

**6TH REPORT OF THE**  
**ANIMAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Meeting held on May 5, 2016, commencing at 5:06 PM, in Committee Room #3, Second Floor, London City Hall.

**PRESENT:** W. Brown (Chair), K. Ashe, M. Gelinias, V. Lightfoot, K. MacIntosh, M. Puzanov, D. Simpson and M. Toplack and J. Martin (Secretary).

**ABSENT:** P. Newbould, C. Perquin and J. Sukhdeo.

**ALSO PRESENT:** F. Sekercioglu.

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**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. 5th Report of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

That it BE NOTED that the 5th Report of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee, from its meeting held on April 7, 2016, was received.

3. Municipal Council Resolution - Dog Licensing and Control By-law

That it BE NOTED that the Municipal Council resolution adopted at its meeting held April 5, 2016, with respect to the Dog Licensing and Control By-law and outdoor tethering of dogs, was received.

4. Municipal Council Resolution – Tea Cup Pigs

That it BE NOTED that the Municipal Council resolution adopted at its meeting held April 5, 2016, with respect to tea cup pigs as pets in London, was received.

**IV. SUB-COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS**

5. Wild-life Sub-Committee

That it BE NOTED that the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC) received a verbal update from W. Brown, on behalf of the AWAC Wildlife Sub-Committee.

6. Companion Animals Sub-Committee

None.

**V. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

7. Coyote Watch Canada Presentation Update - W. Brown

That it BE NOTED that the presentation from Coyote Watch Canada will be arranged for October 6, 2016, from 7:00 to 10:00 pm at City Hall; it being noted that the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC) received a verbal update from W. Brown, with respect to this matter.

8. Tea Cup Pigs

That the Municipal Council BE ADVISED that the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC) does not support an amendment to By-law PH-3 (Animal Control By-law) to allow for pigs to be kept within the City of London; it being noted that the AWAC submits the following items with respect to this matter:

- a) AWAC's sub-committee report and research;
- b) a communication dated April 7, 2016, from F. Morrison, Animal Outreach;
- c) a communication dated April 7, 2016, from S. Poole, Cedar Row Farm sanctuary; and,
- d) National Pig Association (Warwickshire U.K.) Briefing Note on miniature and pet pigs.

**VI. DEFERRED MATTERS/ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

None.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:37 P.M.

**NEXT MEETING DATE: June 2, 2016**

## YOUR COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS

That the Municipal Council BE REQUESTED to uphold the current by-law PH-3 Animal Control By-law and maintain the ban on pigs being kept within the City of London.

The Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC) requests that the Community and Protective Services Committee consider the three attached documents in relation to this request.

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After a careful review of the available research, the AWAC supports upholding the current by-law "PH-3 Animal Control By-law" and maintaining the ban on pigs being kept within the City of London. The research of AWAC confirms and supports all of the information and concerns put forth in the letters of both Florine Morrison of Animal Outreach dated April 7, 2016 and Sioban Poole of Cedar Row Farm Sanctuary dated April 7, 2016. The AWAC's research confirms that there is no such animal as a 'teacup' or 'mini' pig. These pigs could be considered 'miniature' when compared to classic pigs that typically weigh 500 to 1000 pounds. However, sellers that claim to have teacup/mini pigs are merely selling young Pot-bellied and other varieties of pigs who will grow to be at least 100 pounds unless these animals are severely underfed by their owners. This underfeeding leads to malnourishment and starvation and has a direct impact on the welfare of the pigs. Many of these breeds were developed for medical research not to be companion animals and as a result of the genetic manipulation commonly develop a host of medical issues (refer to the attached NPA Briefing). These are not practices that the City of London should condone given its mandate of providing a caring community for animals.

In addition to the concerns brought forth by Animal Outreach and Cedar Row Farm Sanctuary, which the AWAC agrees with and endorses, the AWAC has further issues with allowing pigs to be kept within the city limits:

- a) With the City already committed to achieving a No-Kill status through efforts to reduce the number of unwanted pets in London, allowing pigs in the city would add another species of pet with a high surrender rate that Animal Services would become responsible for in relation to medical treatment and re-homing of the animals. This would add to the challenge that exists in meeting the No-Kill Policy the City has endorsed;
- b) Ultimately allowing pigs in the city will increase the burden on already overburdened and underfunded animal rescue organizations and Animal Services. The pigs are typically bred when they are only three months old and this could quickly result in an overpopulation of unwanted pigs, leading to further costs to already financially burdened animal rescue organizations and sanctuaries and to the City's spay and neuter program. Additionally, it should be noted that there are not many animal rescue organizations/sanctuaries that accept pigs in this area, which could lead to more unwanted pigs being euthanized for lack of space in shelters and/or animal rescue organization facilities;
- c) Additional costs will be created for Animal Services in relation to responding to complaints, taking pigs into custody, caring for pigs while in custody, large medical bills from treating malnourished and sick pigs and a likely need for an expansion in the size of Animal Services' facilities in order to house larger animals such as pigs;
- d) The current service provider for Animal Services in the city may not be prepared to shelter pigs as part of their responsibilities as it is not part of their current contract. This may result in extra costs to the City in finding another service provider for dealing with these animals;
- e) Upon contacting the majority of local veterinary practises AWAC was only able to confirm two veterinary practises in the city that stated they treat pigs. It is clear that the availability of veterinarians that treat pigs in London is inadequate and represents another reason why allowing pigs to be kept within the city limits is not in the best interests of the welfare of these animals; and,
- f) There are additional concerns with respect to the transmission of disease between pigs and humans along with risks to commercial pig herds (refer to attached NPA Briefing).

