Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – March 13, 2023

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – March 6, 2023

Item No. 1 2023 Business Plan (Selection Report) - Animal Services Special Operating Agency

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services and submitted the following to Council:

1. That the 2023 Business Plan (Selection Report) for the Animal Services Special Operating Agency, including the 2023 budget, included as Appendix A, be approved subject to adoption of the City's overall 2023 Operating Budget.

2. That the Agency's Audited Financial Statements for the 2021 fiscal year, ending December 31, 2021, included as Appendix B, be received as information.

3. That the Advisory Board members, in accordance with the Advisory Board Members composition list, included as Appendix D, be approved.

4. That the Director of Community Services be delegated the authority to set Animal Services Special Operating Agency fees and charges for products and services, as detailed in Appendix C.

5. That the Proper Officers of the City of Winnipeg be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – March 13, 2023

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Rollins,

That Rule 10(3) of The Procedure By-law No. 50/2007 be suspended in order that the following item, which was received less than four business days preceding the committee meeting, be considered by Committee.

Carried

Moved by Councillor Orlikow,

That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Yea:	Gillingham, Browaty, Lukes, Mayes, Orlikow, Rollins	6
Nay:		0

Carried

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On March 6, 2023, the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: 2023 Business Plan (Selection Report) - Animal Services Special Operating Agency

Critical Path: Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – Executive Policy Committee – Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
L. Gordon	C. Fernandes	C. Kloepfer	M. Jack

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Selection Report is intended to ensure that the Animal Services Special Operating Agency (the "Agency") continues to provide animal control measures under The City of Winnipeg Charter and the Responsible Pet Ownership By-law (the "RPO"). The Agency helps both animals and people in our community. This includes pet licensing, reunification and care of lost pets, emergency response to incidents involving animals, investigation of animal-related complaints including dog attacks, pets running at large, exotic animals, injured animals, enforcement of the RPO, and neighbourhood dispute resolution. The Agency also provides public education regarding responsible pet ownership and a progressive adoption program for unclaimed animals. Volunteer opportunities for school and social service organizations are also provided. Innovative programs such as "Doggie Dates" and "Station Doggie Dates" help improve resident health and wellness, while providing socialization opportunities for adoptable dogs. Animal Services Officers further disseminate social services information to support the community, when needed in field operations.

The Agency's main goals are to improve the health and safety of neighbourhoods through the enforcement of the RPO and education regarding responsible pet ownership. The Agency also strives to enhance its public image by increasing customer service and satisfaction through the improvement of front-line service delivery; providing professional caring and appropriate responses to citizen and pet owners' concerns, and humane alternatives to unclaimed animals.

The approval of the Selection Report will allow the Animal Services Special Operating Agency to continue to provide animal control measures under The City of Winnipeg Charter and the Responsible Pet Ownership By-law.

At this time, Council approval is required to adjust the fees and charges (above the rate of inflation) for products and services offered by Animal Services Special Operating Agency. This applies to adjustments to existing fees as well as the establishment of new fees, which are required when introducing new products and services. The Public Service recommends that the authority to set Animal Services fees and charges, be delegated to the Director of Community

Services. This will allow the Agency to respond to market conditions more quickly and provide increased opportunities to generate incremental revenue.

There are an estimated 120,000 cats and 140,000 dogs owned by Winnipeg residents based on a 2020 study conducted by Probe Research. Due to these large pet populations, the City of Winnipeg has significant animal-related services in place. These include Animal Services as the facility to take stray dogs, and the Winnipeg Humane Society (WHS), through a Service Agreement with the City of Winnipeg, as the place to take stray cats. Additional services are in place, including 24-hour emergency response to animal incidents, emergency veterinary care, and low income spay/neuter programming.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the 2023 Business Plan (Selection Report) for the Animal Services Special Operating Agency, including the 2023 budget, included as Appendix A, be approved subject to adoption of the City's overall 2023 Operating Budget.

2. That the Agency's Audited Financial Statements for the 2021 fiscal year, ending December 31, 2021, included as Appendix B, be received as information.

3. That the Advisory Board members, in accordance with the Advisory Board Members composition list, included as Appendix D, be approved.

4. That the Director of Community Services be delegated the authority to set Animal Services Special Operating Agency fees and charges for products and services, as detailed in Appendix C.

5. That the Proper Officers of the City of Winnipeg be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

As per the Animal Services Operating Charter, Council approval is required for the Animal Services Special Operating Agency's 2023 Business Plan (Selection Report) and budget.

