

Animal Control By-law Review Working Group: Meeting Minutes

Thursday 14 December 2017 at 4:30 p.m.
Falstaff Room, 2nd Floor, 82 Erie Street Stratford

Meeting called by: Ed Dujlovic, Director of Infrastructure and Development Services

Note taker: Stephanie Potter, Policy and Research Associate

Working Group Members: Ken Wood, Maxine Watson, Christopher Koslowski, Pamela Bartlett, Kathrin Delutis, *Christine Jones (non-voting)*

Regrets: Sharon Morrice, Kimberley Kempen

1.0 Review minutes of previous meeting

11 October 2017 – approved

21 November 2017 – approved

2.0 Animal Concerns Protocol – Delegation: Gerry Foster, Acting Chief of Police

- Working group members asked Chief Foster who would be appropriate to call in the case of animal abuse or an animal emergency outside regular Humane Society working hours;
- Chief Foster explained that if you witness an animal being abused, you can call the police; in cases where abuse is suspected, you should call the Humane Society to file a report;
- Working group members advocated for one number to call so that animal concerns could be dispatched to the correct place, similar to Toronto 311;
- Chief Foster and the working group member representative from the Humane Society indicated that the one number to call in these cases would be the Stratford Perth Humane Society, which has an answering service that will page an officer to respond and has someone on call to respond to issues 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year;
- Chief Foster indicated that police dispatch officers are not trained to handle animal related calls and complaints. Similarly, police officers are not trained to respond to animal issues and do not have the right equipment to respond to animal issues, and that this is unlikely to change. Under the Criminal Code, the police have the authority to deal

with animal issues and can lay charges, but they do so in partnership with the OSPCA and the Humane Society. The Humane Society is the appropriate place to call in the event of an animal concern because they have officers trained to handle animal issues and they have the equipment necessary to do so. OSPCA officers also have the authority to lay charges and will work with the City solicitor

- It was indicated that is not uncommon for the police to call SPHS to handle an animal when the police are conducting investigations/regular business; similarly, OSPCA staff will contact the police when responding to animal issues involving an irate human or domestic issues – there is a dialog between the police and the OSPCA;
- It was asked how many animal related calls the police receive in a year. Chief Foster indicated that the police received 135 animal related calls last year, but the vast majority of those calls were noise complaints, not abuse or emergency related;
- In the case of dealing with large animals, the OSPCA/police will call the Ministry of Natural resources.

⇒ **Motion: That the Humane Society's number and instructions for how handle animal emergencies should be included on the City's website.**

Carried

3.0 Review updates to the Animal Control Bylaw

3.1 Definitions:

- The Working group recommended the following changes to definitions in the Bylaw:

That a clearer definition of wildlife be included in the bylaw;

And that distinct definitions of service animal and therapy animal be included in the bylaw

Carried

3.2 Boarding Kennels:

- The working group expressed concerns over the licensing requirement for boarding kennels, as the current bylaw only requires breeders and borders of pure bread dogs to apply for a kennel license;
- It was noted that the kennel license application is specific to breeding, however, it was noted that animal day cares should be regularly inspected and that a minimum amount of indoor and outdoor space should be required for each animal boarded at a facility, as there is currently no requirement or regulation for these businesses.

⇒ **Motion: That businesses that board and/or care for animals be subject to licensing requirements,**

And that businesses that board animals be required to have a reasonable amount of indoor and outdoor space per animal as defined by the City

Carried

4.0 Review all Animal Control Working Group recommendations

- The working group reviewed the recommendations made so far and indicated that staff should review the implications of waiving pet licensing fees for the first year when a microchip is purchased.

5.0 Wildlife management strategy

- It was suggested that instead of a formal strategy, an education piece regarding on wildlife should be included on the City's website as part of public education, including information on wildlife, the resources available (e.g. the Humane Society, the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority, Ministry of Natural Resources), and the City's 2013 Bylaw regarding feeding wildlife.

⇒ **Motion: That information on wildlife be included as part of public education on the City's website.**

Carried

6.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:50pm