The AWAC does recognize that pigs are intelligent and sensitive animals who are capable of providing human companionship but the research of the AWAC, Animal Outreach and Cedar Row Sanctuary clearly shows that the difficulties and disadvantages of permitting pigs to be kept within the city limits far outweigh the benefits.

**From:** Florine Morrison  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 07, 2016 10:58 AM  
**To:** Martin, Jackie <[JMartin@London.ca](mailto:JMartin@London.ca)>  
**Subject:** AWAC review of pig by-law \*

To: Members of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

From: Florine Morrison  
Animal Outreach  
803 Waterloo St.  
London, Ontario

It has come to my attention that a request to allow "teacup" pigs in London has been referred to your committee for review. As co-founder of an animal protection organization that has been frequently involved in the rescue and re-homing of discarded pet pigs I would like to voice my objection to any by-law change that would permit the keeping of these animals in the City.

Animal Outreach is a registered charity that provides shelter and care for abandoned, neglected, unwanted, injured and abused domesticated animals. Our focus on farm animals puts us into frequent contact with people who have purchased "mini" pigs, only to find that these animals are simply young pot belly pigs; animals that can grow to between 120 to 150 pounds, and in some cases more than 200 pounds.

Too often, especially in urban areas, those who have purchased these animals find that the pigs can no longer be accommodated in their home, often before the pigs are even one year old. Hooves damage floors and make far more noise than paws. Pigs squeal loudly, and their natural vocalizations can be far more disturbing to neighbours than any barking dog. It is the natural behaviour of all pigs, including Pot belly pigs, to root quite vigorously. This means that yards can become completely dug up by even a smaller pig, and a house-bound pig can do significant damage to the home.

Many breeders fail to provide sufficient instructions on care for these animals, and often suggest restrictive feeding guidelines intended to keep the pigs from growing to their natural size, leading to malnourished and sickly animals. I urge you to visit the following site for more information: <http://www.petpigeeducation.com/the-teacup-myth.html>

The so-called "tea cup" pigs are just the latest fad and a new attempt by breeders to sell pigs and add to the already overwhelming number of these animals who outgrow their homes and end up the responsibility of our far too few sanctuaries; organizations that are faced with the physical and financial burden of expensive veterinary services, finding suitable new homes and solving problems that we had no hand in creating.

In our experience, there is a definite correlation between municipalities that prohibit the keeping of these pigs and a decrease in the number of those animals who come into our care.

I strongly urge you to recommend that Council uphold our existing by-law banning all pigs from London.

Sincerely,  
Florine Morrison

**From:** Siobhan Poole  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 07, 2016 5:08 PM  
**To:** Martin, Jackie <[JMartin@London.ca](mailto:JMartin@London.ca)>  
**Subject:** Potbellied Pig Amendment

To Chair and Members of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee:

During the past 17 years, Cedar Row Farm Sanctuary has rescued hundreds of neglected and abandoned farm animals, many of whom have been the so-called mini, teacup and potbellied pigs that breeders promote as ideal house pets. Often within the first year owners discover that these animals can grow to between 60 and 200 pounds. They can be noisy, root constantly, damage property and do all the things that come naturally to pigs which is why so many owners choose to thrust responsibility for their care on donation and volunteer driven sanctuaries.

These discarded pigs are often not spayed or neutered and malnourished in an attempt to keep them small. Expensive veterinary care adds to the financial burden of caring for these animals.

Last year Cedar Row Farm Sanctuary took in 18 unwanted potbellied pigs.

A pig named Floyd was purchased for \$2,500. and kept for only 4 months before his owner left him at Cedar Row. He now weighs about 200 lbs. Floyd's previous experiences in the buyers' home has left him a bad-tempered animal, far less friendly than the actual farm-type pigs that live at Cedar Row. When cleaning Floyd's pen, his care-givers take care to avoid being bitten. Floyd would never be a suitable companion in a home, and is fortunate to have found a sanctuary home capable of providing for him.

Penelope lived in a carrier for 10 hours a day in her original home, before space became available for her to find refuge at Cedar Row Farm Sanctuary.

Wilbert came to Cedar Row extremely underweight because the breeder instructed the owner to only feed him 1/4 cup of food twice a day to keep him small.

