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SEP 30 2019

Olathe Planning Division

Statement of the purpose-

Hello,

My name is Madison Scott, and my boyfriend's name is Brent Jestice. We are applying for a Special Use Permit for our 10 backyard chickens. Neither one of us had ever had chickens so starting our flock was a learning experience! April of 2017 one of our coworkers bought chickens for an Easter photoshoot with her kids and did not know what to do with them after the pictures were taken. I have come to find out this unfortunately happens with a lot of other animals including "Easter Bunnies" which tend to end up in Pounds after they figure out that the animals were more work than they imagined. We talked it over and decided to surprise Brent's daughters with these 6 baby chicks. Our best decision ever in my opinion!

Currently the coop and chickens are in my boyfriend's mothers' backyard located on Cedar St in Original Town Olathe, where my boyfriend also lives. Brent and I plan on finding a home of our own on more acreage within the next 2 year's so we hope to get a permit for that amount of time. These chickens have become a huge part of our family as silly as that sounds. They are our pets who happen to provide us with breakfast as well as a built-in pest control! We have loved every minute of having these birds and they bring joy to everyone who comes to the house. We do not let the birds free range (out of the coop) unless we are able to be there to watch them. We have had too many close calls with stray dogs as well as Chicken Hawks while we were present that we don't want to risk something happening while we aren't there to protect them!

In July of this year we purchased an old hand-built play house that we spent 2 days, sun up to sun down, converting into a new coop! With the help of our friends and family we were able to make sure we had the coop ready with a safe, caged in area for the birds to roam while we were away at work during the day. We are so proud of the work we have done, and the chickens love all the room! The coop gets a once over every weekend, as in cleaning windows, raking the bedding, and scooping/scraping any of their poop off the window seals as well as their roost areas. The collected poop goes into a gallon bucket which we use as fertilizer for the yard. Brents mother Vickie also uses it in her beautiful flower garden! Every other weekend the bedding inside the coop gets completely cleaned out and new bedding goes down. The old bedding is thrown out in a yard waste trash can for pick up on Mondays.

Now when you think of chickens I'm sure what comes to mind is the obvious, delicious meat and eggs, but for myself, they are SO much more than that. They have become almost therapeutic for me. I struggle with anxiety and depression and I have found that sitting outside with the chickens is so stress relieving. They are so funny to watch when they get spooked by something or even if they are just free ranging around looking for food. They all have their own quirks and personalities which I know, who the heck thought a chicken could have a personality! I like to compare them to dogs because they come when you call them, they make little noises when they are happy and mad, they love treats, and they all flock together! I often get called the crazy chicken lady or at work I get called the "Egg Lady". Every weekend I stay with Brent so while he is working on his hobbies (cars) I am spending time in the coop or out in the yard with the chickens! When and if we have to leave, we herd them back into the coop which is very easy if you have a bag of freeze dried meal worms with you! My favorite thing to do is stand on the other side of the yard and shake the bag of worms and watch them come running from all corners of the yard. They will never turn away from a bag of meal worms!

A story I love to tell people is my most recent visit to Sprint to get a new phone. While I was working with the gal swapping over my contacts and photos to the new phone she laughed and said she has seen a lot of girls my age with thousands of selfies but never one with thousands of chicken pictures! We had a good laugh over it and I showed her a few videos I had of them. I love to show them off! With all these pictures I have created a social media page that has gained almost 4 thousand fellow chicken enthusiast followers! I have gained a whole new perspective on birds and chickens after creating this page and receiving feedback from people all over the world. It is so cool to see the different chickens and coop setups that everyone else has in their backyards. I had someone from Australia who found my page and sent me a new feeder and waterer free of charge if I posted pictures and tagged them for my followers to see. It is so cool what kind of people you can reach just through posting pictures to social media!

Following the social media trend, I came across a gal who rehabs battered, caged, sick, or even hurt hens. Along with the help of her husband and kids, they give these birds one on one care in the comfort of their own home. This is something most chickens are not used to. One video she posted made me cry, this was the first time this chicken was seeing or feeling grass under its feet! These are things most people take for granted and don't think about! I believe this touches me most because I have a special needs chicken of my own. We bought 4 new baby chicks a year ago and as they grew older we noticed one walking with a limp. This little chicken has come to be one of my favorites! Her name is Cripple, and she has a bum leg that we believe she was born with. She is the sweetest little hen ever who will come up to you if you hold your hand out!

So as you see, these birds have so much more meaning to our family than just a small meal. I can't imagine life without them, and I am hoping to continue to raise this little flock of ours while complying with the city and permit laws.

Thank you for your time!

Madison Scott and Brent Jestice