



Corporate Report

NO: R272

COUNCIL DATE: DECEMBER 12, 2005

REGULAR

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **December 12, 2005**

FROM: **City Solicitor**

FILE: **2320-20-02 / #2**

SUBJECT: **Animal Protection, Care, Control and Licensing**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

1. Receive this report as information.
2. Approve and authorize staff to extend the current Contract with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (the "SPCA") for an additional two years.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the provision of animal protection, care and control services in the City under contract with the SPCA.

BACKGROUND

In 2004 the City contracted with the SPCA for animal control services for one year expiring December 31, 2005. The SPCA has offered to extend the current Contract yearly amount of \$824,000 for the next two years. This proposal is consistent with the provisions contained in Section 11.2 of the existing Contract. The BCSPCA Collective Agreement with CUPE Local 1622 continues until December 31, 2009 and will ensure cost certainty for the duration of this Contract as well as avoiding any labour disturbance during this period.

DISCUSSION

Our current shelter at 6706 – 152 Street, owned by the City, has now reached a tenure whereby a new shelter will have to be built in the near future. This past year the shelter was cleaned and painted inside with some minor repairs. The shelter has now reached a stage where any significant capital costs should be directed towards funding a new shelter

rather than doing any major renovations to the current facility. The property is currently zoned A-1 (General Agriculture Zone) and is proposed IB (Business Park Zone) in the East Newton Business Park Neighbourhood Concept Plan. The current appraised value of this property is in excess of \$1,750,000. The surrounding property is currently being developed and undoubtedly this shelter may pose a problem in future years with noise and traffic issues.

The City currently owns property at 19710 Colebrook Road. This City owned property currently zoned A-1 (General Agriculture Zone) contains a net area of approximately 49 acres and of this approximately 40 acres is currently leased to Nicomekl Farms Ltd. for agricultural purposes. The remaining 9 acres are primarily vacant with a single residence. The 9 acres would serve the City well for a new shelter. This location is excellent as the surrounding area is made up of farm land and borders both Highway #10 and Highway #15. The CP main railway line also separates the property from all commercial zones within Cloverdale. The SPCA Long Range Strategic Plan identifies Surrey as the location for a new animal centre and this has been supported by the Board of Directors for the BCSPCA. An extension to the Contract will allow the City to explore a partnership with the SPCA in providing a shelter and animal care facility for a number of municipalities south of the Fraser River. To construct two separate shelters would not be cost effective in providing animal care in this area. Over the next two to three years options can be explored with Senior Management of the BCSPCA with a further report (Business Plan) to Council.

In the last year the SPCA has been able to implement a comprehensive web-based animal shelter database called "Shelter Buddy". This database has allowed for significantly improved record keeping and generating many reports on a wide range of animal welfare concerns. As part of this database, the BCSPCA created a public "lost/found" component which allows members of the public to search online for animals they may have lost or to post descriptions of animals they may have found. This component has made a significant difference in reuniting animals with their owners. The animal distribution program was upgraded with the introduction of the "Pet Express" vehicles. This program is particularly important to Surrey as many hundreds of animals are transferred out of Surrey each year to avoid overcrowding in our shelter. The BCSPCA Summer Camp Youth Program has been able to expand offering more camps in 2005 than before. The Animal Learning Centre in Surrey is key to the continued growth in these camps as we provide opportunities for children to make meaningful interactions with animals and learn many life skills.

Through By-law and Licensing we have been able to provide coverage to the City on animal control complaints relating to barking dogs and dogs off leash within our parks. These complaints are now being handled through our call centre and our parks program, reducing the call load on the animal shelter considerably. The educational program (Playing it Safe with Dogs) has provided education to approximately 6,000 students on the handling of dogs. This program, through By-law and Licensing, has been provided solely by volunteers visiting the schools throughout Surrey.

In 2005 we expanded our licensing program and continued to educate the public in licensing their pets. We hope to achieve through increased licensing a "fetch and return" policy whereby dogs are immediately returned to their owner through immediate

identification on the licensing program thus reducing the stress on the animal and the workload involved in returning the dog to the shelter.

CONCLUSION

The two year animal control Contract between the City and the SPCA will not only renew the strong links that exist between the two organizations, but more importantly will ensure the delivery of quality animal services for both the animals and the residents of Surrey. It is recommended that Council approve this report and authorize staff to extend the current Contract with the SPCA for an additional two years.

CRAIG MacFARLANE
City Solicitor

CM:mlg

c.c. John Sherstone, Manger, By-laws and Licensing Services