,

Seconded by Alderman _____ and adopted. Ayes ____.

102523.6 Being Prepared.

102523.7

By Alderman: _____

Resolved that pursuant to their request, 'Light Up Lockport' be and the same is hereby granted permission to use the City's right-of-way to conduct the following events on Saturday, November 25, 2023:

Light Up Lockport Parade commencing at 6:00pm at Ida Fritz Park, east on Main Street to Charles Street.

Resolved that said permissions are subject to approval for the routes by the Police Chief
And be it further

Resolved, that said permissions are subject to approval of the routes by the Police Chief, and 'Light Up Lockport' filing a certificate of insurance with the City Clerk naming the City of Lockport as additional insured, and be it further

Resolved, that the Director of Highways, Parks and Water Distribution is hereby authorized and directed to arrange for delivery of barricades and temporary 'no parking' signs for the entire length of the south side of Main Street prior to said events.

Seconded by Alderman _____ and adopted. Ayes _____.

102523.8

ADJOURNMENT

At _____ P.M. Alderman Beakman moved the Common Council be adjourned until 6:30 P.M., Wednesday, November 8th, 2023.

Seconded by Alderman _____ and adopted. Ayes _____.

SARAH K. LANZO
City Clerk



Office of the

LOCKPORT MUNICIPAL BUILDING
One Locks Plaza
Lockport, New York 14094
Phone (716) 439-6665
Fax (716) 439-6668

Michelle M. Roman
MAYOR

Mayor

October 18, 2023

To Common Council:

Under and by virtue of the authority conferred on me by the Charter of the City of Lockport, New York, I, Michelle M. Roman, Mayor of said City, do hereby appoint Marietta Schrader, 32 Gaffney Road, Lockport, New York, 14094 to the Human Relations Commission.

Said term expires on July 15, 2026.

Witness my hand and the seal of the City of Lockport, New York this 18th day of October, 2023.

Sincerely,

Michelle M. Roman
Mayor

MMR/mal

Cc: M. Schrader



Office of the Mayor

LOCKPORT MUNICIPAL BUILDING
One Locks Plaza
Lockport, New York 14094
Phone (716) 439-6665
Fax (716) 439-6668

Michelle M. Roman
MAYOR

October 19, 2023

TO: Common Council

Under and by virtue of the authority conferred on me by the Charter of the City of Lockport, New York, I, Michelle M. Roman, Mayor of said City, do hereby appoint Connor J. McCarthy, 163 Monroe Street, Lockport NY 14094 to Building Inspector for the City of Lockport Building Inspection Department effective August 9, 2023.

Said appointment is Provisional and subject to the City of Lockport Municipal Civil Services Rules and Regulations.

Witness by hand and the Seal of the City of Lockport this 19th day of October 2023.

Michelle M. Roman
Mayor

MMR/mal

cc: C. McCarthy
J. Dool
~~Civil Service~~
Clerk



LOCKPORT MUNICIPAL BUILDING
One Locks Plaza
Lockport, New York 14094
Phone (716) 439-6665
Fax (716) 439-6668

Office of the

Michelle M. Roman
MAYOR

Mayor

October 20, 2023

To Common Council:

Under and by virtue of the authority conferred on me by the Charter of the City of Lockport, New York, I, Michelle M. Roman, Mayor of said City, do hereby reappoint Steven D. O'Mara, 197 Jackson Street, Lockport, New York, 14094 to the Human Relations Commission.

Said term expires on July 15, 2025..

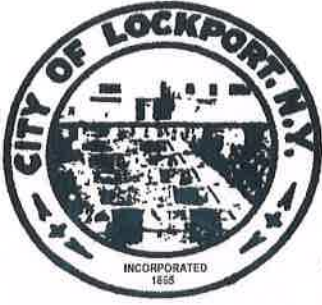
Witness my hand and the seal of the City of Lockport, New York this 20th day of October, 2023.

Sincerely,

Michelle M. Roman
Mayor

MMR/mal

Cc: S. O'Mara



Office of the

LOCKPORT MUNICIPAL BUILDING
One Locks Plaza
Lockport, New York 14094
Phone (716) 439-6665
Fax (716) 439-6668

Michelle M. Roman
MAYOR

Mayor

October 20, 2023

To Common Council:

Under and by virtue of the authority conferred on me by the Charter of the City of Lockport, New York, I, Michelle M. Roman, Mayor of said City, do hereby reappoint Jon D. Wiley, 39 Harrison Avenue, Lockport, New York, 14094 to the Human Relations Commission.

