



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

TO:	Chair and Members Planning Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	September 15, 2015
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	User Fees for Animal Services (PED15132) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Ken Leendertse (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3059
SUBMITTED BY:	Jason Thorne General Manager Planning and Economic Development Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

(a) That the following User Fees (exclusive of HST) for services provided by Animal Services be approved:

- | | | |
|-------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| (i) | Special Cremation Fee | \$123.90 |
| (ii) | Clay Paw Print | \$26.55 |
| (iii) | Painted Paw Print | \$41.59 |
| (iv) | Cadaver Surrender - Small Dog | \$49.57 (Seniors \$34.51) |
| (v) | Animal Assistance Fee | \$44.25 per hour |

(b) That the City's User Fees and Charges By-law be amended accordingly.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Special Cremations, Clay Paw Prints and Painted Paw Prints are services provided by Animal Services, at a pet owner's request, that are not currently captured in the User Fee By-law. A reduced fee for Cadaver Surrender is more reflective for smaller dogs and is more reflective of the actual cost to dispose of the cadaver. The Animal Assistance Fee is a new fee for services provided to the Community that are not legislated but are value added to the citizens of Hamilton.

The City has a long-standing practice of providing the services referenced above to the community, and the recommended fees are being offered at a significantly-reduced cost relative to private-sector operators.

Alternatives for Consideration

N/A

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The fees recommended in this report will recover the costs already associated with services that are currently being provided by Animals Services. All new fees added will be subject to HST. There is a potential of increased revenue from the Animal Assistance Fees.

Staffing: No new staff is required to implement these fees.

Legal: N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

N/A

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

N/A

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Finance and Administration assisted in determining the appropriate fees for cost recovery of the services being offered.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Memorial Fees

Animal Services offers three special services to grieving pet owners to assist them when their pets die. These services include Special Cremation, Clay Paw Print and Painted Paw Print. The Special Cremation Fee is when owners request the return of their pet's ashes after the pet has been brought to Animal Services for cremation. Both the Clay Paw Print and the Painted Paw Print (memorial tokens of remembrance) are services currently being provided to grieving pet owners. The recommended fees would cover the costs associated with these services.

Cadaver Surrender Fee (Small Dog)

The actual cost to cremate a small dog (under 20 lbs./9 kg.) is comparable to a cat, which is \$49.56. The current fee for any dog is \$108.85 at regular rate and \$84.96 at a discounted rate (seniors/disability pension). The recommended fee is more in line with

the actual cost to cremate the animal. The recommended fee is significantly reduced, but reflects the actual cost of administration and cremation and provides a method for pet owners who may not have an alternative means.

In 2014, owners surrendered 78 dogs (all sizes). With 50% being smaller dogs, the total loss of revenue would be approximately \$3,000 a year; however, there may be more owners that would use this service if the cost was at a more reasonable rate.

Animal Assistance Fee (Hourly rate \$50.00)

Private property owners are responsible to remove and deal with animal-related issues on their property. Traditionally, Animal Services has provided these services free of charge or have declined to assist. The recommended fee will allow Animal Services staff to provide these services to the public and recover the costs associated with the Officers' time and equipment. The requests for these services are not mandated by legislation, but are meeting the needs of our Community as we provide quality and timely services. Some of the services which are now part of the Animal Assistance Fee include:

- Catch and release of wildlife from within a dwelling. (includes bats if Public Health Services is not involved);
- Removal of a dead squirrel from a pool;
- Removal of an impaled deer from a private fence;
- Assist the Sheriff's office during evictions;
- Removal of animal(s) from shed/garage/basement such as cats/raccoons, and squirrels; and,
- Removal of wildlife from private property.

These fees will recover the cost and will provide better service to the citizens of Hamilton.

In 2014, Animal Services responded to 1,300 calls where the Animal Service Fee could have been charged. This would have had the potential to generate increased revenue of \$65,000. However, we estimate about a 25% uptake on this service, resulting in potential revenue of \$16,250. The basis for this estimate is that the public may find other options or take care of the situations themselves, recognizing that a cost would be associated with the service.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

The alternative to not implementing the proposed User Fee would be to discontinue providing this service, which would then place the onus on the property owner to seek a private company to respond to their concerns.

In relation to the removal of animals, the alternative for the property owner is to put the dead animal in a garbage bag and leave it curb side. Animal Services staff would then do a pick up when time permits. This would allow for the Officers to focus on higher-priority calls during peak periods.

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2012 – 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Priority #2

Valued & Sustainable Services

WE deliver high quality services that meet citizen needs and expectations, in a cost effective and responsible manner.

Strategic Objective

- 2.1 Implement processes to improve services, leverage technology and validate cost effectiveness and efficiencies across the Corporation.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

N/A

KL:cab