The City Organization By-law No. 7100/97 states that the authority to make final decisions on the fixing of prices, rates, fees and charges for all civic services shall remain with Council, unless specifically delegated. The Public Service is seeking Council approval to delegate authority to the Director of Community Services to set Animal Services fees and charges.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Council approval of Recommendation 1 with respect to the 2023 Business Plan will enable the Agency to:

- Provide an essential service to promote, protect and safeguard the health of the community; and

- Establish and maintain an urban environment which permits the City of Winnipeg's human and animal populations to co-exist free of conditions which could adversely affect the health, safety and enjoyment of the community.

Should the recommendations be concurred in, the authority to set Animal Services fees and charges would be delegated to the Director of Community Services which will allow Animal Services to respond more quickly to market conditions. This will provide more timely opportunities for the generation of incremental revenue.

The Public Service will continue to publish the Animal Services fees and charges as part of the annual City Fees and Charges Schedule posted on the City's website.

The budget impact of any fee increases will be incorporated in future budgets. Any requested FTEs or additional operating costs will be addressed as part of the annual budget process

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

Animal Services SOA:

Animal Services was designated by Council as a Special Operating Agency (SOA) effective January 1, 2000. The Animal Services Special Operating Agency enforces the Responsible Pet Ownership By-law ("RPO") By-law.

The mandate of the Agency is to promote, protect and safeguard the health of the community by establishing and maintaining an urban environment which permits the City of Winnipeg's human and animal populations to co-exist free of conditions which adversely affect the health, safety and enjoyment of the community.

The Agency continues to work towards its goals and strategies as outlined in the 2023 Business Plan:

- Maintain the enforcement of the Responsible Pet Ownership By-law and continue to educate pet owners regarding their responsibilities, including pet licensing.
- Increase customer service and satisfaction through improvement in front-line service delivery.
- Improve the health and safety of neighbourhoods.
- Enhance the Agency's public image.

Financial support is provided to the Agency through a mill rate tax-supported transfer. For 2023, the budgeted transfer is $1,271,219, which includes two components: $652,273 to support the Service Agreement between the City of Winnipeg (the "City") and the Winnipeg Humane Society ("WHS"), and $618,946 in operational support for the Agency.

The Service Agreement between the City and the WHS is administered through the Agency. The primary elements of the agreement include front-end care of stray cats, emergency veterinary care, and low-income spay/neuter programming.

The current agreement with the WHS expiring December 31, 2024, provides funding by way of an annual grant in the amount of $822,273 to provide general animal services to the City at $582,273, plus the provision of a subsidized spay and neuter program of $240,000. On October 28, 2021, Council approved increasing support for the subsidized spay and neuter program to

$240,000; $652,273 continues to be funded through the tax-supported transfer and the increase to support the spay and neuter program of $170,000 is funded from the Agency's accumulated surplus.

The 2023 expense budget for the Agency is $4,012,610. Deducting the $822,273 grant to the WHS, the operating expense budget is $3,190,337. With an operational mill rate support of $618,946 and funding of $170,000 from the Agency's accumulated surplus, expenses of $2,401,391 are funded primarily from pet license revenue. The budgeted loss for the Agency in 2023 is $11,831 and is supported by the Agency's accumulated surplus.

This budget assumes that dog and cat license levels will remain flat in 2023 as some licenses will not be renewed due to pets passing away, being given away, or unwillingness by the community to pay increasing licensing fees.

License revenues primarily fund the operation, including housing stray pets and reuniting them with their owners, attending house fires or car accidents to help in the care of animals, and providing an Adoption Program. A team of Animal Services Officers patrol the streets of Winnipeg to help resolve neighbourhood disputes and incidents involving animals. Animal Services is "open admission" regarding stray dogs. "Open admission" refers to an organization that accepts animals regardless of temperament or health, and does not turn away animals.

At present, more than 30 different fees and charges currently exist for services currently offered at Animal Services (see Appendix C). Any changes to these fees (other than annual inflationary increases) require approval from Council.

The inability to update fees to reflect market conditions or introduce a new fee places Animal Services at a disadvantage which limits the ability to cost recover. At present, if an opportunity arises, an update to the Fees and Charges Schedule with approval from Council is needed. If the authority were to rest with the Director of Community Services, Animal Services could more quickly realize incremental revenue.

Animal Services' Highlights:

Licensing:
In 2022, 311 representatives reunited 230 dogs and cats wearing licenses with their owners, without those animals having to set foot or paw in an animal shelter. At the end of 2022, a total of 47,274 dogs and 28,239 cats were licensed in Winnipeg.

Responsible Pet Ownership By-Law amendments:
In 2022, several Agency recommended updates to the RPO were approved by Council. The RPO is now one of the most progressive animal control by-laws in Canada.