Said term expires on July 15, 2025.

Witness my hand and the seal of the City of Lockport, New York this 20th day of October 2023.

Sincerely,

Michelle M. Roman
Mayor

MMR/mal

Cc: J. Wiley



RE: Notification of adult-use retail dispensary license application

License Type: New Establishment

Previous DBA:

License Number (if applicable):

Applicant Name: Michael Donaldson

Phone Number: 707-695-3036

Email Address: michaeldoaldson@gmail.com

Dear Municipal Clerk/NYC Community Board:

This serves as notification that I (name) Michael Donaldson of (dba) TBD

intend to, or have, file(d) an application for licensure with the Office of Cannabis Management to open a(n):

- retail dispensary premises (new or additional)
registered organization with dispensing (or ROD)
microbusiness

in (county name) Niagara County. This business, once the license is approved, shall be located at:

Address Line 1: 76 East Ave

Address Line 2:

City: Lockport

Zip code: 14094

The mailing address is (if different from business location):

Address Line 1: 14809 Alta Canyon 4

Address Line 2:

City/Town/Village: Rio Nido

State: CA Zip code: 96554

(As applicable, name of business if different from above) has _____
retained the legal services of (attorney or representative)

Name: _____

Address Line 1: _____

Address Line 2: _____

City/Town/Village: _____

State: Zip code: _____

Telephone with area code: _____

If the municipality or community board would like to express an opinion to the Cannabis Control Board, they must respond to this notification within 30 days by emailing an opinion to municipalities@ocm.ny.gov. This expressed opinion must be on official municipality or community board letterhead.

If the municipality or community board would like to request a one-time 30 day extension for the municipality or community board to provide their opinion, or if the municipality or community board has any comments, concerns, or questions, they must reach out to the Office at municipalities@ocm.ny.gov with "Notification to Municipalities Municipality Opinion 30 Day Extension Request – [Insert municipality or community board name here]" in the subject line. Municipalities or community boards should be sure to provide proof of the date of receipt of the Notification to Municipalities that they wish to request an extension of time for submitting a municipality opinion. Any request that does not include such information will be rejected as incomplete.

Signed  _____

Today's date: 10/3/23

Print Michael Donaldson



RE: Notification of adult-use retail dispensary license application

License Type: New Establishment

Previous DBA: _____

License Number (if applicable): _____

Applicant Name: Morris Oiring

Phone Number: 917-282-2303

Email Address: moisheoiring@gmail.com

RECEIVED

OCT 06 2023

CITY CLERK OFFICE

Dear Municipal Clerk/NYC Community Board:

This serves as notification that I (name) Morris Oiring
of (dba) _____

intend to, or have, file(d) an application for licensure with the Office of Cannabis Management to open a(n):

- retail dispensary premises (new or additional)
- registered organization with dispensing (or ROD)
- microbusiness

in (county name) Niagara County. This business, once the license is approved, shall be located at:

Address Line 1: 1001 Lincoln Ave

Address Line 2: _____

City: Lockport

Zip code: 14094

The mailing address is (if different from business location):

Address Line 1: _____

Address Line 2: _____

City/Town/Village: _____

State: Zip code: _____

(As applicable, name of business if different from above) has _____
retained the legal services of (attorney or representative)

Name: Richard S. Harrow

Address Line 1: 54 State Street

Address Line 2: _____

City/Town/Village: Albany

State: Zip code: 12207

Telephone with area code: (518) 462-5601

If the municipality or community board would like to express an opinion to the Cannabis Control Board, they must respond to this notification within 30 days by emailing an opinion to municipalities@ocm.ny.gov. This expressed opinion must be on official municipality or community board letterhead.

If the municipality or community board would like to request a one-time 30 day extension for the municipality or community board to provide their opinion, or if the municipality or community board has any comments, concerns, or questions, they must reach out to the Office at municipalities@ocm.ny.gov with "Notification to Municipalities Municipality Opinion 30 Day Extension Request – [Insert municipality or community board name here]" in the subject line. Municipalities or community boards should be sure to provide proof of the date of receipt of the Notification to Municipalities that they wish to request an extension of time for submitting a municipality opinion. Any request that does not include such information will be rejected as incomplete.

