



Municipality of Port Hope

Staff Report

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Report Title: Animal Control By-law Housekeeping Update

Report to: Corporate Services Committee

Date of meeting: July 5, 2022

Report Author:

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Department responsible:

Corporate Services

Report Number: CS-09-22

Recommendation:

That a by-law be presented to Council to adopt an updated Animal Control By-law to reflect recent changes to the delivery of animal care and control services in the Municipality of Port Hope and repeal By-law 20/2022.

Highlights:

- The Joint Animal Control Municipal Services Board was effectively dissolved in May 2022 through the passing of By-law 26/2022
- The Northumberland Humane Society has assumed the delivery of animal care and control services
- By-law updates are required to reflect these recent changes and provide for further clarity in administrative housekeeping matters

Background:

In May 2022, the former Joint Animal Control Municipal Services Board was dissolved by Council in coordination with the Township of Hamilton and the Township of Alwicks/Haldimand. The previous Municipal Animal Services facility was sold to the Northumberland Humane Society (NHS) who have also assumed the delivery of animal care and control services under contract with the Municipality of Port Hope.

The current Animal Control By-law (By-law 20/2020) requires a number of amendments to reflect these changes and remove reference to the previous board governance structure. Rather than amending the current by-law numerous times, a new revised by-law is being proposed to replace the existing by-law. NHS enforces this by-law on behalf of the Municipality of Port Hope under a service agreement.

Discussion:

The proposed new Animal Control By-law (**Attachment 1**) does not propose new animal control restrictions or alter the general nature of the previous by-law. The current

by-law was last extensively updated in 2020 and included public consultation. The proposed by-law has only been updated to reflect numerous minor administrative and housekeeping amendments required to reflect the new service provider.

Reference to the former Board has been removed and replaced with proper reference to the Northumberland Humane Society. Throughout the proposed by-law the reflection of this change also includes proper reference to the licensing processes.

The new Animal Control By-law identifies that an Appeal Body will be assigned as the entity anticipated to hold appeal hearings associated with Orders to Restrain (muzzle orders). Prior to 2020, Council was identified as the entity that would hear appeals. This was changed to the Joint Animal Control Municipal Service Board proper in 2020 but with the recent dissolution of that Board a new hearing body is required.

The proposed by-law identifies that Council can appoint that body by Resolution at any time. Staff will bring forward a recommendation on that element in the near future. The options of a small committee appointed by and comprising members of Council, or the NHS itself is being explored. It is further worth noting that there have only been 2 appeals held for the Municipality of Port Hope in the previous 7 years so there is no immediate need to address this element prior to moving forward with the proposed by-law changes.

Other minor adjustments to the proposed by-law may be provided for prior to the final version anticipated to be presented for adoption on August 2nd. Staff are working with the NHS through the recent transition to refine any necessary adjustments to align with service delivery expectations. Additional feedback on the proposed by-law is being sought by NHS and staff will identify any adjustments to Council at the time that the by-law is presented for adoption.

Financial Considerations:

There are no financial considerations directly related to this proposed by-law. The process undertaken to revise the Animal Control By-law was managed internally by staff.

The proposed fines for non-compliance associated with the Animal Control By-law remain unchanged from the previous by-law adopted in 2020. These fines will need to be further approved by the Ministry of the Attorney General upon passing of the proposed by-law.

Communication and Public Engagement:

Fundamentally, the provisions of the Animal Control By-law remain unchanged from the most recent version adopted in 2020. At that time, community consultation efforts were undertaken to solicit and received feedback that was taken into consideration by Council.

The majority of the changes within the revised by-law are housekeeping matters addressing the recent change to the provision of animal care and control services. As such, additional communications are not being undertaken.

The recent change to a new provider of animal care and control services was well communicated through jointly coordinated media releases and website updates with the Northumberland Humane Society, the Township of Hamilton, and the Township of Alnwick/Haldimand. The Municipality of Port Hope took the lead in coordinating this effort. The recent change to a new provider has been well received by residents.

Conclusion:

The proposed Animal Control By-law contains mainly the exact same animal control provisions as the current By-law 20/2020. The updates are reflective of the change in service provider to the NHS and the dissolution of the Joint Animal Control Municipal Service Board.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Draft Animal Control By-law