

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 17, 2016

Item 22, Report No. 21, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on May 17, 2016.

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**TECHNICAL AMENDMENT –
RESPECTING THE LICENSING OF KENNELS AND THE LICENSING OF PETS**

The Committee of the Whole recommends approval of the recommendation contained in the following report of the Director of By-law & Compliance, Licensing & Permit Services, dated May 3, 2016:

Recommendation

The Director of By-law & Compliance, Licensing & Permit Services, in consultation with the Deputy City Manager, Community Services, recommends:

1. That Section 19 of Licensing By-law No. 315-2005, as amended, be further amended by deleting all references made to the Ontario Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (“OSPCA”) and replacing it with a reference to Vaughan Animal Services;
2. That the Fees and Charges By-law No. 200-2015, be amended to include a fee, for the inspection of Kennels and Boarding Facilities for the purpose of licensing, of \$150, plus applicable tax; and
3. That Animal Control By-law No. 53-2002, as amended, be further amended to establish that all pet licences expire on the date of their anniversary.

Contribution to Sustainability

Continuing to ensure the safety and well-being of citizens is a primary goal of the City's regulatory by-laws. Ensuring the welfare of animals, including the manner in which they are kept for commercial purposes in the City helps to enhance the safety and welfare of the community in general and is therefore a key objective. The provision of clean, safe and well-managed animal kennels and boarding facilities, as prescribed in the City's Licensing By-law, is a key outcome in achieving this objective.

Economic Impact

There are currently three (3) licensed kennels/boarding facilities in Vaughan. The City is proposing to take over the required annual inspections from the OSPCA and establish a fee that covers the associated cost of providing the service. As such, there is no economic impact stemming from this report's recommendations. The proposed fee will serve to off-set the costs associated with the inspection function; which typically entails 1-3 hours of officer time and associated documentation/checklist preparation.

In addition, the recommendation to have all pet licences expire on their anniversary date, has no economic impact.

Communications Plan

All licensed kennels will be notified of the changes to the By-law prior to inspections being scheduled by Animal Services staff. These recommended changes do not affect the general public at large and as such no communication initiative to the public is being proposed.

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New pet licensees will be informed of the related change in license expiry at time of application. Existing licensees will be informed of the change upon renewal. Additional notice will be provided more generally through the Animal Services web page.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to introduce two technical by-law amendments: one to provide the City's Animal Services the responsibility and authority to conduct required kennel inspections for the purposes of enforcing the City's Licensing By-law, along with an associated inspection fee; and the other to ensure that pet owners who obtain an annual pet licence have the benefit a full twelve months for the licensing fees paid.

Background – Analysis and Options

Kennel/Boarding Facility Inspections

Under the authority of the City of Vaughan's Licensing By-law No. 315-2005, s.4.3 and s.19, a business licence is required for the operation of a Kennel/Boarding Facility as defined. This includes, but is not limited to, such facilities where purebred dogs and cats are kept for show purposes and/or where four (4) or more domestic animals are kept for the purposes of breeding, grooming, boarding, training or selling; and/or other similar purpose.

As a requirement of granting a business licence, the Licensing By-law No. 315-2005, as amended, requires an annual clearance inspection. The responsibility for the inspections pertaining to the welfare of the animals kept by licensed kennels was previously delegated to the OSPCA, pursuant to Section 19.

Recently, the OSPCA advised licensed kennel operators that it will no longer be providing the required inspections and related clearance letters. As a result, licensees will not be able to meet the City's prescribed requirements.

Whereas the City relied on the expertise of the OSPCA, today the City, through Vaughan Animal Services ("VAS") boasts an animal services program with a high level of expertise in animal care and control, investigations and inspections. As such, VAS is fully capable of providing the inspection services required to ensure the welfare of animals in licensed kennels through its current staffing complement.

The recommendations in this report would have the effect of transferring the responsibility and authority for the related inspections and for ensuring that licensees meet all of the By-law's standards and requirements, accordingly.

Pet Licensing Renewal Dates

Currently, pet licences expire on December 31; however, irrespective of when the licence is obtained, an annual licence fee is required. Therefore, purchase of a pet licence during a calendar year requires the pet owner to pay one full year licensing fee even though the licence may be due for renewal fewer than twelve (12) months from the date of purchase. The reason for this practice was partially due to established limitations of the City's previous animal services software system, which has since been replaced.

VAS recently migrated to the Chameleon software system and as such is now able to provide licence expiry dates that correspond to the anniversary date of the licences. This means that all pet licensees will have the benefit of a full twelve-month licence.

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Existing pet owners will receive a notice in advance of their existing anniversary date advising them of the change and of the need to renew. At such time, all renewed licences will reflect the corresponding anniversary date of expiry.

From an efficiency and workflow perspective, instead of creating peak work periods during renewal dates the recommended change will allow notices to be sent out throughout the year and for licensing workloads to become more streamlined; ultimately enhancing over-all service delivery to licensed pet owners.

Relationship to Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018)

The recommendations in this report are in line with the following priorities for this term of Council:

- Continue to ensure the safety and well-being of citizens – through the appropriate level of regulation; and
- Continue to advance a culture of excellence in governance – by continuously improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of services.

The recommendations of this report are also in line with the objectives and deliverables of the *By-law Strategy*, mainly to ensure that the City has by-laws in place that are relevant, effective, sustainable, and meet the current needs of Vaughan's communities.

A further, more comprehensive review of both the Licensing By-law and the Animal Control By-law shall be conducted at a future date in accordance with the City's *By-law Strategy*.

Regional Implications

There are no implications to the Region as a result of the recommendations in this report.

Conclusion

This report recommends two technical amendments to the Licensing and the Animal Control By-laws. By transferring the delegated authority for inspection and licence clearance from the OSPCA to Vaughan Animal Services, the City can continue to ensure that all licensed kennels are maintained to prescribed standards and support the health, safety and well-being of citizens and domestic animals.

By changing renewal pet licence dates from January 1 to the date of the anniversary of the licence, the term of licences will accurately match the corresponding fee and licence renewal workload will be streamlined, ultimately supporting an enhanced service delivery. These recommended changes provide immediate relief to stakeholders, with a further, more comprehensive review of both by-laws being undertaken in the future in accordance with the City's *By-law Strategy*.

Attachments

None.

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