

CITY OF HAMILTON

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT Parking and By-law Services Division

TO: Chair and Members Planning Committee	WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE
COMMITTEE DATE: October 18, 2011	
SUBJECT/REPORT NO: Dog Licensing for Persons in Receipt of Disability Tax Credit (PED11178) (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item)	
SUBMITTED BY: Tim McCabe General Manager Planning and Economic Development Department	PREPARED BY: Sue O'Dwyer 905-546-2424 ext. 2597
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

That the item respecting "Reduced dog licence fee for those receiving disability tax credit" be removed from the Planning Committee's Outstanding Business List.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The (former) Economic Development and Planning Committee directed staff to report back on the feasibility of providing a discounted dog license fee for citizens who receive the Disability Tax Credit. This Report responds to that direction and recommends no action because Hamilton is already far more generous with dog license fee discounts than other municipalities and offering a discount to those receiving a Disability Tax Credit would:

- result in significant loss of revenues; and,
- be very difficult for staff to administer, and would require the development of protocols for income testing to ensure the discount is applied only to those with low income levels.

Alternatives for Consideration – N/A

FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (for Recommendation(s) only)

Financial/ Staffing/Legal: There are no financial implications associated with the recommendation, but offering a discount to persons who receive a Disability Tax Credit could result in an annual revenue loss of approximately \$20,000.00.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Chronology of events)

On May 18, 2010, the (former) Economic Development and Planning Committee, on a Motion by Councillor Brian McHattie, approved the following direction to staff:

“Whereas, the City of Hamilton currently provides discounted dog license fees for citizens who are over 65 years of age and receive a Government Disability Pension, and;

Whereas, citizens who receive a disability tax credit are equally disabled (and certified as such by a medical practitioner) but may not receive a Government Disability Pension (i.e. such as those citizens who are permanently disabled but were self-employed and therefore did not have enough CPP contributions).

Now therefore, Staff be requested to report back on a discount on dog license fees for citizens who receive the disability tax credit.”

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

It has been a long-standing practice to provide a 50% discount for dog licences to seniors and disabled persons who qualify for the “Government Disability Pension” (CDP), or the “Ontario Disability Support Plan” (ODSP).

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

The following municipalities/cities, both local and across Canada, were consulted in the preparation of this Report: Brantford, Burlington, Oakville, Milton, Kitchener, London, St. Catharines, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton and Winnipeg.

ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

(include Performance Measurement/Benchmarking Data, if applicable)

Staff surveyed a number of municipalities and determined that Hamilton is unique in providing a discount for persons with disabilities. Further, many do not provide discounts for seniors, and where they do, the discount is significantly less than 50%. Citizens who qualify for the Disability Tax Credit do not necessarily have low income or an inability to work. Offering a discount to this group would be very difficult for staff to administer, and would require the development of protocols for income testing to ensure the discount is applied only to those with low income levels.

Staff met with Councillor McHattie, apprised him of their findings and he is in agreement with not pursuing the discount.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

(include Financial, Staffing, Legal and Policy Implications and pros and cons for each alternative)

N/A

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN (Linkage to Desired End Results)

Focus Areas: 1. Skilled, Innovative and Respectful Organization, 2. Financial Sustainability, 3. Intergovernmental Relationships, 4. Growing Our Economy, 5. Social Development, 6. Environmental Stewardship, 7. Healthy Community

Financial Sustainability: Delivery of municipal services and management of capital assets/liabilities in a sustainable, innovative and cost effective manner.

APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

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