

Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

Report

The 2nd Meeting of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee
March 4, 2021

Advisory Committee Virtual Meeting - during the COVID-19 Emergency

Attendance PRESENT: W. Brown (Chair), M. Blosh, A. Hames, P. Lystar, M. Szabo, and M. Toplack.

ALSO PRESENT: O. Katolyk, M. McBride, A. Pascual
(Committee Clerk), and B. Westlake-Power.

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM; it being noted that the following Members were in remote attendance: M. Blosh, W. Brown, A. Hames, P. Lystar, M. Szabo, and M. Toplack.

1. Call to Order

1.1 Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest

That it BE NOTED that no pecuniary interests were disclosed.

2. Scheduled Items

None.

3. Consent

3.1 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 February 4, 2021, was received.

4. Sub-Committees and Working Groups

None.

5. Items for Discussion

5.1 Trap, Spay, Neuter and Release Program

That the revised attached "Recommendations to promote the Trap, Spay, Neuter and Release Program" BE FORWARDED to the Civic Administration for implementation or action, where appropriate.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:33 PM.

Friday March 5, 2021

RE: Recommendations to promote the Trap, Spay, Neuter and Release Program

City of London

From: Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

To: Heather Chapman
Orest Katolyk
Michelle McBride

Thank you for bringing your request for suggestions to enhance the Trap, Spay, Neuter, and Release Program with the City of London. Please review the additions, edits, and rationales to the previous word document provided to you by AWAC, and outlined in this updated set of recommendations gathered at our March 4th/21 AWAC Subcommittee meeting as follows:

Increase awareness for Londoners via various media platforms to raise public awareness regarding the program, benefits, issue and impacts for cats, their welfare, and the environment.

- City of London social media page
- City of London website
- Print media
- CTV London, CBC Radio 1 London public awareness campaign

Create a “catchy” slogan for the program that could be used and embedded into various written formats such as brochures, poster, web pages and media platforms.

*Assessment of the City of London TSNR website information recommends:

The TSNR Program be front and center under the heading that exists “Feral Cats”. Currently the information is not visible unless one clicks on FAQ and **only** if one clicks on the final question answer under “What is the City of London doing...”

Consider provision of a QR code to the program for easier access (Orest to consult Communications as discussed during AWAC Meeting on March 4/21)

Under the final question answer no information is provided to inform the reader that residents **can access** resources to trap and bring feral cats to be spayed/neutered and may inadvertently lead the reader to assume the City is already taking care of that for them.

*Given the link between pet owners on limited incomes/living in poverty unable to afford to spay/neuter and the overall feral cat population, AWAC has reviewed the information on the site. To be helpful, AWAC recommends:

- Consider that many folks on low incomes/living in poverty have unlicensed cats due to cost concerns and the current climate of rent, housing crisis, and costs of living do not align with ODSP and OW benefits.

- Provide a link to the cost in relation to OW and ODSP rates to incentivize
- Consider allowing and informing folks visiting the site that their pets **can/must enter into licensing upon accessing this program** if not already licensed (so as not to inadvertently deter folk from participating in this vital program.)
- Forward info regarding the program to London's social agencies working with OW and ODSP recipients such as CMHA Elgin Middlesex, OW, ODSP, Salvation Army Centre of Hope, Addiction Services Thames Valley, etc. so service providers can assist folks either as trustees or encourage participants to access this program.

Create a poster and brochure that could be downloaded and printed out from the City of London-Animal Services page to provide an overview of the TSNR program, "what is a feral cat" and how to access the program. *The AWAC Committee would be pleased to assist to develop a comprehensive brochure with the goal to promote the program in mind and to communicate that healthy communities steward good animal welfare.

Provide the brochures to:

- London Public Libraries
- London Business Associations
- Neighborhood/community groups
- Universities and College Sites
- Nature London
- Urban League London (an umbrella group whose members consist of neighborhood associations, community groups, and individuals across London)
- London Veterinarian Clinics

Posters could be provided to local businesses for the purpose of display and assistance with feral cats.

Gather data regarding location of feral colonies and create a formal volunteer program through LACC that could be trained and deployed to assist residents and locate feral colonies that need to be addressed through the program. *Provide a workshop to educate and train interested rescue groups, volunteers, and residents. The workshop can also be offered "virtually" or perhaps at LACC/alternate suitable location.

Invite the public as well as cat rescue groups to a Presentation/Workshop-awareness, education, impacts for cats, the environmental implications, benefits, trapping, the program, how it works...

As discussed during AWAC Meeting, assign student placement to assist with tasks associated with promoting the TSNR program.

On behalf of AWAC Committee members, we look forward to discuss further and to make inquires to you to help us better understand how this program has been promoted in the past, availability re: hours of operation, fee to borrow traps, how many traps are available, process when trapping kittens that are adoptable.