

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – JUNE 18, 2007

PET LICENSES

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services and City Solicitor, in conjunction with the Senior Manager of Enforcement Services, and in consultation with the Manager of Special Projects, Licensing and Permits and Risk Management, recommends:

That short-term canvassers be hired (summer students, etc.) as canvassers to solicit sales door-to-door for pet licenses within the City of Vaughan during the months of July and August; and,

That Corporate Communications include this information on the City Page and Website.

Economic Impact

There is no cost impact to this initiative. The canvassers are to be paid on a commission-only basis so the cost of having the canvassers will be recovered through the costs of licenses sold.

Communications Plan

The canvassers will have information to provide residents regarding the licensing of animals. In addition, a “media campaign” may be helpful to advise residents of the obligation on pet owners to purchase a license through the City Page and on the City Website.

Purpose

This report is to provide information regarding a proposal to have door-to-door canvassing for pet licenses.

Background - Analysis and Options

The City of Vaughan Animal Control By-law 53-2002, requires owners of dogs and cats to license the animals annually. Currently, licenses can be obtained from the Clerk’s Department, participating veterinary offices, and our Animal Control contractor.

The exact number of dogs and cats in the City is not known. However, statistics provided in a recent study by the Pathwise Group would suggest that the City of Vaughan could have as many as 30,000 – 40,000 dogs or cats, living within its borders.

Historically, the number of licenses sold has represented only a very small fraction of this number, possibly as low as 3%. The table below indicates the data from the previous 3 years.

YEAR	DOG LICENSES	CAT LICENSES	TOTAL LICENSES	REVENUE
2004	1370	47	1417	\$3,936.40
2005	1433	37	1470	\$4,089.50
2006	1265	33	1288	\$3,778.50

If all dogs and cats were licensed, at a rate of \$20.00, revenue would be almost sufficient to cover anticipated annual operating costs of a City-run Animal Control Shelter, including administration and enforcement. In order to begin to build data and ensure more pervasive licensing for future, the summer door-to-door canvassing is an opportunity to begin to raise awareness and sense of responsibility among pet-owners.

The low number of animal licenses in the City can be increased through the use of door-to-door canvassers, which improves the City's ability to ensure the return of stray animals, and begins to establish a more accurate picture of the number of dogs and cats in Vaughan. This approach, among others, was apparently used by the City of Vaughan many years ago, and has more recently been implemented by the Town of Aurora.

The concept is that the canvassers could provide information to homeowners who may not be aware of the requirements to license their dogs and cats, and also provide the opportunity for the residents to purchase a license at their door from the canvasser.

The cost of licenses for dogs and cats is \$20.00 per animal. Although discounts are available for dogs/cats that are spayed or neutered or micro chipped, such discounts will require attendance of the pet owner in person, for verification purposes.

A complete review of licensing rates will be undertaken in the fall.

Canvassers would be paid through commission only, receiving \$8.00 per license sold.

Canvassers will be provided training regarding appropriately interacting with residents.

Canvassers will be recruited from among summer students.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This initiative supports excellence in service delivery.

Regional Implications

Not applicable.

Conclusion

Historically, only a small percentage of dogs and cats in Vaughan are licensed each year. This initiative will increase the number of animals properly licensed by the City, improving the success rate on returning strays, and ensuring licensing data is up-to-date.

Attachments

None

Report prepared by:

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Respectfully submitted,

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Tony Thompson
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