

REGULATION OF ANIMAL RELATED ACTIVITY ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES (BEES, PIGS, CHICKENS)

APRIL 20, 2021



BACKGROUND

- November 4, 2020 - City Council directed staff to evaluate animal related requirements or provisions in the Municipal Code, specifically as they relate to bees, chickens, and pigs on residential properties.
- City has received four, independent, animal-related complaints since 2018.
 1. Roosters (2018)
 2. Beekeeping (2018)
 3. Beekeeping (2020)
 4. Beekeeping (2021)
- Presentation summarizes current regulation and available avenues of enforcement for animal-related nuisances.



EXISTING MUNICIPAL CODE PROVISIONS

- Animal Definitions (MBMC 10.04.030)

Animal, Domestic: Small animals of the type generally accepted as pets, including dogs, cats, rabbits, hens, fish and the like, but not including roosters, ducks, geese, pea fowl, goats, sheep, hogs or the like.

Animal, Exotic: Any wild animal not customarily confined or cultivated by man for domestic or commercial purposes but kept as a pet or for display.

Animal, Large: An animal larger than the largest breed of dogs. This term includes horses, cows, and other mammals customarily kept in corrals or stables.

Animal, Small: An animal no larger than the largest breed of dogs. This term includes fish, birds, and mammals customarily kept in kennels.



BEEKEEPING

- Bees not specifically defined or regulated
- Provisions in Title 5 (Sanitation and Health) and Title 9 (Building Regulations) of the Municipal Code that more generally govern animal activities and nuisances
- Placement of the hive, availability of water, amount of space in the hive, re-queening, and tending to the hive all play a significant role in successful beekeeping
- Aggressive bee behavior can lead to public nuisance



BEEKEEPING

- Beekeeping activity surge in response to evidence indicating that a number of bee species have become endangered
- Bees are the most well-known pollinators
- Pollinators play a crucial role in supporting biodiversity
- Pollinators support many benefits that humans receive from healthy ecosystems, the most notable being food security



BEEKEEPING IN LA COUNTY

- County Dept. of Agricultural Commissioner / Weights & Measures responsible for regulating beekeeping
- Annual registration required
- Investigate all nuisance complaints
- Take two days from receipt of the complaint to conduct a site inspection
- County inspector will coordinate with the Code Enforcement division of the local jurisdiction



BEEKEEPING IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

- Some local jurisdictions have not adopted beekeeping regulations and continue to rely on LA County for inspector services and guidance.
- Some have prohibited beekeeping entirely.
- Others have adopted specific beekeeping regulations (permitting requirements and operational parameters):
 - Redondo Beach (Sanitation & Health Code)
 - Torrance (Public Health and Welfare Code)
 - Long Beach (Animal Code)
 - Los Angeles (Zoning Code)



CHICKENS AND PIGS - MBMC

Chickens/Roosters

- Chickens are permitted
- Chicken coops are regulated as accessory structures
- Roosters are prohibited

Pigs

- Vietnamese pot-bellied pigs (pygmy pigs or mini-pigs) are permitted
- Hogs and other species of pigs are prohibited



ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS

- 9.68.020- Public nuisance; substandard or dangerous property conditions

“Any other condition which adversely affects the public health, welfare, and safety.”

- 5.01.280- Animals. Public Nuisance

“Any animal or animals which molest passersby or passing vehicles, attack other animals, trespass on school grounds, is repeatedly at large, damages, and/or trespasses on private or public property, bark, whines, or howls in an excessive, continuous, or untimely fashion, shall be considered a public nuisance.”



ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS (CONT'D)

5.01.310 – Animals at Large

“It is unlawful for the owner or person having custody of any dog or other animal to permit, either willfully or through failure to exercise due care or control; any such dog or animal to commit any nuisance, and to allow such nuisance...”

- 5.08 – Animal Care Regulations

- Supply animals with sufficient food and water as often as the feeding habits of the respective animals require
- Maintain their housing facilities in good repair
- Maintain animals as to eliminate excessive and nighttime noise
- Take reasonable precautions to protect the public from the animals and the animals from the public
- Correct any violations within a reasonable time

- 5.48.050– Animals and Fowl

“Any animal or fowl which emanates sound or outcry in an excessive, continuous, or untimely fashion, shall be considered a public nuisance.”



POLICY ALTERNATIVES

- I. Continue to enforce existing animal-related regulations in the Municipal Code and work with the County of Los Angeles on City enforcement of beekeeping-related code enforcement cases (i.e. enforce as a public nuisance);
- II. Add work plan item to improve, modernize, and amend existing Code sections in Title 5, Title 9, Title 10 to more specifically allow or prohibit animal/bee related uses on residentially zoned properties and specify enforcement mechanisms; or
- III. Add work plan item to develop a local beekeeping ordinance.



STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council discuss and provide direction on regulations governing animal-related activity, specifically bees, pigs and chickens, on residential properties.

