

History of the SPCA and Highlights of the City of Saskatoon's Work with SPCA

In the 1920's, residents in Regina and Saskatoon petitioned the Province of Saskatchewan to form (incorporate) the Saskatchewan SPCA. Enacted by the legislature in 1928, the provincial SPCA was organized to have branch offices located across the province to respond to cruelty complaints from the rural areas. There was very little animal welfare activity in Saskatoon in the 1930's. In the 1940's and 1950's, a charitable Blue Cross organization assisted with some animal welfare work.

In 1957, the Saskatoon Branch of the provincial SPCA was formed, using a local veterinarian's kennel as a shelter facility. In 1962, the City of Saskatoon Pound and SPCA shared a building in the City of Saskatoon (City), Engineering Department at the City yards. In 1963, the SPCA was located on 21st Street in a remodeled comfort station.

In 1968, the organization was incorporated as the Saskatoon Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, separate from the Saskatchewan SPCA. From 1968 to 1991, the Saskatoon SPCA was located at 302 103rd Street (Sutherland district) in a City-owned building. During this time, the demand and need for services and programs steadily increased and the relatively small facility was quickly outgrown.

In 1989, a massive building fundraising campaign was launched. With monies generated through the extensive fundraising campaign and substantial financial assistance from the City, the goal of relocating to a larger building was realized in October of 1991.

On October 11, 1991, the Saskatoon SPCA relocated to its current location five kilometers south of Circle Drive on Clarence Avenue, in the Rural Municipality of Corman Park. The main portion of the building was constructed in 1976 (based on information from the R.M. of Corman Park). The original total floor area was approximately 909 m². The facility underwent a major renovation in 1990, which included major structural, mechanical, and electrical upgrades plus the addition of 124 m² of floor area. This brought the facility's total floor area to the present 1,033 m² or 11,119.2 sq. ft. The newly renovated building allowed the Saskatoon SPCA to further expand its services and programs while improving the quality of care provided to the thousands of animals received annually.

In 1994, discussions began with the Saskatoon SPCA's to take on the Animal Control Services for the City. This service had been historically provided through the City of Saskatoon Police Services. On April 1, 1998, the Saskatoon SPCA assumed responsibility for the enforcement of then City Bylaw #5996, under the new title of Animal Protection Services. The original bylaw included the provision of licensing and maintenance of canine control in the City of Saskatoon. In 2000, the City of Saskatoon passed a resolution to incorporate The Animal Control Bylaw #7860. The Bylaw #7860 includes the licensing and maintenance of canine and feline control in the City of Saskatoon.

During 2001/2002, the SPCA indicated to the City they were no longer able to continue providing the Animal Control Services and enforcement of the Animal Control Bylaw. With this request, the City began to explore alternate options for the delivery of these services, to relieve

the SPCA of this responsibility.

In 2003, Administration issued a Request for Proposal (RFP), for the animal control and animal pound services, as two separate contracts for service.

In 2004, the City awarded the contract for Animal Control to the newly formed organization Saskatoon Animal Control Agency. The Saskatoon SPCA was awarded a one-year contract to continue providing pound keeping for the City subject to several conditions, including the submission of a detailed business plan.

In 2004, when the SPCA was in a difficult financial position, an independent audit of the SPCA's financial capacity was completed to determine if the SPCA had the financial capacity to continue to deliver pound keeping services at a cost equal to the one-year contract rate. The audit determined the contract rate at the time was sufficient to cover all pound related costs. The audit also recommended several improvements that would strengthen the SPCA's financial controls and governance practices.

In 2005, faced with a deteriorating building and no funds with which to maintain it, as well as continued financial difficulties, the SPCA membership voted to approach the City with a request to sell the SPCA building and land to the City. This was to give the SPCA some much needed cashflow, to address outstanding debt. The City agreed to this request, which was a beneficial arrangement for both parties. When the City took ownership of the building, the City also undertook to do some major capital upgrades (more than \$100,000) to the building, to address the state of disrepair the building had gotten to.

