

Janzen, Heather

Subject: FW: Email - Communication - Mercy Harris -Coyote and Feeding of Wildlife Update - CK 151-14

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>

Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 1:24 PM

To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>

Subject: Email - Communication - Mercy Harris -Coyote and Feeding of Wildlife Update - CK 151-14

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED]

Submitted on Sunday, March 23, 2025 - 13:23

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.: No

I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.: No

Date: Sunday, March 23, 2025

To: Her Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name: Mercy

Last Name: Harris

Email: [REDACTED]

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:

Address: [REDACTED] Main Street

Ward: Ward 6

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: MARCH 26 REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: 8.3.2 Coyote and Feeding of Wildlife Update [CC2024-0607]

Comments:

Dear Councilors,

I am writing to express concern regarding the recommendation in the “Coyote and Feeding of Wildlife Update Approval Report” that the City “engage a contractor to provide the more advanced components of a coyote management plan including aversion conditioning and euthanasia.”

My first concern is with the lack of research supporting the report’s recommendation about hiring a contractor. First, the report only presents what other cities are doing and does not present any research about established best management practices for urban coyotes – these two are not necessarily the same! Second and more concerning, there is a lack of expert consultation. For example, Dr. Ryan Brooks (U of S), Dr. Douglas Clark (an expert in human-wildlife interactions at the U of S), and the Saskatoon Urban Wildlife Information Network would be excellent sources of local insight, yet they were not consulted. Why not? Local experts could likely provide suggestions tailored to Saskatoon, which might avoid the brute force approach of giving a contractor carte blanche to do anything up to and including killing coyotes. I also suspect that suggestions from local experts would cost the city far less than a contractor– I was astounded to see in Appendix 3 that coyote contractors cost \$260,000-280,000 per year in Calgary!

My second concern is the lack of concrete data demonstrating a need for actions as extreme as killing coyotes. The report states that in 2024 there were only five “conflicts” with coyotes, of which four involved no coyote-human contact. While the one incident in which there was contact with the coyote is certainly unfortunate, I believe that giving a contractor free reign to use lethal force is an overreaction. Given that these five “conflicts” comprise a tiny fraction of the ~210 (estimating from the bar graph) coyote calls received by the City, it seems that current responses of public education, posting signs, etc. do seem to largely be preventing bad outcomes for virtually all of Saskatoon's ~270,000 residents.

Finally, I firmly believe that it is far more important for the City to ramp up awareness campaigns and public education than engage a contractor. In Saskatoon, we are fortunate to have many greenspaces that provide habitat wildlife, including coyotes. We should recognize that living near greenspace requires some responsibility on our part, and we should acknowledge that human behaviour is often the root cause of coyote-human interactions. If we focus on awareness of our own responsibilities, escalating to the use of lethal force will be unnecessary.

In closing, I ask Council to reject the proposal to hire a contractor to haze and kill coyotes. I will also remind Council that we are in the midst of a globally-recognized biodiversity crisis, and that coyotes, like all species, are important components of the ecosystems that sustain us.

Yours sincerely,
Mercy Harris

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No