

April 26, 2018

Secretary, Standing Policy Committee on
Planning, Development & Community Services

Re: **2017 Annual Report - Advisory Committee on Animal Control (ACAC)**
(File No. CK. 430-63)

The mandate of the Advisory Committee on Animal Control is to advise City Council, through the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development & Community Services, on all policy matters relating to animal services in the community. This annual report is in keeping with the requirement of City Council to report on its activities for the previous year.

2017 MEMBERSHIP

The Advisory Committee on Animal Control has a membership of 10 individuals as appointed by City Council. Following is a list of Committee members for 2017:

Ms. Andrea Ziegler, representing the general public, Chair
Dr. Karen Sheehan, representing the SPCA Board, Vice-Chair
Ms. Bev Ashwin, representing the general public
Dr. Breanne Couperthwaite, representing the Saskatoon Veterinary Practitioners
Councillor Zach Jeffries, representing City Council
Dr. Edward Hudson, representing the general public
Dr. Duncan Hockley, representing Western College of Veterinary Medicine
Dr. Todd Shury, representing the general public
Ms. Kristen Shymko, representing Saskatchewan Health Authority
Ms. Jill Thomson, representing the general public

In addition to the members, the Committee received information and advice from the following individuals:

Ms. Chelsie Schafer, Open Space Consultant (replaced by Mr. Shane Carter)
Ms. Jodi Manastryski, Solicitor
Ms. Eva Alexandrovici, President, Saskatoon Animal Control Agency
Ms. Patricia Cameron, Executive Director, Saskatoon S.P.C.A.
Inspector Lisa Lafreniere, Saskatoon Police Service
Ms. Debby Sackmann, Committee Assistant

MEETINGS

The Advisory Committee on Animal Control meets on the fourth Thursday of every month, with the exceptions of July, August, and December.

REPORTS, REFERRALS AND REQUESTS

The Advisory Committee reviewed and/or received information on the following items:

- Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee on Animal Control.
- *The Animal Control Bylaw, 1999 No. 7860, and The Dangerous Dog Bylaw, 2003, No. 8176*, but made no suggestions for changes.
- Pet licensing program, total Licences: 23,935, as provided by the Open Space Consultant.
- SPCA Impounded Animal Statistics: 3,985 animals, as provided by the Saskatoon SPCA.
- Multi-pet households with the view of maintaining sanitary conditions.
- The Bite Prevention campaign and the S.P.C.A.'s Bite Awareness Program, as well as updates to the "Good Dogs Bite Too" pamphlets.
- Saskatoon Animal Control Agency citations issued in 2017: 1,055.
- Governance and Priorities Committee recommendation to dissolve the Advisory Committee on Animal Control at the end of 2018 as not being "best practices".

COURT REPORTS

The Advisory Committee on Animal Control reviewed Court Reports on a monthly basis; the Office of the City Solicitor provided explanation and clarification.

Court Actions: of 362 charges there were 293 convictions; fines imposed: \$73,784.00.

The Solicitor noted that voluntary payment of fines is not recorded by the City Solicitor's Office. The yearly summary of these reports is attached.

OPEN SPACE CONSULTANT UPDATES

Monthly updates were provided by the Open Space Consultant on issues such as:

- Statistics related to number of animals licensed in the City of Saskatoon
- Plans for new dog parks to be developed
- The market plan for pet licensing
- The City's process in picking up deceased domestic and feral animals
- The sign strategy for Dog Parks
- The Dog Bite Awareness Campaign
- Success of the upgrade to the Pierre Radisson Dog Park
- Expansion to the Avalon Dog Park
- Paul Muskaway Dog Park completion for a total of ten off-lease dog parks

- Number of off-leash dog park visitors from April to October: 73,000
- Installation of pet pick-up bag dispensers in neighbourhood parks

2017 INITIATIVES

Beginning in June 2011, the Advisory Committee on Animal Control has been developing the Animal Bite Awareness Campaign. This program is designed to educate pet owners - and non-pet owners - of their responsibility to prevent animal bites. The Advisory Committee on Animal Control has employed the media talents of Tap Communications to produce an educational video entitled, "*Good Dogs Bite Too*." This video has been added to the City's website for informational purposes.