In 2005, the City established a lease, for the building and land, with the SPCA in which the lease term was tied to the provision of pound services, performance of animal protection services, and permitted the SPCA to conduct its own shelter/adoption programs and services. The term of the original lease was five years and has been renewed on five-year terms since, with the last renewal term for 2019 to 2023 to coincide with the term of the pound services agreement. As a condition of the lease, as opposed to charging market rent for the building and 10 acres of land (2021 market rate estimated at \$68,500), the SPCA pays a nominal rent of \$1,000 for each year of the term and is responsible for operations, custodial and day to day maintenance and repair services, utilities, and taxes. The City is responsible for major capital repairs to the including foundation, building envelope, and essential building systems (mechanical, electrical, structural, conveyance, life safety). The City currently contributes \$35,500 annually to the City's Building Comprehensive Maintenance reserve for funding to support major repairs to this facility.

Starting in 2006, the SPCA went through a restructuring with more strategic focus on Board recruitment and new management with the primary focus being that of finance and business backgrounds to assist with the operational aspects of the business to ensure financial health and sustainability for the future.

In 2009, an audit of the City of Saskatoon Animal Services Program included an audit of the Saskatoon SPCA. The audit report indicated that overall, the Saskatoon SPCA's financial

position and performance had improved greatly since 2003.

- Cash and short-term investments had been completely restored;
- Inventory had decreased 84%;
- Accounts payable and accrual liabilities had decreased significantly (92%);
- The unrestricted fund balance (i.e., shareholder equity) had been replenished from its 2003 deficit position of almost \$240,000;
- Long-term investments had increased 328% from \$91,781 at the end of 2003 to almost \$400,000 at the end of 2008;
- Donations had tripled;
- Program fees (i.e., adoption revenue) had increased 30%; and
- The Saskatoon SPCA had had a positive cash flow from operations, before considering transfers from restricted funds, since 2005.

From 2009 to 2013, the organization took a shift as the organization redefined key priorities, went through the process of re-branding and saw the completion of a new website. The SPCA's Strategic Document, developed in 2009, became the organization's blueprint to guide direction and operations.

In 2013, the City and SPCA renegotiated a five-year agreement for 2014 to 2018 with inflationary increases in the annual fees for service paid to the SPCA. The Saskatoon SPCA continued to provide pound services for the City of Saskatoon and Animal Protection Services through the enforcement of *The Animal Protection Act, 1999* of Saskatchewan and the *Criminal Code of Canada*. The provision of services tied to the Animal Protection Act has historically been supported primarily from donor support as well as through an annual grant from the City. The pound keeping and animal protection services have always been closely connected to the SPCA since its inception.

In 2015, the City, as part of the comprehensive building maintenance work, spent \$41,500 to replace the furnace, replace the air conditioner with a larger five-ton air conditioner and evaporator, and to replace the water heater.

In 2016/2017 the SPCA approached the City about applying for a Canada 150 grant to do substantial upgrades to the facility. The SPCA was successful in being approved for a \$400,000 grant and was required to match that grant for a total of \$800,000 in building upgrades. The City contributed \$100,000 towards the dewatering portion of the project and SPCA provided the remaining \$300,000 in funding. The work included: installation of solar panels, low flow toilets, bathroom sinks, food prep area sinks to help reduce utility costs; improvements to the outdoor space pathways, landscaping, and fencing; flood abatement/dewatering, installation of appropriate flooring, and temperature monitoring systems.

In 2018, the City and SPCA renegotiated a five-year agreement for 2019 to 2023 to include the building lease, the provision of pound services, and the animal cruelty investigations. Each year of the agreement included a year over year inflationary increase, a 2% increase

for each of the first two years and a 3% increase for each of the final three years, representing an overall 13.7% increase over the five-year term.