Signed **Morris Oiring** Digitally signed by Morris Oiring
Date: 2023.10.02 14:40:11 -04'00' Today's date: 10/2/23

Print Morris Oiring



RE: Notification of adult-use retail dispensary license application
License Type: New Establishment
Previous DBA:
License Number:

RECEIVED
OCT 18 2023
CITY CLERK OFFICE

Dear Municipal Clerk/NYC Community Board:

This serves as notification that I (name) Amy Castle and Jonathan George of (dba) The Grass Station have obtained a provisional license from the Cannabis Control Board and intend to file an application for full licensure with the Office of Cannabis Management to open a

- [checked] retail dispensary
[] on-site consumption business

in (county name) Niagara County [checked]. This business, once the license is approved, shall be located at:

Street: 55 Lock Street
Unit: South
City of Lockport
Zip code: 14094

The mailing address is (if different from business location):

Street: 10 Gooding Street
Unit:
City/Town/Village: Lockport
State: NY Zip code: 14094

(As applicable, name of business if different from above)
has retained the legal services of (attorney or representative)
Name:
Street:

Unit:

City/Town/Village:

State:

Zip code:

Telephone with area code:

If you would like to express an opinion to the Cannabis Control Board please respond to this notification within 30 days by mail to:

Attn: Licensing Division
New York State Office of Cannabis Management
P.O. Box 2071
Albany, NY 12220

Thank you.

Signed



Amy E. Castle

Today's date: 5-15-23



RE: Notification of adult-use retail dispensary license application
License Type: New Establishment
Previous DBA:
License Number:

RECEIVED

MAY 15 2023

CITY CLERK OFFICE

Dear Municipal Clerk/NYC Community Board:

This serves as notification that I (name) Amy Castle and Jonathan George
of (dba) The Grass Station

have obtained a provisional license from the Cannabis Control Board and intend to file an application for
full licensure with the Office of Cannabis Management to open a

- retail dispensary
- on-site consumption business

in (county name) Niagara County
located at:

This business, once the license is approved, shall be

Street: 20 Lock Street
Unit: South
City of Lockport
Zip code: 14094

The mailing address is (if different from business location):

Street: 10 Gooding Street
Unit:
City/Town/Village: Lockport
State: NY Zip code: 14094

(As applicable, name of business if different from above)
has retained the legal services of (attorney or representative)

Name:
Street:

Unit:

City/Town/Village:

State:

Zip code:

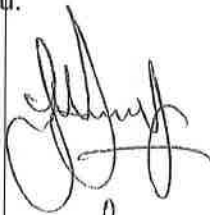
Telephone with area code:

If you would like to express an opinion to the Cannabis Control Board please respond to this notification within 30 days by mail to:

Attn: Licensing Division
New York State Office of Cannabis Management
P.O. Box 2071
Albany, NY 12220

Thank you.

Signed



Amy E. Castle

Today's date: 5-15-23

City of Lockport - Resolution Request Form

Agenda Description: Lockport Community Farmers Market								
Presented By: Lockport Main Street	Date Submitted: 10/05/2023							
Topic Area (Select Most Applicable Option):								
Community Event Budget Amendment Contract Approval Donation Acceptance Grant Application / Award Fund Utilization Request	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><td style="height: 15px;">✓</td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 15px;"> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 15px;"> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 15px;"> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 15px;"> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 15px;"> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 15px;"> </td></tr> </table>	✓						
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Local Law Change Community Development Community Event Engineering Process Code and Planning Other	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><td style="height: 15px;"> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 15px;"> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 15px;"> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 15px;"> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 15px;"> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 15px;"> </td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 15px;"> </td></tr> </table>							
<i>Please provide to Clerk at least 9 calendar days prior to Council meeting. Otherwise request will go to following meeting.</i>								
Summary of Resolution:								
<p>Lockport Main Street would like to continue it's Lockport Community Farmers Market season located on Canal Street on Saturday November 4th, 11th, and 18th. We would like to host an array of farmers, food producers, artisans, and local businesses for the community to shop.</p> <p>Lockport Main Street request the use of Canal Street, the pocket park, and the adjoining parking lot, the extent to be determined by the city, for the LCFM during the November dates listed above for the market. LMS will submit a certificate of insurance with the City clerk naming the City of Lockport as additional insured.</p> <p>LMS request that the Mayor has the authority to permit the use of the same space on other days in the event that an event is rescheduled or added to the calendar as long as LMS provides the City with the proper insurance paperwork.</p>								
Explanation of Attachments:								
<small>Please include all backup correspondence, purchase order, quotes, meeting minutes, emails, etc... if any of this information is confidential and cannot be released publically, please denote a check in this field: _____</small>								
Clerk/Legal/Finance Approval:								
Notes:								
Name:	Date of Approval:							

