



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

<b>TO:</b>	Chair and Members Planning Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	January 17, 2017
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	User Fees for Animal Services (PED15132(a)) (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Ken Leendertse (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3059
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Jason Thorne General Manager Planning and Economic Development Department
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the 2016 User Fee for Animal Services – Animal Assistance Fee, approved by Council on a one-year trial basis on September 23, 2015 in adopting Item 9(a)(v) of Planning Committee Report 15-014, be approved as a permanent fee, as included in the User Fees and Charges By-law.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

City Council, at its meeting held on September 23, 2015, approved Item 9 of Planning Committee Report 15-014 respecting “User Fees for Animal Services (PED15132)”. Sub-section (a)(v) of Item 9 sets out a user fee for the “Animal Assistance Fee” provided by Animal Services, and was approved on the basis of a one-year trial.

This purpose of this Report is to provide the Committee with an update of the one-year trial and recommend the approval of this fee.

***Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 3***

## **FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial: Animal Assistance Fee (2016 Hourly Rate \$44.25 plus HST = \$50). This fee generated \$1,050 in new revenue in 2016. There was a potential of

an additional \$18,650 in fees; however due to the rabies outbreak, these fees were waived.

Staffing: N/A

Legal: N/A

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

On September 23, 2015, Council approved the implementation of a new user fee for Animal Assistance. In January 2016, this user fee was implemented. Shortly thereafter, in January 2016, with the rabies outbreak in our community, management waived the fee for the pick-up of rabies vector wildlife to ensure public safety.

## **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**

Private property owners are responsible for removing and dealing with animal-related issues on their property. Traditionally, Animal Services had provided these services free of charge or declined to assist. The approved fee allows Animal Services staff to provide these services to the public, and recover the costs associated with the Officers' time and equipment. These services are not mandated by legislation, but meet the needs of our community as we provide quality and timely services. Some of the services which have been provided by Animal Services staff over the past year, and which are now part of the Animal Assistance Fee include:

- Catch and release of wildlife from within a dwelling (includes bats if Public Health 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 animals such as cats, raccoons and squirrels from sheds, garages and basements; and
- Removal of wildlife from private property.

Animal Services implemented these fees in January 2016. However, since the outbreak of rabies, the fees related to the retrieval of rabies vector wildlife have been suspended.

To date, Animal Services has received eight calls requesting wildlife cadaver removal from private property owners where the service fee was quoted. Of those eight calls, only three private property owners requested the service, while the other five either bagged the animal for pick-up at curb side, or the animal was disposed of by the owner. The revenue from providing this service was \$150.

Additional revenues were generated as follows:

- Two fees were paid for the removal of dead deer (\$100); and
- 16 fees for wildlife removal or release from private property (\$800).

There were 373 Rabies Vector Animals (skunks/raccoons) removed from private property. Under normal circumstances, these removals would be subject to the Animal Assistance Fee; however, due to the rabies outbreak, fees in the amount of \$18,650 were waived (calculated at one hour per animal at \$50/hour).

Of note, there were 202 wildlife cadavers bagged and placed at the curb side by the homeowners for pick-up in the evenings when Officers were available (free service).

The approval of the Animal Assistance Fee has allowed Animal Services staff to provide quality service to the public and recover the costs associated with the Officers' time and equipment. Although the outbreak of rabies has hampered the detailed analysis of reducing priority calls for service, the change in behaviour of leaving the cadavers curb side has assisted in determining a better response to service.

These fees assisted to recover the cost of providing this service, and has provided better service to the citizens of Hamilton.

## **ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**

The alternative to not approving the 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 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN**

**HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES**

*Hamilton* is a safe and supportive City where people are active, healthy and have a high quality of life.

**OUR PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE**

*Hamiltonians* have a high level of trust and confidence in their City government.

**APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

N/A

KL:cab