In 2019, the SPCA approached the City about the possibility of launching a capital campaign to expand the building to include a new area for clinic and veterinarian services on site. The City sought and received City Council approval for the SPCA to proceed with the building expansion. Although this work never actually commenced, significant parts of the planning were completed in 2019.

In late 2021, the SPCA wrote to the Province and City indicating that unless the Province provided full funding for the delivery of the Animal Cruelty Investigations under *The Animal Protection Act, 2018*, the SPCA would cease to provide Animal Cruelty Investigations, as of March 31, 2022. The SPCA publicly reported they were requesting \$50,000 per month to deliver services of an Animal Protection Agency. Even though *The Animal Protection Act, 2018* is a provincial Act, and the enforcement of it is not within the City's jurisdiction, the City saw the benefit of ensuring the services of an Animal Protection agency was being provided in Saskatoon. To support this, the City had been providing the SPCA with an annual grant (\$172,638 in 2022) for the delivery of the Animal Cruelty Investigations and outlined the terms of the provision of animal protection services within the terms of the overall Pound Services Agreement.

In late 2021, the SPCA wrote to City Administration and City Council indicating they were once again in a situation where their financial situation was not as it should be, brought on by several factors, not the least of which was the pandemic. The SPCA was requesting a substantial increase in annual funding, even though we were in the middle of a term of a signed agreement.

On April 1, 2022, with the Province not agreeing to provide the SPCA with the significant request for annual funding to continue with provision of animal cruelty investigations, the SPCA ceased the delivery of animal cruelty investigations, and ceased being the Animal Protection Agency in Saskatoon, for the enforcement under *The Animal Protection Act, 2018*.

In late April 2022, after working with the SPCA representatives to review numbers and details, and acknowledging the changing reality related to animal shelters and animal keeping regulations, the City Administration recommended to City Council and received approval for a post budget \$231,700 increase to the pound services contract for 2022. This represented an almost 50% increase in funding (for 2022 - \$466,300 up to \$698,000 annual funding). The Administration recommended a further 3% inflationary increase for 2023, up to \$718,900 for the Pound Services Agreement.

April 25, 2022, City Council approved the recommended increase in funding to the SPCA to continue to provide pound services for the City for the remainder of 2022. City Council also requested that City Administration work with the SPCA to report back on a detailed plan and level of funding for the SPCA, in advance of the 2023 Budget approval.

Throughout the history of the Saskatoon SPCA, animal intake statistics have been maintained and the numbers have been relatively consistent over the years showing an average of 5,100 animal intakes annually in the earlier years, and more recently that average has dropped to about 4,100 animal intakes annually. From 1968 through 1973 there is minimal information available, and then from 1974 to present the full summary of animal intake statistics is included below. The intake numbers represent all categories of intakes. For pound services only, the average number of intakes has historically been approximately 55% to 60% of the total intakes.

Historical summary of total animal intakes by year:

Historical Animal Statistics on Total Intake							
Year	Intake	Year	Intake	Year	Intake	Year	Intake
1974	6,064	1980	4,869	1994	5,322	1999	5,782
1975	5,505	1981	5,289	1995	4,764	2000	5,425
1976	4,836	1982	5,012	1996	4,904	2001	5,510
1977	3,961	1983	4,947	1997	4,607	2002	5,438
1978	4,957	1984	5,292	1998	5,204	2003	5,731
1979	4,722	1985 to 1993 – no info available				2004	4,907

Recent Data Animal Statistics on Total Intake							
Year	Intake	Year	Intake	Year	Intake	Year	Intake
2005	4,768	2010	4,508	2015	3,471	2020	3,316
2006	5,302	2011	4,018	2016	4,018	2021	3,542
2007	5,105	2012	4,231	2017	3,983		
2008	4,247	2013	3,897	2018	3,751	Average	4,131
2009	4,210	2014	3,820	2019	4,036		
Note 1:	4,131	this average represents all categories of intake average					
Note 2:	2,434	number of intakes for pound services only					