

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (WORKING SESSION) - JANUARY 12, 2009

ANIMAL SERVICES SHELTER

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services and City Solicitor, and the Director of Enforcement Services, recommend:

1. That staff continue to work on the development of a permanent joint animal shelter facility with King Township.

Economic Impact

There is no economic impact at this time.

Communications Plan

None at this time.

Purpose

This report is to provide a status update relating to the options being pursued for development of a permanent animal shelter solution.

Background - Analysis and Options

Council, at its meeting of November 26, 2007, adopted the following recommendation:

“That staff be directed to contact the Township of King to review opportunities to provide animal shelter services for both municipalities.”

Pursuant to the above direction, staff have been working with King Township to canvass options for the development of a permanent joint animal shelter facility.

Options

Following several discussions and meetings, staff have narrowed the potential options to (1) development of a shelter facility at the King Campus of Seneca College, or (2) development of a facility on a property identified as available within King.

1. King’s CAO and Clerk and Vaughan’s City Manager, City Solicitor, and Director of Enforcement Services met with the Dean of Applied Arts and Health Sciences at Seneca College to discuss a joint venture located at the King Campus. The discussions contemplate a facility constructed in conjunction with the Veterinary Technicians Course facility.

This option would benefit from the large pool of students to work in the shelter, likely as part of a co-op within their program. Seneca already has a relationship with Kennel Inn, the current service provider. This option might include Seneca ultimately employing Kennel Inn management and staff to run the operation, and both municipalities purchasing services.

This option does, however, involve Seneca in the requirement for environmental assessment as the location is within the Oakridges Moraine. Necessary approvals result in a timeline of 18-24 months, placing potential occupancy into 2011.

2. Several properties within King were initially identified, and through process of elimination King has now identified a property located in Pottageville (7th Concession and 18th Side Road) as a viable location. The property is 2 acres and has a 3,000. sq. ft. shell building structure with a paved lot. The building is owned and operated by King, being occasionally used as a community hall. The building could be renovated, and expanded as required. The driving time to this location is between 15-20 minutes from the Civic Centre.

Timing

There remains a sense of urgency to finalizing a solution to animal sheltering for the City of Vaughan. Because Richmond Hill has determined to establish its own animal shelter facility, only King and Vaughan will continue to purchase services from Kennel Inn after spring 2009. Kennel Inn, advises that King and Vaughan will have their contract rate increased to offset their lost revenue, as they are unable to continue to offer service without the operating funds. Therefore, starting in April 2009 the annual cost to Vaughan will increase from \$400,000 to \$700,000. (King is facing a similar increase).

King and Vaughan are the only two municipalities in York Region still utilizing the services of Kennel Inn and Kennel Inn has advised us that its long-term future is uncertain. The facility is on leased land that is approved for development. With the current economic downturn, the property owner does not expect to start development until 2010, and has provided the owners of Kennel Inn with a lease extension to 2010.

Next Steps

Staff will continue to work to bring a complete proposal to Council prior to the summer hiatus. At this moment, Seneca has not confirmed its commitment to Option 1, so staff will focus on developing Option 2, development of a property located in Pottageville in King.

Details need to be worked out regarding timing, ownership, capital cost sharing, and operational cost-sharing. It is anticipated that funds will be allocated within the 2010 Capital Budget, however if circumstances at Kennel Inn were to change, it might be necessary to move forward with pre-budget approval in during 2009.

In the Capital Budget submission, Enforcement Services requested \$700,000. for a temporary shelter solution in the event that Kennel Inn closed down prior to a permanent shutdown being finalized. This amount was previously put forward in 2008, and remains below the line until needed. Ideally, a permanent animal shelter will be established in time to provide service when Kennel Inn loses their facility in Aurora, without the need for a temporary facility to bridge the gap.

As of today, it appears that Kennel Inn will remain in business until sometime in 2010.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

This initiative is in keeping with the Vaughan Vision in that it speaks to Pursuing Excellence in Service Delivery.

Regional Implications

Not applicable.

Conclusion

Staff will continue to work with King to develop a comprehensive proposal for a permanent joint animal shelter facility and bring forward a report prior to the summer hiatus. Kennel Inn continues to provide the City with service, albeit at an increased operating cost, and can be expected to sustain this into 2010. In the event circumstances change with Kennel Inn, it might be necessary to move forward with a pre-budget approval in 2009.

Attachments

None

Report prepared by:

Tony Thompson
Director of Enforcement Services

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Atwood-Petkovski
Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services
and City Solicitor

Tony Thompson
Director of Enforcement Services