

2ND REPORT OF THE
ANIMAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on January 7, 2016, commencing at 5:07 PM, in Committee Room #4, Second Floor, London City Hall.

PRESENT: W. Brown (Chair), M. Gelinas, V. Lightfoot, K. MacIntosh, D. Simpson, J. Sukhdeo, M. Toplack and J. Martin (Secretary).

ABSENT: K. Ashe, P. Newbould, C. Perquin and M. Puzanov.

ALSO PRESENT: D. Clarke, J. MacKay, R. Oke and F. Sekercioglu.

I. CALL TO ORDER

1. Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest

That it BE NOTED that no pecuniary interests were disclosed.

II. SCHEDULED ITEMS

None.

III. CONSENT ITEMS

2. 1st Report of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

That it BE NOTED that the 1st Report of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee, from its meeting held on December 3, 2015, was received.

IV. SUB-COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS

3. Wildlife Sub-Committee

That it BE NOTED that the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC) received a verbal update from W. Brown and M. Gelinas, on behalf of the AWAC Wildlife Sub-Committee; it being noted that the AWAC approved expenditures of up to \$500.00 with respect to a presentation, to held in April 2016, from Coyote Watch Canada; it being further noted that the AWAC has sufficient funds in its proposed 2016 budget for these expenditures.

4. Companion Animals Sub-Committee

That the following actions be taken with respect to the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee Companion Animals Sub-Committee:

- a) the Municipal Council BE REQUESTED to consider expanding the spay/neuter program to include additional companion animals such as rabbits and guinea pigs;
- b) the Civic Administration BE REQUESTED to provide a more detailed breakdown of statistical information with respect to animal transfers to rescues serving London and to groups outside London, including who received the animals and the species transferred, as reported in the City of London Animal Services Update 2015/2016 pamphlet provided by the Civic Administration; and,
- c) the attached minutes of the Companion Animals Sub-Committee, from its meeting held on January 4, 2016, BE RECEIVED.

V. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

5. 2016 Animal Welfare Advisory Committee Work Plan

That the attached 2016 Work Plan for the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee BE FORWARDED to the Municipal Council for consideration.

6. 2016 Budget

That the Municipal Council BE REQUESTED to consider increasing the budget for the spay/neuter program by an additional \$50,000.00.

VI. DEFERRED MATTERS/ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

None.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 P.M.

NEXT MEETING DATE: February 4, 2016

Report of the COMPANION ANIMAL SUB-COMMITTEE/ AWAC

Meeting held on January 4th, 2016.

Attended:

Vicky Lightfoot
Kaylie MacIntosh
Vicki Van Linden

Following are two recommendations from the Companion Animal Sub-committee for AWAC's consideration. The suggested recommendations for the Community and Protective Services Committee are included in each item, including a preamble to be included with each suggested recommendation.

1. The first recommendation concerns a recommendation that the city budget include a modest increase in the spay/neuter fund of an additional \$50,000. Note that the justifications for that increase are fully explained in that section, and it should be noted that while the funding for TNR spay/neuters did last until November of 2015, the funding for the Low-income Spay/neuter program was fully used by July of 2015, leaving 5 months without funding.

This recommendation regarding the budget is time-sensitive and must be completed and submitted at the January 7th, AWAC meeting for consideration.

2. The second item concerns a recommendation that more complete information be provided regarding what 'groups' received animals transferred from the LACC as reported in the 'Animal Services Update' pamphlet.

This item is not time-sensitive and could wait until the February meeting if desired.

First item:

Note: The first section of the report is from the sub-committee to AWAC.

*The second section, starting with the **recommendation**, and including all of the **preamble**, can be included in the formal recommendation to CPSC, if approved by AWAC members.*

RE: Request for Additional funding for Spay/Neuter Subsidy Programming.

The Animal Welfare Co-ordinator previously informed AWAC that spay/neuter funding in the current fund lasted until November of 2015. On further review, we have learned that the funds that did last that long were specifically those ear-marked for the TNR program for homeless/street cats.