RECEIVED

OCT 13 2023

Special Use Permit

Revocable Permit

CITY CLERK OFFICE

Name: Keli & Robert Worden

Phone: 806-543-5666

Address: 100 Irving Street, Lockport, New York 14094

Email: _____

Property Address: 100 Irving Street, Lockport, New York 14094

Existing Zoning: R-1

Description of proposed action: Request for a special use permit to harbor chickens and quail on the property

Please do not write below this line (office use only) _____

Building Inspection

Planning Board App. Received: 10/13/2023 (ms)

Planning Board Meeting Date: 11/6/2023

Corporation Counsel

Approval: _____

City Clerk

Call for Public Hearing: _____

Public Hearing: _____

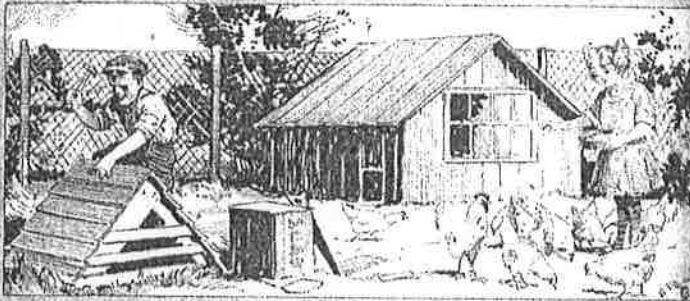
Common Council

Sponsor of Resolution: _____

6:32

60%

Uncle Sam Expects You To Keep Hens and Raise Chickens



Two Hens in the Back Yard for Each Person in the House Will Keep a Family In Fresh Eggs

EVEN the smallest back yard has room for a flock large enough to supply the home with eggs. The cost of maintaining such a flock is small. Table and kitchen waste provide much of the feed for the hens. They require little attention—only a few minutes a day.

An interested child, old enough to take a little responsibility, can care for a few fowls as well as a grown person.

Every back yard in the United States should contribute its share to a bumper crop of poultry and eggs in 1918.

**In Time of Peace a Profitable Recreation
In Time of War a Patriotic Duty**

For information about methods of Back-Yard Poultry Keeping suited to your location and conditions, write

**Your State Agricultural College
or
The United States Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C.**

GW Lansberry
1 HOUR AGO



Sent via the Samsung Galaxy A52 5G, an AT&T 5G smartphone

(No Subject)

From: blueidkele13 (blueidkele13@aol.com)

To: blueidkele13@aol.com

Date: Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 06:39 PM EDT

Free chickens are being given out to people in a French town to reduce food waste

A French town is giving its residents free chickens to help get rid of waste more sustainably.

Colmar, in northeastern France, is offering each household two free red hens to be used for composting.

Authorities there have calculated that the animals can devour around 300 grams of waste a day – about 100 kilograms annually.

Families have until March 24 to apply and those who are considered eligible will receive the new additions on June 10, local media reports.

People have to prove they will be able to house and care for the birds and accept that authorities have the right to visit and checkup on their welfare.

Colmar has been handing out chickens for environmental reasons since 2015 and the drives have taken place twice a year since.

Chickens help with disposing of waste by eating foods that would otherwise end up in landfills.

They can also be used to physically work the compost by scratching and tearing at pile.

On top of this, they add their own droppings to the waste, adding to its nutrients.

France has made it compulsory for all local authorities to provide households with a way to compost by next January.

Several areas have opted to offer free worms instead of chickens, including Paris which holds regular worm composting and distributing campaigns regularly.

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy A52 5G, an AT&T 5G smartphone

(No Subject)

From: blueidkele13 (blueidkele13@aol.com)

To: blueidkele13@aol.com

Date: Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 06:41 PM EDT

Having Chickens Reduces Your Food Waste, and There's Proof

A city in Belgium had a pretty unique "social experiment."

SHAWNA DAVIS DEC 30, 2022 7:00 AM EST

If you've never considered having a few chickens around, you may want to start thinking about it. People who have pet chickens are likely already aware of why it's necessary to have them around, however, if you're unfamiliar why having a few of them (if you have the space, of course) should be the new "normal," allow us to explain.

These adorable fluffy birds offer quite a few benefits — and we're talking more than just providing you with fresh eggs for breakfast. Apparently, having a few chickens around can offer quite a few environmental benefits and thanks to the province of Flanders, we've learned exactly how chickens can reduce food waste and better the environment.