This week, Cedar Row took the latest unwanted potbellied pig from London to be spayed at a cost of about \$350. This unfortunate piglet has been fed only apples and cheerios and at 7 months in very underweight. We expect, that with proper nutrition she will recover.

Exempting any type of pig from London's by-law will further burden area rescues and sanctuaries. These volunteer driven organizations already struggle to keep up with the abandoned animals who are discarded by irresponsible owners. London's Animal Services will face further demand and rising costs, but the brunt of such a bylaw change will be borne by sanctuaries like Cedar Row Farm Sanctuary that are already over-whelmed with requests to take in discarded pigs.

I strongly urge you to support the existing ban on all pigs in London, and to recommend to Council members to maintain the current ban.

Sincerely,  
Siobhan Poole  
Co-Founder of Cedar Row Farm Sanctuary

# NPA BRIEFING



**Date:** April 2015  
**Contact:** Zoe Davies  
**Telephone:** 02476 858782

## **NPA briefing note on miniature and pet pigs**

### **Issue:**

Keeping pigs and micro pigs as pets has become a fashion trend, but frequently owners are not fully aware of the welfare, disease and legal implications of keeping these animals.

### **Background:**

- Micro pigs are not a distinct breed; there are more than twenty breeds of miniature pig across the world (e.g. Gottingen, Sinclair, Minnesota, Wuzhishan, Yucatan).
- Many of the miniature pig breeds were developed for medical research to study xenotransplantation (organ transplants), Huntingdon Disease, malignant melanoma (skin cancer), achondroplasia (dwarfism).
- As a result, these pigs may carry genetic mutations responsible for deformities linked with dwarfism such as deformed skulls, shortened legs and weak limbs. Obesity is also a common problem in these pigs, often leading to severe locomotor issues.
- Micro pigs are also produced by successive breeding of the smallest pigs (often the runts) from litters of traditional breeds such as the Vietnamese pot belly or Kune Kune. This is usually achieved through inbreeding, which can lead to other genetic weaknesses or susceptibilities.
- Thus, continued breeding of these animals may compromise welfare and should not be encouraged.
- In some cases people have bought "micro pigs" only to find that they are in fact just small pigs which later grow to full size weighing 150-200 kg.
- Pigs generally do not make good house pets because they like to root around their environment and chew, meaning they can be quite destructive. We would advise against pigs living in a house - outdoor accommodation should be provided ensuring that the pig has enough space and suitable secure shelter.
- Apart from the welfare concerns associated with how micro pigs are bred, these animals also pose a disease risk to commercial pig herds.
- The British pig industry invests substantial time and money into reducing and preventing disease, through health improvement programmes and biosecurity practices on farm.
- Pet pigs can catch and spread exactly the same diseases that commercial pigs get, including notifiable diseases such as Foot and Mouth Disease and Classical Swine Fever. These viruses are known as 'notifiable' diseases because of the legal requirement for pig owners to notify the authorities if their animals are suspected of carrying them.
- The UK pig herd is currently free from notifiable diseases, but if the situation were to change movement restrictions would be placed on all pigs in the area surrounding the infected premises and any affected animals would have to be culled in order to eliminate the disease.

- Pigs can also transmit disease to humans and vice versa, especially flu, so owners should take appropriate care when handling their pig, e.g. hand-washing.
- Pet pig owners must follow the same legal rules as pig farmers. These include:

**All** pig owners must have a County Parish Holding number, for the place where the pig will be kept, even if they only have one pig. This must be obtained *before* the pig arrives and can be obtained from the Rural Payments Agency.

**All** pig owners must obtain a herd health mark by registering their pigs with the local Animal and Plant Health Agency within 30 days of the pig arriving on the property.

When a pig is brought onto the property, **no other pigs** may leave the property for 20 days.

**Any movement** of a pig from its registered holding (apart from a walk, visit to the vets or non-economic activity) must be reported in advance.

Owners wishing to walk pet pigs on a public street must first obtain a walking licence.

Pigs to be moved or walked must first be tagged, tattooed or marked with identification details.

It is **illegal** to feed any pig with **food waste** (even vegetables) from a household or commercial kitchen. This is classed as swill-feeding which has been banned across the EU since 2002 after an outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease.

Failure to comply with these rules can result in a £5000 fine or being banned from keeping animals.

#### **NPA position:**

- The nature of the way some micro pigs are bred has some severe welfare implications. The NPA urges people to not support irresponsible breeding of micro pigs.
- NPA understands that the vast majority of people that keep pigs do comply with the law, but we are keen to see that any pig keeper who is found breaking the law, jeopardising animal welfare or causing significant disease risks should be prosecuted.
- Pet pigs pose a threat to the health of the commercial pig herd and the livelihoods of pig farmers and as such NPA would encourage all owners to consider and avoid the possibility of disease spread in all activities involving their pet pigs.
- Protecting pig welfare must be a priority for all pig keepers. The veterinary, nutritional, behavioural and environmental needs of pet pigs should be met at all times.

END