The subsidy program for the pets living with Lower-income Londoners was all spoken for in July of 2015, so funding to assist cats and dogs while they were still in homes was no longer available for at least 5 months of the year. That fund had run out.

Civic administration has advised the AWAC that it is their opinion that an increase in funding is not needed as the City Veterinarian is expected to provide sterilization surgeries for animals during 2016. As well, the City Cat Adoption Center is expected to become active during 2016. It is fair to respectfully note that when a request for additional spay/neuter funding was made by AWAC in February of 2015, civic administration also advised against the need for such funding, stating at that time that the two new programs were expected to be active during 2015. Yet, neither program met that target, and neither program is yet operational.

And, we see that the funding for 'owned' animals did indeed run out, leaving 5 months uncovered. We are told again that both programs will become active soon, yet we understand that these are expectations but cannot be guarantees. We understand that civic administration faces many hurdles in getting both programs active and are appreciative of the hard work that these programs involve. Still, it seems more prudent to provide a mechanism to ensure that more 'owned' animals will be successfully sterilized during 2016, regardless of any possible delays in the two new programs. An increase in spay/neuter funding provides that assurance.

Recommendation:

AWAC recommends that council increase the preventative investment in spay/neuter funding by \$50,000 annually to control and possibly reduce animal services costs in the future.

We further recommend that the community spay/neuter funding be expanded to include any commonly kept companion animal such as rabbits and guinea pigs.

Preamble:

At present, the city provides \$150,000 annually for **companion animal community programming**, and this funding is supported by dog license and cat identification fees.

Programs these funds are used for:

- the annual Super Adoption Day,
- feral cat Trap/Neuter/Return program (TNR) – mostly the cost of Spay/neuter surgeries
- Pets of Low-income Londoners – as in the cost of Spay/neuter surgery subsidies for dogs and cats only.

During 2015, the Low-income Subsidy program funds were already assigned by July, as confirmed by civic administration. After July of 2015 no new applicants were considered for the Low-income subsidy program. This resulted in a period of 5 months when subsidies for low-income pet owners, a highly preventative program, were unavailable.

We are also informed by civic administration that this part of the fund has usually run out by mid-April in previous years. The fact that low-income owner/guardians of cats and dogs were unable to access subsidies for at least 5 months of the past year is of grave concern.

During 2015, the fund for spay/neuter of cats who are part of the city's TNR (Trap/Neuter/Return) program did last until November.

Cats that become part of London's homeless/street cat population often start out as 'owned' cats. They are sometimes purposefully discarded to the street because of the undesirable behaviours they exhibit when sexually mature. As well, cats who are unaltered frequently escape their homes in search of mates, and may wander too far to find their way home again.

So we see that many cats who later require care through the TNR program could have avoided the streets all together if they had been spayed or neutered when they were still 'owned.' We know there is a greater risk for pets living with people who are financially disadvantaged to go unsterilized and to become homeless. Such animals, once born, have a higher likelihood of breeding further litters, and of needing the city's animal services, thus increasing costs.

Getting to as many animals as possible while they are still in homes and before they reach the streets is the best way to ensure that those animals will never need the city's services. **So, the Low-income subsidy program is critical to reducing and controlling animal services costs.**

As a city, we can invest this money now, or spend much more later. As the human population expands so too does the number of companion animals whom new residents acquire. If the city wants to hold the cost of animal services steady in face of an increasing human population, then increased investment in this preventative program is the best way to reduce and control future demand for animal services.

We are aware that some quality programming is expected to come on-stream later this year, the City Veterinarian and the Cat Adoption Centre.

Nevertheless, we respectfully note that both of these programs were expected to become active during 2015 and did not. We understand that unavoidable road-blocks prevented both programs from becoming active, at no fault of civic administration. Keeping that history in mind, it is fair to say that there is no positive guarantee of when either program will become active. Again, we understand that delays in municipal programming are unavoidable and no fault of our hard-working civic administration.

