



COMMUNITY SAFETY STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Title Animal Bylaw Review

Meeting Date October 12, 2023

Submitted By Councillor Schmidt-Rempel, Chair – Community Safety Standing Policy Committee

Recommendation from Community Safety Standing Policy Committee:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT City Council direct the City Manager to provide an amalgamated draft Animal Control Bylaw with modernization to repeal and replace Dog Control Bylaw 5235, Wild and Domestic Animal Control Bylaw 3383, Pigeon Bylaw 2609 and include draft provision(s) for the regulation of cats by Q3 2024.

Vote:

In Favour: 4-0 (Unanimous)

Public Speakers at the Meeting: None

Public Submissions: None

Submitted By Duane Ens, General Manager - Regulatory Services

Summary

- Dog Control Bylaw 5235 is nearly two decades old and requires revamping to reflect current practices, public needs and additional “housekeeping” issues.
- In March 2022, a new animal shelter contracted service provider (i.e., Community Animal Services Care and Control) was selected after 23 years with the previous provider.
- Administration has been working extensively with the Community Animal Services Care and Control Director to ensure a continued level of service, where current and future practices are being reviewed while developing a modernized all-encompassing Animal Control Bylaw.
- One objective is to engage with local residents, community organizations and stakeholders to gather their feedback on developing regulations for responsible cat ownership.

Recommendation(s)

That the Community Safety, Standing Policy Committee recommends that Council:

1. Direct the City Manager (or Administration) to provide an amalgamated draft Animal Control Bylaw with modernization to repeal and replace Dog Control Bylaw 5235, Wild and Domestic Animal Control Bylaw 3383, Pigeon Bylaw 2609 and include draft provision(s) for the regulation of cats by Q3 2024.

Financial

If *Option 1* is approved, Administration will complete a detailed cost analysis by Q3 of 2024. The analysis will identify the operating and capital expenditures required for the successful implementation of the bylaw. This will include reviewing any cost or level of service requirements for expanding the licensing & regulations (i.e., specifically cats), additional enforcement measures or other recommendations as identified through the process required for implementation of the draft Animal Control Bylaw.

Background and Prior Decisions

- [Pigeon Bylaw 2609](#) was passed in 1965 and is no longer relevant with no licensed owners of show or racing pigeons in years.
- [Wild and Domestic Animal Bylaw 3383](#) was last revised in 1983.
- [Dog Control Bylaw 5235](#) was drafted and passed in 2004 with the latest revision completed in 2019.
- In 2015, the Animal Welfare Committee was established to act as advisory committee to City Council on issues related to animal welfare.
- An [Urban Hen Review](#) was presented to Council on November 13, 2018, with a [Public Opinion Survey](#) conducted in 2019. Council opted not to proceed with an Urban Hen Pilot Program. Again, on October 13, 2022 a [public submission](#) requesting chickens in residential backyards was presented with a resolution to receive the report as information.
- On May 26, 2021, there was a [public submission](#) to the Community Safety, SPC requesting the City introduce a cat bylaw to restrict the number of cats per household.
- Some of these additional services, such as a Cat Licensing and Enforcement Program were previously brought forward to City Council and did not receive the required support to proceed.
- In recent years, the City of Lethbridge has noted an increase in the number of licensed cats through a voluntary Cat Licensing Program, where owners have the option to register their cat(s) for a one-time fee.

- In March 2022, Community Animal Services Care and Control became the new contract service provider for managing animal shelter operations and enforcement of animal bylaws. It has been an enormous undertaking to maintain service levels during this transition after 23 years with our previous provider. See attachment 1 for *Operational Overview - Community Animal Services Care & Control*.
- Administration and the Community Animal Services Care and Control Director have started the initial Animal Bylaw Review by evaluating service levels and programs throughout the province.

Engagement

Planned engagement for the Animal Bylaw Review includes:

- Community Conversation Event, October 23, 2023
- City of Lethbridge Website Survey
- Additional survey results collected at the Animal Shelter
- Animal Welfare Committee feedback

Recommendation and Option(s) Analysis

Option 1 – Direct the City Manager (or Administration) to provide an amalgamated draft Animal Control Bylaw with modernization to repeal and replace Dog Control Bylaw 5235, Wild and Domestic Animal Control Bylaw 3383, Pigeon Bylaw 2609 and include draft provision(s) for the regulation of cats by Q3 2024.

The existing Dog Control Bylaw 5235 was passed in 2004 and based on best practices at the time. Administration is requesting a bylaw overhaul by replacing and repealing three existing bylaws (i.e., Dog Control Bylaw 5235, Wild and Domestic Animal Control Bylaw 3383 and Pigeon Bylaw 2609) with an all-encompassing Animal Control Bylaw. Based on internal input, public feedback and stakeholder engagement it's anticipated the new Animal Control Bylaw will include:

- Expanding regulations beyond dogs (i.e., specifically cats)
- Updates to strengthen existing bylaw provisions
- Additional enforcement measures
- Amendments to increase or add specified penalties
- Other recommendations as identified through the review process

Administration will proceed with public engagement starting in October if approved by the Community Safety, SPC. This feedback will be instrumental in the development of the Animal Control Bylaw and any additional animal programs. Any proposed animal programs, including

those related to cats, would also require budget approval for implementation. As part of the public engagement process we will also include discussion surrounding the keeping of urban hens to supplement the Urban Hen Review conducted in 2018.

Option 2 – No change.

Attachment(s)

1. Operational Overview - Community Animal Services Care & Control

Link(s)

1. [Wild and Domestic Bylaw 3383](#)
2. [Dog Control Bylaw 5235](#)
3. [Pigeon Bylaw 2609](#)
4. [Public Submission re: Chickens – October 13, 2022](#)
5. [Public Submission re: Cat Bylaw – May 26, 2021](#)
6. [Public Opinion Survey – February 2019](#)
7. [2018 Urban Hen Review](#)

Approvals

Department Director: Brian Loewen

City Manager: Lloyd Brierley