

**City of Falcon Heights  
Environment Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
August 13, 2012**

Present: Commissioners Diane Ross, Brian Goodspeed, Peggy Hall, Nina Semmelroth, Ethan Wagner, Isaac Mielke, Mayor Peter Lindstrom, Deb Jones (Staff).

Absent: Jeff Connell, Rebecca Montgomery

1. The meeting was called to order by the Chairs at 6:30. The July minutes were tabled because they were not yet available.

2. **Model Beekeeping Ordinance**

For those who were not present in June, the Chairs and staff gave a recap of the presentation by Gary Reuter, bee keeper and scientist from the University of Minnesota. Commissioner Ross reported that she visited Egg Plant in St. Paul. Commissioner Hall visited Jane McHattie's chickens in St. Paul.

Commissioner Hall asked about the process of adopting an ordinance and the Environment Commission's role, answered by Jones and the Mayor. Mayor Lindstrom asked if the Commission has a consensus on moving forward with a bee ordinance. Although the general mood of the Commission seemed to be in favor of continuing, Hall said she has reservations regarding both bees and chickens because of the city's small lot sizes. Citing interest expressed by the community and the need to prepare, Commissioner Semmelroth moved, Ross seconded, to move forward and examine the issue further.

Commissioner Goodspeed described keeping of bees as an environmental issue on many planes, "including moral." He would encourage the city to let people practice beekeeping. Semmelroth posed the question: does it really make sense in this community? Commissioners discussed concerns about possible complaints, liability, allergies, and administration. The question was called; the motion passed.

Commissioners started reviewing the model beekeeping ordinance from the Minnesota Hobby Beekeepers Association. Goodspeed will draft an additional "whereas" regarding the environmental benefit of locally grown food. The Mayor would like an ordinance to require some educational preparation of permittees. Other provisions proposed were the requirement of 100% approval from adjacent neighbors, plus 80% approval of neighbors within 100 feet, and a

20 foot setback from any bee colony to the property line, some way to address cases where a neighbor has a fatal allergy to bee venom.

Commissioners requested the following research: (1) which nearby communities allow bees, (2) what educational requirements other cities have for licensing, (3) what permit fees are charged.

3. **Mercury Standards.** Mayor Lindstrom shared with the Commission a letter of thanks from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for his support of the new Mercury and Air Toxic Standards.
4. **Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at about 8:40 p.m.