Last year, in February of 2015, civic administration recommended to council that additional spay/neuter funding was not needed as the new programs would become active during that year. Yet, neither program became active and the spay/neuter funding for low-income subsidies did run out.

This year, it seems prudent to provide a mechanism to ensure that more 'owned' animals will be successfully sterilized during 2016, regardless of any possible delays in the two new programs. An increase in spay/neuter funding provides that assurance. And, if those funds are not needed they will not be spent and will simply remain with the city.

We note as well, that of the two new programs, only the City Veterinarian program has the ability to reduce the births of unwanted animals.

The Cat Adoption Centre will be an extremely valuable program and will contribute to the 'No Kill' goal. It will provide a highly efficient, cost-effective and more humane way to shelter cats waiting for adoption. The Cat Adoption Program is well designed to dramatically reduce future animal services costs. But, the Cat Adoption Centre is not a factor in preventing litters born to 'owned' animals, some who may later become homeless.

A Preventative program with Cost Savings:

The current program provides on average \$100 for each spay/neuter of an 'owned' animal. At times, an animal may require additional care, thereby increasing this amount.

With an increase in funding of \$50,000,
and assuming average costs between \$100 to \$125 per spay/neuter,
the increase would cover the sterilization of approximately 400 to 500 animals.

The long-term benefits of having that many additional animals sterilized is profound. We all know that the real way to control costs is to prevent unwanted litters from being born in the first place.

Using cats as an example:

Cats go into heat at least twice a year,
and averaging a litter size of 4 kittens per litter,
by sterilizing an additional 400 to 500 cats,
we could prevent the birth of approximately 1600 to 2,000 kittens in just one year.

To be completely fair and not over-state, let's consider that half of those kittens either die, or find good homes and are sterilized. That could still be between 800 to 1,000 kittens who are prevented in one year of additional funding of just \$50,000.

Those kittens that do survive and find their way into homes are still taking up spaces that will not be available to already living pets who need those homes.

Additional funding can prevent the birth of between 800 to 1,000 cats:

- who will never require services at the city shelter or Cat Adoption Centre,
- will never have kittens themselves,
- will never need support from the Trap/Neuter/Return program
- and will never suffer being killed because there are no homes for them.

Now expand that number again to take into account the litters that would be born from those litters – and on and on – and it is clear that there is a significant cost-saving benefit to this modest increase in funding.

Spending money at the front-end, which is what spay/neuter programs are – is the surest way to control and reduce costs, and in the quickest way possible. A modest increase of funding, even if coming from the tax base, has a high likelihood of considerable savings to the city's future animal services costs. Note that the city's contracted animal services are paid entirely from the tax base, so efforts today to control future costs are a prudent investment.

Regarding inclusion of other companion animal species, such as rabbits and guinea pigs:

Though companion species other than cats and dogs do not enter the city shelter in as large numbers as cats and dogs we know that there is a great strain on the volunteers who work to rescue and re-home these animal companions.

It is our position that as the City of London has allowed the sale of these animals for many years in retail outlets within our city, that we therefore have an obligation to provide some assistance to the volunteers who shoulder the burden of assisting these animals when they become discarded and homeless.

The policies of the city that freely allow the unencumbered sale of such animals creates the framework where these animals are often seen as 'starter' pets. They are often discarded and rescue volunteers struggle to provide compassionate outcomes for such animals without benefit of community programming.

By allowing the owner/guardians of such animals, especially rabbits, to access the lower-income subsidy program we can assist in keeping more of these animals in their initial homes. And, in cases when they are surrendered, access to spay/neuter funding will assist volunteer rescuers to provide care.

Second Item:

Recommendation

Members of the AWAC recommend that, in the interests of full transparency, the City Council of London request the names of the facilities or 'groups' that have received the transfers of 90 animals in 2014, and 314 animals in 2015 from London.

