

CITY OF GEM LAKE, RAMSEY COUNTY, MINNESOTA

ORDINANCE NO. 110

AN ORDINANCE TO PERMIT AND REGULATE THE KEEPING OF PIGEONS IN THE CITY OF GEM LAKE, AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 69.

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GEM LAKE ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. Intent and Purpose. It is the purpose and intent of this ordinance to permit the keeping, maintenance and flying of certain registered pigeons as a recreational sport and hobby, subject to regulations hereinafter set forth. The keeping, breeding, maintenance and flying of fancy, racing and sporting breeds of pigeons, as defined herein, is determined not to be a nuisance and is not detrimental to the public welfare, if regulated as hereafter set forth. It is recognized that the keeping, breeding, maintenance and flying of such pigeons is now mainly engaged in by members of local, district and national organizations, and such persons keep their pigeons in suitable permanent structures constructed and maintained for such purpose, and keep such structures in a clean and sanitary manner, and do not permit their pigeons to remain at large in the community in such manner as to disturb their neighbors or to prevent the full enjoyment of property rights by their neighbors.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENT. Section 2.3 of Ordinance 69 is amended, to add the following definitions:

Pigeon. A member of the family Columbidae, and shall include “Racing Pigeons”, “Fancy Pigeons” and “Sporting Pigeons” as defined in this ordinance.

Pigeon - Fancy Pigeon. A pigeon which, through past breeding, has developed certain distinctive physical and performing characteristics as to be clearly identified and accepted as such by the National Pigeon Association, the American Pigeon Club, or the Rare Breeds Pigeon Club. Examples: Fantails, Pouters, Trumpeters.

Pigeon - Loft. A structure for the keeping or housing of pigeons.

Pigeon - Mature Pigeon. A pigeon aged six months or older.

Pigeon - Racing Pigeon. A pigeon which, through selective past breeding, has developed the distinctive physical and mental characteristics as to enable it to return to its home after having been released a considerable distance therefrom, and which is accepted as such by the American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc. or the International Federation of Racing Pigeon Fanciers. Common names are Racing Homer, Homing Pigeon, or Carrier Pigeon.

Pigeon - Sporting Pigeon. A pigeon which, through selective past breeding, has developed the ability to fly in a distinctive manner, such as aerial acrobatics or endurance flying. Examples: Rollers, Tipplers.

SECTION 3. AMENDMENT. Section 3 of Ordinance 69 is amended to add the following sub-sections:

Section 3.12 Keeping of Pigeons. The keeping, breeding, maintenance and flying of pigeons may be permitted subject to the following:

3.12.1 A loft must be constructed and maintained to keep and confine the pigeons. The loft must provide at least nine cubic feet of space per bird. The loft must be enclosed with wire netting or equivalent material that will prevent pigeons from escaping the confines of the loft. Lofts must be elevated a minimum of six inches and a maximum of twelve inches above grade to ensure free-way beneath the loft. Lofts shall rest upon concrete footings, cement blocks, or other suitable foundation material. A loft may have a maximum height of nine feet.

3.12.2 The loft must be constructed and maintained so as to be rodent-proof.

3.12.3 The owner may construct pigeon lofts up to a cumulative maximum floor area of 200 square feet. Any single loft with over 120 square feet in floor area requires a building permit, as with other accessory structures.

3.12.4 Pigeon lofts may be located in the rear yard only and shall be at least 50 feet from adjacent habitable structures.

3.12.5 Pigeons shall be confined to the loft except when they are released for exercise, performance, training, or to return from areas outside the City of Gem Lake for the purpose of engaging in a race or returning from training flights.

3.12.6 All pigeons shall be fed within the confines of the loft on the premises on which the pigeons are housed.

3.12.7 All grains and food stored for the use of the pigeons on a licensed premises shall be kept in a rodent-proof container.

3.12.8 Pigeons must be banded in a way to identify each pigeon as kept by its owner.

3.12.9 All premises on which pigeons are kept or maintained shall be kept reasonably clean from filth, garbage, and any substances which attract rodents. The loft and its surroundings must be cleaned daily.

3.12.10 No one shall release pigeons to fly for exercise, training or competition within the City of Gem Lake except an owner of pigeons who is a member in good standing of an organized pigeon club, such as the American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc., the International Federation of Racing Pigeon Fanciers, the National Pigeon Association, the American Tippler Society, the International Roller Association, the Rare Breeds Pigeon

Club, or a local club which has rules that will help preserve the peace and tranquility of the neighborhood.

SECTION 4. AMENDMENT. Section 4 of Ordinance 69 is hereby amended to add the following sub-sections:

Section 4.2. Pigeon Keeping License. No person shall own, keep or harbor pigeons within the City of Gem Lake without first obtaining a license. Applicant shall complete an application form provided by the City. The application shall include, but not be limited to the following information: a site plan showing the location and size of the premises, and the location size and type of all pigeon lofts, and demonstration that said lofts will comply with City zoning requirements; a statement of the maximum number of pigeons to be kept on the premises at one time; and an agreement by the applicant that the premises may be inspected by the City at all reasonable times so as to assure compliance with the conditions outlined in Section 3.12. Only one license may be issued per property.

4.2.1 Duration of License; Fee. Each license issued hereunder shall expire one (1) year after issuance unless sooner revoked. A license must be renewed annually to continue the keeping of pigeons. The City Council shall set the annual fee for a license by ordinance with other City fees. Fees shall be paid at the time of the making of the application for license or renewal.

4.2.2 Number of Animals. The number of pigeons permitted to be kept under an approved license is calculated by dividing the volume of loft space by nine (minimum space per bird). The maximum number of pigeons allowed to any licensee, regardless of capacity, is 120 birds from March 1 to May 31, and 90 birds during the rest of the year.

4.2.3 Denial or Revocation. The pigeon-keeping license may be revoked, or renewal denied, if the licensee fails to comply with limits on number of pigeons or any of the conditions outlined in Section 3.12.

SECTION 5. Severability. Should any section, subdivision, clause or other provision of this Ordinance be held to be invalid in any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the Ordinance as a whole, or of any part hereof, other than the part held to be invalid.

SECTION 6. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and publication.

Dated: 10-19, 2009


Robert Uzpen Mayor


William Short - Clerk

Summary of Ordinance 110 approved by City Council and published in the White Bear Press on 10-28, 2009.