Progressive Low-Income Spay/Neuter Programs:
In 2022, 1,814 cats and 480 dogs were spayed/neutered at the WHS with support from the City through two innovative programs. The FIXIT grant program dedicates 45% of cat licensing revenues to low income spay/neuter programming of cats and is made possible through cat licensing. The SNAP program is partially funded by the City under a service agreement and provides spay/neuter for both cats and dogs. In 2022, 74 dogs were spayed/neutered through the Animal Services' PAL program which is funded by a private donor.

Providing Volunteer and Work Experience Opportunities:
Animal Services welcomes residents to volunteer at the Agency. Volunteers typically walk dogs, help at events, and complete light facility cleaning. Animal Services has also forged progressive relationships with numerous community organizations including Red River College, Arthur Day Middle School, Hugh John Macdonald School, and The Link. Participants receive hands-on experience working with animals along with further interactions with various facets of Animal Services' operations.

Online Adoptable Pets:
Animal Services features their adoptable pets on Petfinder.com. In 2022, their pets received 449,893 views on the website. The online platform has resulted in visitors travelling to Animal Services to adopt from not only Winnipeg, but also from British Columbia, Alberta, Nunavut, the Yukon, North Dakota, and Minnesota.

Winnipeg Lost Dog Alert:
Animal Services actively utilizes Winnipeg Lost Dog Alert (WLDA) on Facebook in an effort to reunite more lost pets with their owners. Residents post lost and found dogs on the page. Animal Services' staff also send pictures of in-take dogs to WLDA for posting on their page in hopes of getting those dogs back to their owners as quickly as possible.

Northern Outreach Initiative:
Collaboratively working with rescues, Animal Services takes a limited number of unwanted dogs from northern communities and places them up for adoption. The team at Animal Services also sends surplus pet food and treats to those same communities to help pets in need. Animal Services also offers to Northern Communities a course in basic animal control and welfare.

Helping Wildlife:
The Agency occasionally assists in the rescue of injured wildlife. When resources are available, Animal Services Officers work with wildlife rehabilitation organizations to rescue and care for injured wildlife.

Outreach:
Animal Services has a strong social media presence which helps educate the community and showcase the work of the Agency. Staff also appear monthly on media outlets and at events to discuss responsible pet ownership and pet adoption.

Doggie Dates:
Under this program, which has garnered national media attention, residents can "check out" an adoptable dog like a library book from Animal Services for a day, weekend, or week. The program gives adoptable dogs a break from shelter life, improves their adoptability, and increases the health and wellness of participants. In 2022, the program was expanded with the creation of "Station Doggie Dates" where adoptable dogs live in Winnipeg Fire Paramedic (WFPS) stations. Since its inception, over 70 dogs have lived in stations and then been adopted by residents or WFPS members.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement

Date: February 10, 2023

Project Name:

First Year of Program **2023**

2023 Business Plan (Selection Report) Animal Services Special Operating Agency

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Capital					
Capital Expenditures Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budgeted Costs	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Funding Sources:					
Debt - Internal	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Debt - External	-	-	-	-	-
Grants	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves, Equity, Surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -				
Total Additional Debt Required	$ -				
Current Expenditures/Revenues					
Direct Costs	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery	-	-	-	-	-
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	-	-	-	-	-
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -

Additional Comments: See Appendix A for the 2023 to 2024 projected financial statements and notes.

Original signed by O. Garrett

Ozzy Garrett, CPA, CGA
Acting Manager of Finance
Community Services Department

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

- Legal Services (as to Legal issues)

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

03-2 Vitality
Direction 4: Maintain the Health and Safety of Neighborhoods by Enforcing Animal Control By-Laws and Promoting Responsible Pet Ownership

- Maintain Licensing and spay/neuter efforts to identify the animal population and help control over-population.
- Work with existing community animal welfare organizations to develop a shared vision and expand educational outreach efforts.
- Engage residents and community organization on an ongoing basis to ensure that City animal control services are responsive and effective in addressing locally identified neighboring needs.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

N/A

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

Goal 6: All City Services are Equitable, Inclusive and Accessible

- Low cost spay/neuter programs

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Community Services
Division: Animal Services SOA
Prepared by: Leland Gordon, General Manager
Date: February 10, 2023

Attachments:

Appendix A: 2023 Business Plan

Appendix B: 2021 Audited Financial Statements

Appendix C: Animal Services - Fees and Charges Schedule

Appendix D: Advisory Board Members

Appendix E: Animal Services Newsletter