We further recommend that those 404 animals from London be clearly listed by species, so that we can know how many were cats, dogs, rabbits or other in order to better plan our municipal and rescue programming.

Preamble:

In the pamphlet distributed by the City of London titled: 'Animal Services Updates' actual transfers are listed in two ways:

-Transfers to rescues serving London

-Transfers to groups outside of London.

It would appear that 'groups' are not 'rescue groups' from the difference in wording. It is important to understand what 'groups' are receiving London's homeless animals.

-Are these animals being transferred to other shelters?

-If so, are those shelters or groups also practicing 'No Kill'?

-Do those shelters or groups have a firm policy of never voluntarily providing animals to research facilities under the practice known as Pound Seizure?

Note:

Pound Seizure is the practice where lost, stray, or abandoned former pets are handed over to research facilities to be used as test subjects. This classification of animals is referred to as 'random-sourced' as opposed to 'purpose-bred.' Once those animals, former pets and companions, are handed over they are no longer protected by the OSPCA Act, and their treatment is governed by a different set of laws that allows them to be subjected to painful procedures including those that may cause death. Regardless of one's position on the use of animals for scientific testing, most Canadians agree that animals who have lived in homes and acted as companions deserve a different fate when they become lost or abandoned.

As well, in keeping with the previous council's decision that London work toward the goal of being a 'No Kill' community, providing animals to research facilities is clearly contrary to that goal; the purpose of which is to provide the most compassionate outcomes possible for lost animals.

We recognize that Ontario is the only province in Canada that mandates that municipally-funded shelters provide animals to research facilities when demanded to do so. Nevertheless, we are also aware that when shelters take a firm stand that they will not voluntarily hand over lost pets to research facilities, the provincial 'Pound Seizure' law is rarely invoked to force the shelter to release those animals. This appears to be because there are still several shelters in Ontario that willingly provide lost pets to be used as scientific research test subjects when asked to do so. It is important to us that animals from London not be transferred to facilities that would voluntarily provide them to research facilities.

From the Animal Alliance of Canada website:

www.animalalliance.ca

"Despite this growing movement [opposition to the use of former pets as research test subjects], Canadian research facilities still "seize" lost and homeless pets from shelters for use in experimentation. In 2010 (the latest available figures), 11,790 lost and abandoned dogs and cats were used in labs across Canada. According to the statistics from the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC), of the 4,438 cats used in experiments, 3,784 came from pounds, a

staggering 85%. For the same year, 8,006 or 77% of the 10,381 dogs came from pounds. (www.ccac.ca)”

Therefore, the AWAC believes that it is essential that members of London City Council are made aware of which ‘groups’ are receiving London’s lost and stray dogs, cats, rabbits and any other animals.

Further, in keeping with the goal of ‘No Kill’ it is clear that if animals are transferred to other facilities or groups that are not committed to ‘No Kill’, then clearly the goal of ‘No Kill’ is not being furthered.

Much of the AWAC’s concern is based on the knowledge that most other Ontario communities are not functioning as ‘No Kill’ as the entire province struggles with the still critical over-population of companion animals such as dogs, cats and rabbits. Cats especially are at critical levels in every Ontario community that we are aware of. Therefore, we question what Ontario communities have so few lost or stray cats from their own community that they would be able to take in London animals.

While we appreciate that LACC is making effort to achieve the ‘No Kill’ goal set by the previous city council, we are concerned that this goal be truly achieved through the progressive programs that are already underway in the city, and through an actual reduction in pet over-population.

Partnering with rescue groups who are committed to the ‘No Kill’ philosophy is a recommended practice in achieving a reduced kill rate, and we recommend that this practice continue and be further developed by co-operating with any London-approved rescue group who is willing to take animals from the LACC facility.

If any of London’s dogs, cats, rabbits or other are transferred to a group or facility that may then kill them, or provide them to a research laboratory then we have not truly provided a compassionate outcome for those animals which is the true goal of the ‘No Kill’ philosophy. Such transfers would have simply hidden our pet over-population problem by exporting the problem elsewhere.