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy A52 5G, an AT&T 5G smartphone

(No Subject)

From: blueidkele13 (blueidkele13@aol.com)

To: blueidkele13@aol.com

Date: Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 06:45 PM EDT

The idea: Urban hens can help cities become more food secure

Backyard hens provide a cheap, nutritious and regular source of protein for little investment. Cities can do more to help Canadians embrace them.

As inflation hits all areas of spending, Canadians say that food prices are where they're hit the hardest. From May 2021 to May 2022, the price of food rose by 9.7 per cent. And in a survey conducted by Statistics Canada in April, 43 per cent of respondents said rising food prices impacted them the most in the past six months, followed by rising transportation prices, at 32 percent.

Basic food staples were up across the board in May 2022, from fresh fruit (+10 per cent) to meat (+10.1 per cent) and fresh vegetables (+8.2 per cent). While planting vegetables in your backyard allows people to grow their own source of food (along with the well-being benefits of tending to a garden) sources of complex protein are harder to come by. That's where backyard hens come into play. Hens lay an average of one egg a day for 200 to 250 days out of the year. They're a reliable source of fresh protein with little upfront and ongoing cost.

ADVERTISEMENT

As the price of groceries increases, growing one's own food can be a powerful tool to affordably feed households and make cities more food secure. Backyard hens can be a part of this strategy.

The idea: Supporting urban food security by allowing citizens to raise egg-laying hens in their backyards.

How it works: Over the past decade, cities across Canada have been piloting urban hen programs. Saint John was the first city in the Maritimes to allow homeowners to keep chickens, in 2013, while Toronto's UrbanHensTO pilot began five years later. Vancouver and Calgary began permitting for backyard hens in 2022, although Calgary, which recently did the same, has limited its program to 100 applicants for the first year.

Rules vary by city, but hen-keepers typically need to apply for a permit or to register their hens. Vancouver allows a maximum of four hens, while Calgary stipulates a minimum of two and a maximum of four, since hens should be part of a flock. Bylaws also cover the size of enclosures, along with doors that can be locked at night to protect them from predators, like coyotes.

Paul Hughes, executive director of Grow Calgary, a non-profit community farm, has long been a proponent of urban chickens. "They are a very good fit in an urban environment because of their size and how easy it is to feed them very simple table scraps," Hughes explains, which helps to reduce household waste. Alternatively, he says a \$10 bag of feed supports three hens for two months. Enclosures can run the gamut of costs, but Hughes built his from scrap materials. The hens themselves are cheap too, costing about \$10 each for a standard laying hen, and up to \$50 or more for heritage varieties that lays eggs in unconventional colours.

There are, however, opponents to the movement, citing concerns over cleanliness, hygiene and noise. The town of Tecumseh, in southwestern Ontario, discontinued its two-year urban hens pilot program in March 2022 due to complaints that hen coops attracted rodents. But Hughes says mice and rats are prevalent in urban settings and the presence of chickens is not a significant factor in their proliferation. While chickens are susceptible to avian flus, the segregated nature of backyard flocks makes it easy to identify and isolate problems to prevent the spread of disease.

As for noise complaints, Hughes reminds us that it's roosters that crow, not hens, which is why most urban chicken programs don't permit roosters. "Hens are very, very quiet," he says. "They will make a tiny bit of noise when they're having an egg because they're very proud. That's their big event for the day."

The big picture: Urban hens aren't the only solution to feeding cities, but they can be part of it. "Our food security in Canada is so low," Hughes explains. "Every little initiative will add considerably to our capacity to feed ourselves. Families that choose to have hens will improve their household food security." Hughes believes that cities can and should do more to encourage citizens to raise chickens through municipal campaigns, similar to recycling campaigns. "[Cities can] promote hens as a way to reduce organic waste and as a way to access nutritious food," he says.

Much like cities offer free compost for gardens, cities could also subsidize materials required to raise hens as an incentive—or subsidize the hens themselves. In 2010, the town of Mouscron, in Belgium, gave away 50 pairs of chickens as a means of waste management and egg production.

As a bonus, Hughes reminds us of the emotional support that hens provide. "We call them pets with pets of benefits," he says. "A dog gives you nothing back. A cat gives you nothing back. But a chicken gives you an egg."

This story is part of a series on food insecurity in Canada funded by the Maple Leaf Centre for Food Security, in partnership with Community Food Centres Canada.

