

Animal Control By-law Review Working Group Minutes

Wednesday, August 24, 2016 at 5:00p.m, Avon Room

Present: Ken Wood, Jack Kinch, Sharon Morrice, Christopher Koslowski
Kimberley Kempen, Maxine Watson, Ed Dujlovic, Stephanie Potter

1.0 Introductions

Committee members introduced themselves to the group.

2.0 Review of Terms of Reference

Committee Terms of Reference were reviewed. Issues were identified that have been presented to Council. It was noted that further issues can be added to this review as needed. It was suggested that protocols for dealing with wildlife might be considered for addition. It was noted that Council has reviewed the issue of pet store licensing/banning the sale of pets in pet stores in the past and has said no.

3.0 Review of Existing City By-laws

The committee discussed the existing Animal Control Bylaw. It was suggested that some attention should be given to revising the current definitions in the bylaw, and that all committee recommendations be enforceable. It was noted that the City Solicitor will be consulted on the wording of any recommended changes.

4.0 Review bylaw review items:

Staff presented the various issues that have been identified for this bylaw review, and the research collected thus far. Committee members then spoke to their concerns and priorities on these issues as follows:

- Members agreed that the pet sale ban discussion should be restricted to the sale of cats and dogs in pet stores;
- Some members advocate banning the sale of pets in pet stores unless they are from a reputable rescue organization and have been spayed or neutered;
- It was stated that pet sale bans will help to promote the adoption of rescue animals in shelters, limit impulse purchases, and help to control the unwanted pet population because all adopted animals are spayed/neutered;
- It was also suggested that some pets that are sold in pet stores are unhealthy and neglected, particularly because Kennel Associations do not allow purebred animals to be sold in pet stores. Thus purebred animals sold in pet stores are

often acquired from puppy mills. The attached research collected by Ken Wood was referenced, in addition to several examples of municipalities banning the sale of pets in pet stores across North America to help mitigate these issues;

- Some committee members stated that the pet store sale ban may make these issues more difficult to regulate because they simply drive the problem further underground to online sites such as kijiji. Similarly, it was mentioned that the pet sale ban is usually advocated to stop the operation of puppy mills. However, this problem still exists;
- One committee member stated that local pet stores should be allowed to sell puppies/kittens because many people want to purchase animals at a young age. It was also stated that many residents have offered unwanted kittens to pet stores to sell because they have no other means of finding homes for them. Banning the sale of pets in pet stores will mean that pet stores are no longer able to help find homes for these animals;
- Members debated mandatory spay and neuter protocols for breeders, prohibiting the sale of unaltered animals, the possibility of surcharging to have kittens/puppies fixed at the time of sale and providing a voucher as alternatives to banning the sale of pets in pet stores and as a means of controlling/limiting “backyard breeding;”
- It was mentioned that there is no regulation on breeding – anyone can say they are a breeder;
- It was suggested that cats should only be allowed to roam at large if they are spayed/neutered, and that owners can be fined if an unaltered cat is found outdoors;
- It was suggested that no animal should be offered for sale unless they have been spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and microchipped;
- Exploring the creation of a low cost/no cost rabies and spay/neuter clinic was suggested;
- It was suggested that the City consider undertaking a microchipping program in addition to the current pet licensing protocol as a low-cost and effective way to improve owner accountability;
- Exploring education programs was advocated as an effective means of controlling the pet population, promoting animal adoption, and helping people recognize puppy mill operations;
- The committee discussed lowering adoption fees as a means of encouraging more residents to adopt rescue animals.

5.0 Next Steps:

Staff will bring a draft public survey to the next meeting for discussion/suggestions

6.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:48pm.