Summary:

-Therefore, we recommend that in the interests of full transparency, that the names of the facilities or ‘groups’ that have received 90 animals in 2014, and 314 animals in 2015 from London (as reported at the time of the update) be openly reported to London’s City Council.

-We further recommend that the species of those animals be clearly reported. We need to know what numbers of those transferred animals were cats, dogs, rabbits or other in order to better plan our municipal and rescue programming. Complete, detailed and fully transparent statistics are needed to help us to plan the programs that will move us ahead.

Animal Welfare Advisory Committee Work Plan – 2016

Date, January 2016

Activity	Background	Responsibility	Timeline	Proposed Budget	Strategic Plan Alignment
Coyote Education Seminar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host an educational seminar to provide information to stakeholders and the community about how to handle coyote issues in the urban setting. 	Wildlife Sub-Committee	Spring 2016		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities, Health, Safe, 3.E, 5.F
Coyote Response Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research other municipalities and how they provide resources to assist with urban coyote issues. • Develop a protocol for a coyote response team. 	Wildlife Sub-Committee	Spring 2016		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities, Health, Safe, 3.E, 5.F
Authorized rescue groups for class 4 – companion animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the practices of other municipalities with respect to limit expansions for class 4 companion animals for registered foster rescues. 	Companion Sub-Committee	2016		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities, Caring and Compassionate Services, 3.E
Request consideration of additional funding of \$50,000 to support the spay and neuter program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide background on why an additional budgeted amount would be money well spent – spend now – save later. • Provide reasoning for a request for increase. 	Companion Sub-Committee	For the four year budget process		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities, Caring and Compassionate Services, 3.E
Ban or protection for animals living outdoor 24/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research what other municipalities have been successful and not successful with respect to a ban on animals (dogs, cats, rabbits, etc) living outdoors 24/7 (Noting that the care and control of animals is split between the province and the municipality). 	Companion Sub-Committee	2016		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities, Caring and Compassionate Services, 3.E
Potential Service Improvements – Animal Care Contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide research to include best practices in other municipalities including new initiatives, processes and products for enhanced service provision, promote licensing, return to owner, adoption etc. 	Companion Sub-Committee	2016 to 2017		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities, Caring and Compassionate Services, 3.E • Healthy, Safe, 5.F
Ban of sales of specific species from retail stores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the practices of other municipalities with respect to bans on the sales of specific species from retail stores. • Follow the progress of the City on business licensing re: retail stores selling specific species. 	Companion Sub-Committee	2016		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities, Caring and Compassionate Services, 3.E

Living With Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research best practices for living with wildlife in urban settings and develop educational materials to provide the community. 	Wildlife Sub-Committee	2016 to 2017		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities, Health, Safe 3.E, 5.F • Building Sustainable City Strong Healthy Environment 3.C
Wildlife Control Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Civic Administration to have consideration given to tenders for service providers that are aware of and observe the City of London's Humane Wildlife Urban Conflict Policy. 	Wildlife Sub-Committee			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities, Health, Safe 3.E
Tree Trimming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with Civic Administration to develop tree trimming procedures with respect to wildlife. 	Wildlife Sub-Committee			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities, Health, Safe 3.E • Building a Sustainable City Strong and Healthy Environment 3.C, 3.E
FLAP Program Fatal Light Awareness Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide research of current practices in other municipalities with respect to window treatments to deter birds from hitting the windows. • Work with EPAC and ACE to develop a policy with respect to design and construction guidelines to reduce bird strikes. 	Wildlife Sub-Committee			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities, Health, Safe 3.E 5.F • Building Sustainable City Strong Healthy Environment 3.C • Growing our Economy 2. Urban Regeneration, C • Building a Sustainable City, 4.C
Pest/Rodent Control Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding policies to include protection for animals currently exempted, in the future. 	AWAC			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Communities, Health, Safe 3.E • Building a Sustainable City, 3.C,