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Backyard Chickens: Eggs, Therapy, Stress Relief, Pest Control

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Keeping and raising chickens is becoming more and more popular. There are many benefits of tending chickens, including fresh eggs, pest control, fertilizer, entertainment, stress relieve, therapy and family values. It is great for children to learn where their food comes from. What a great way to learn about the food chain and about respecting the animals that provide us with food.

The daily fare of fresh eggs offers numerous health benefits and they taste good, too. A recent study in Mother Earth News showed a comparison in nutrients between eggs from pasture-raised chickens and those raised on factory farms. Benefits of pasture-raised chicken eggs over their commercial counterpart include:

- Less cholesterol and fat
- Two times more omega-3 fatty acids
- Three times more vitamin E
- Six times more vitamin D
- Seven times more beta carotene

Have backyard pests? Chickens love to search for bugs. Every waking moment they are scratching and pecking around looking for a tasty snack. Chickens like grasshoppers, caterpillars, worms, beetles, centipedes, scorpions and other crawling nibbles. What we consider pests, chickens consider lunch.

Chickens are also masters at recycling. The nutrients in food scraps and weeds eaten by chickens are recycled into an extremely valuable substance for the garden...manure! Chicken poop is one of the best garden fertilizers because it contains essential nutrients including nitrogen, potassium and phosphorous. The hardest part is keeping the chickens from eating the garden while they are fertilizing it.

Did you know raising chickens can also help reduce stress, increase health and calm the mind? Similar to caring for and enjoying other pets, tending chickens causes the body to release oxytocin, a stress-lowering hormone. Clea Danaan, author of *Zen and the Art of Raising Chickens: The Way of the Hen*, explains, "Chicken watching increases our mindfulness skills. Caring for chickens gets us outside regularly and watching their methodical scratching and foraging around the yard slows us down and grounds us in the present, providing a meditative and relaxing experience."

When socialized and supervised properly, many animals offer additional therapeutic benefits to children and adults. More than 3,000 animal assisted interaction programs exist across the country. These programs are designed to help people create a natural relationship with animals, which helps strengthen their own social and emotional skills. Chickens are recognized therapy animals used to address a wide variety of issues including dementia, Alzheimer's, sensory disorders, psychiatric illness, depression and autism.

Pet.org.au, an organization that provides support services for autistic children and parents to find the perfect companion animal, offers the following explanation: "A child who is on the autism spectrum inherently needs to be assisted away from over fixation on the inner self. This encouragement to outward awareness and not to fear it can be found in the antics and curious jerky head motions made by chickens. It is so captivating and funny. Chickens, as with most pets, will coax a special needs child to innately accept that there is fascinating 'chaos' in life and that unpredictable things will occur with a fun result. Chickens offer a soothing effect, as well as help to increase social and play skills, decrease feelings of loneliness, and promote

self-care and independent living skills through daily chores."

Finally, chickens are very entertaining. Each one has a different personality and quirky behavior. Some are quiet and some are chatty. Some liked to be held and carried; others not so much. And, there are so many different breeds available. You can find some cool-looking chickens. Kids love to pet and hold chickens and if you get them when they are chicks, they will like the physical attention.

The biggest time investment is building the coop and preparing the yard for the flock. After that, you might only spend 10 minutes a day making sure your hens have plenty of food and water, throwing out scraps for them to snack on and checking for eggs. If you let your hens free range in the backyard, you will only have to clean out their coop every three to four weeks. But you will have to hose the back patio or deck often, and rolling around on the lawn my offer more than grass strains.

It is important to check city ordinances or neighborhood regulations to make sure backyard chickens are allowed and to find out the limit. Most cities allow three to six hens and no roosters. FBN

Jenniene L. Foster, M.D., a board-certified anesthesiologist specializing in regional anesthesia, joined Forest Country Anesthesia in 2006. Dr. Foster came to Flagstaff after completing her medical residency program at The Ohio State University. When not caring for patients, Dr. Foster enjoys spending time with her husband and two daughters in their yard that backs the national forest and has room enough for a large garden and nearly a dozen chickens.

Forest Country Anesthesia providers perform more than 16,000 anesthetic procedures each year in all areas of anesthesiology, including cardiovascular, neurosurgery, obstetrics, orthopedics and pediatrics, across five facilities in Northern Arizona. To learn more about Dr. Foster and Forest Country Anesthesia, visit ForestCountryAnesthesia.com or call 928-773-2505.

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