
CITY OF KELOWNA

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 27, 2009

File No.: 6130-07

To: City Manager

From: Urban Forestry Supervisor

Subject: Feral Rabbit Update

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receive, for information, the update on the feral rabbit situation as outlined in the Report of the Urban Forestry Supervisor dated January 27, 2009.

BACKGROUND:

At the January 19, 2009 meeting, Council approved the following resolution:

THAT Council direct staff to request that EBB Environmental Consulting Inc. immediately step-up the live trapping of the feral rabbits with the goal of re-location;

AND THAT staff look into the possibility of involving local animal advocacy organizations in the live trapping and re-location process;

AND THAT staff determine whether or not there will be an additional cost with respect to the live trapping and re-location process, and if so, identify any funding source;

AND FURTHER THAT staff report back to Council regarding the above resolutions by February 2, 2009.

EBB was contacted and they have stepped up their programs accordingly. Between January 15 – 26, approximately 36 additional rabbits were captured. At this point, the remaining numbers appear to be quite low. However EBB also estimates that the remaining budget in their contract will only allow them to continue trapping for about three more weeks. Staff have asked EBB for an estimate of costs to extend the contract, if desired.

The following animal advocacy groups were contacted by staff:

- The local (Kelowna) SPCA;
- The Responsible Animal Care Society (TRACS);
- Warren Peace Bunny Sanctuary;
- Rabbit Advocacy Group; and
- Friends of the Bunnies.



Staff were also contacted independently, by Farmer John's Petting Zoo in Keremeos.

Some of these groups did not respond, or indicated that they would prefer to work with others. The results are summarized in the attached Table 1, for those groups / organizations that offered to trap or accept live animals. Some of the groups indicated that they would gladly accept additional funding if available.

If the City were to partner with one of these groups it would be expected that they would be responsible for complying with all pertinent provincial or federal legislation (e.g. necessary permits) and provide documentation as to spaying / neutering if applicable. A call has been placed to the BC Ministry of Environment regarding permit requirements.

If it is the wish of Council to partner with one or more of these groups, this could be addressed at final budget through taxation.

LEGAL/STATUTORY AUTHORITY:

Community Charter section 8,9 and 59; and Spheres of Concurrent Jurisdiction – Environment and Wildlife Regulation B.C. Reg. 144/2004.

CONSIDERATIONS THAT WERE NOT APPLICABLE TO THIS REPORT:

INTERNAL CIRCULATION TO:

EXISTING POLICY:

LEGAL/STATUTORY PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS:

LEGAL/STATUTORY PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS:

FINANCIAL/BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS:

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS:

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

EXTERNAL AGENCY/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

ALTERNATE RECOMMENDATION:

Submitted by:



I. Wilson, Urban Forestry Supervisor

Approved for Inclusion:



Cc: Joe Creron, Director of Infrastructure Operations
John Vos, General Manager of Citizen Services
Maureen MacGillivray, Purchasing Manager

ATTACHMENT

Table 1. Summary of results from animal advocacy groups; trapping and/or housing costs.

Name	Max. No. Rabbits Accepted	Requested Funding					TOTAL funds
		Trapping	Spaying	Neutering	Housing	Feed one year	
TRACS*	150	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$11,500
Warren Peace Bunny Sanctuary	80	No	\$ 4,320	\$ 3,680	\$ 2,143	\$ 3,588	\$13,731
Rabbit Advocacy Group	a few	No	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Farmer John's Petting Zoo**	150	No	No	No	\$ 0	\$ 2,250	\$ 2,250

*TRACS stated that total amount requested would be \$11,500 for up to 150 rabbits, this includes spay/neuter and housing costs. TRACS was the only group who is also willing to help trap rabbits, using volunteers in their spare time.

** Animals would not be spayed or neutered, but would be separated by sex into pens. Although there is no cost listed for this option, there may be some additional transportation costs.