The "*Good Dogs Bite Too*" program continues. This year the Advisory Committee on Animal Control published and is making available to the public four pamphlets, i.e., "Pet Licencing," "Cats in the Community," "Good Dogs Bite Too" in a one-page format and a one third page handout.

The Advisory Committee on Animal Control, in conjunction with the Saskatoon SPCA, is concerned with the number of feral cats within the City, and together we have been investigating ways to mitigate this problem.

The Advisory Committee on Animal Control held a special called meeting in December 2017 to draft a reply to the Governance and Priorities Committee's recommendation to disband the Advisory Committee on Animal Control and subsume its activities into other Committees. The members of the Advisory Committee on Animal Control are unanimous in recommending that the Committee be continued beyond 2018.

2018 INITIATIVES

As the Animal Committee on Animal Control enters the last year under its present organizational structure, it will continue to provide advice to City Council on policy matters relating to Animal Services in the City of Saskatoon as requested.

The Committee recognizes several perennial problems that vex the citizens of Saskatoon. That is, in an effective, proactive manner, the City will need to continue to address:

- the high number of dog bites of people
- the absolute requirement to ensure the effective confinement of dogs that are declared dangerous
- the reluctance of some animal owners to licence their pets, to use leashes while walking, to remove animal feces, and to control barking
- the requirement for the proper vaccination of all dogs and cats to ensure human safety

- the reduction and control of the feral cat population of the City
- the provision of adequate numbers of off-leash dog parks to ensure that both owners and animals can be properly exercised
- the large number of dogs, cats, puppies, and kittens that are submitted to the SPCA

Counterbalancing these concerns are the benefits of pet ownership to the City. From a merely economic standpoint, the business community benefits by:

- the amount of dog and cat food sold in grocery stores
- the thirty-one pet shops in Saskatoon that offer everything from cat litter to pet spas
- the twenty-one veterinary clinics that offer "companion animal" care that employ fifty-eight veterinarians, plus a significant number of technical assistances and support staff
- the Western College of Veterinary Medicine with seventy students in each annual graduating class and the larger number of faculty of professors and instructors

But economic benefits aside, pets make us better people. Research shows that pet ownership makes people healthier by:

- reducing depression
- lowering blood pressure
- decreasing stress, and
- lowering the risk of heart attacks.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2017 Annual Court Report, Animal Control Bylaw Prosecutions - City of Saskatoon, Office of the City Solicitor.
2. 2017 Citations issued by the Saskatoon Animal Control Agency (SACA).
3. 2017 Animal Bite Statistics, Saskatchewan Health Authority.

Written By: Edward B. Hudson, DVM, MS

Sincerely,

Edward B. Hudson, 2018 Chair
Advisory Committee on Animal Control

EH/drs

REFERENCES:

1. The Health Benefits of Dogs (and Cats), How Caring for Pets can Help You Deal with Depression, Anxiety, and Stress, HelpGuide.Org
<http://www.helpguide.org/articles/emotional-health/the-health-benefits-of-pets.htm#resources>.
2. Physical & Medical Health Benefits of Pets, Increase longevity after heart attacks
Veterinary & Aquatic Services Department, Drs. Foster & Smith
<http://www.peteducation.com/article.cfm?c=0&aid=638>.
3. Dog ownership, health and physical activity: a critical review of the literature.
Cutt H1, Giles-Corti B, Knuiiman M, Burke V., Health Place. 2007 Mar;13(1):261-72.
Epub 2006 Feb 28.
<http://www.helpguide.org/articles/emotional-health/the-health-benefits-of-pets.htm#resources>.
4. Get Healthy, Get a Dog: The health benefits of canine companionship
Harvard Health Publications, Harvard Medical School
<http://www.health.harvard.edu/special-health-reports/get-healthy-get-a-dog>.
5. Five Ways Pets Can Improve Your Health, Jeanie Lerche Davis
WebMD Feature Reviewed by Louise Chang, MD, WebMD Feature Archive
<http://www.webmd.com/hypertension-high-blood-pressure/features/health-benefits-of-pets>.