Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – April 16, 2024

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – March 11, 2024

Item No. 1 2024 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 2024 Business Plan (Selection Report) for the Animal Services Special Operating Agency, including the 2024 budget, included as Appendix A, be approved subject to adoption of the City's overall 2024 Operating Budget.

2. That the Agency's Audited Financial Statements for the 2022 fiscal year, ending December 31, 2022, 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 C, be approved.

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

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – March 11, 2024

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Duncan,

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

Carried

His Worship Mayor Gillingham was absent from the vote on the above motion.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On March 11, 2024, 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: 2024 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

This Selection Report is intended to ensure the Animal Services Special Operating Agency (the "Agency") continues to provide animal control measures under the governing legislation. [*The City of Winnipeg Charter* and the *Responsible Pet Ownership By-law* (the "RPO")].

The Agency's main goals are to improve the health and safety of people and animals in neighbourhoods. These goals are realized through enforcement of the RPO and public education about being a responsible pet owner. Customer service plays a very important role and the Agency strives to enhance its public image by:

- improving front-line service delivery; and
- providing professional, caring, and appropriate responses to citizens' and pet owners' concerns and questions; and offering humane alternatives to unclaimed animals.

The Agency helps both animals and people in our community by:

- pet licensing;
- reunification and care of lost pets;
- emergency response to incidents involving animals;
- investigation of animal-related complaints such as:
    - dog attacks
    - pets running at large
    - exotic animals
    - injured animals
    - enforcement of the RPO By-law and
    - neighbourhood dispute resolution;
- public education about responsible pet ownership;
- progressive adoption program for unclaimed animals;
- providing volunteer opportunities for school and social service organizations;
- innovative programs, like "Doggie Dates", can improve resident health and wellness while allowing for socialization of adoptable dogs at the same time;

- Animal Services Officers distribute social services information to support the community.

Council approval of Recommendation 1 in the 2024 Business Plan will enable the Agency to continue to:

- provide an essential service that promotes, protects and safeguards the health of the community;
- establish and maintain an urban environment that allows the City of Winnipeg's human and animal populations to co-exist without adversely affecting the health, safety enjoyment of the community.

There are an estimated 120,000 cats and 140,000 dogs owned by Winnipeg residents. These figures are according to a 2020 Probe Research study. Because of such large pet populations, the City requires significant animal-related services be in place. There are two facilities: Animal Services - the place to take stray dogs, and the Winnipeg Humane Society (WHS), as the place to take stray cats. The WHS has a Service Agreement with the City of Winnipeg for this. Additional animal-related services are in place and include 24-hour emergency response to animal incidents, emergency veterinary care, and low income spay/neuter programming.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the 2024 Business Plan (Selection Report) for the Animal Services Special Operating Agency, including the 2024 budget, included as Appendix A, be approved subject to adoption of the City's overall 2024 Operating Budget.

2. That the Agency's Audited Financial Statements for the 2022 fiscal year, ending December 31, 2022, 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 C, be approved.

4. 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 2024 Business Plan (Selection Report) and budget.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The approval of the 2024 Business Plan (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.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

Animal Services Special Operating Agency (the Agency):

Animal Services was designated by Council as a Special Operating Agency (SOA) effective January 1, 2000. The Agency enforces the Responsible Pet Ownership (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 2024 Business Plan:

- Maintain the enforcement of the RPO 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 2024, 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 (the 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. $652,273 of the annual grant continues to be funded through the tax supported transfer and $170,000 is funded from the Agency's accumulated surplus to support an increase provided to the subsidized spay and neuter program, from $170,000 to $240,000 approved in 2021.

The 2024 expense budget for the Agency is $4,204,944. Deducting the $822,273 grant to the WHS, the operating expense budget is $3,382,671. With an operational mill rate support of $618,946 and funding of $170,000 from the Agency's accumulated surplus, expenses of $2,573,725 are funded primarily from pet license revenue. The budgeted deficit for the Agency in 2024 is $143,725 and is supported by the Agency's accumulated surplus.

This budget assumes that dog and cat license levels will remain flat in 2024 as some licenses will not be renewed due to pets passing way, being given away, or unwillingness by the community to pay increasing licensing fees. All fees, except for sterilized dog/cat licenses and select administrative fees, will increase by an inflationary rate of 5.0% as determined by the City's Chief Financial Officer.

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 and volunteer 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 D).

Animal Services' Highlights:

Licensing:
In 2023, 311 representatives reunited 348 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 2023, a total of 47,196 dogs and 30,044 cats were licensed in Winnipeg.

Progressive Spay/Neuter Programs:
Almost every dog that enters Animal Services is not spayed/neutered or licensed. In 2023, Animal Services launched a temporary spay/neuter clinic once a week at the facility. Animal Services is working to expand opportunities for increased spay/neuter at the facility to help residents living on low income.

In 2023, 2107 cats and 671 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 the service agreement and provides spay/neuter for both cats and dogs.

In 2023, 92 dogs were spayed/neutered through the Animal Services' PAL program which is funded by a private donor.

Providing Volunteer and Corporate Volunteerism Opportunities:
Animal Services welcomes our community 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 and business organizations. Some of the participating organizations include Arthur Day Middle School, Hugh John Macdonald School, The Link., Winnipeg Airports Authority, Manitoba Blue Cross, and Wawanesa Insurance.

Online Adoptable Pets:
Animal Services features their adoptable pets on Petfinder.com. In 2023, their pets received 596,195 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, Yukon, North Dakota, and Minnesota.

Winnipeg Lost Dog Alert:
Animal Services actively utilizes Winnipeg Lost Dog Alert (WLDA) on Facebook in 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.

Helping Wildlife:
Animal Services 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 the Global News and CJOB morning shows and at events to discuss responsible pet ownership and pet adoption.

Doggie Dates:
Under this program that 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.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement

Date: January 29, 2024

Project Name:

First Year of Program **2024**

2024 Business Plan (Selection Report) Animal Services Special Operating Agency

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
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 - 2024 Business Plan for the 2024 to 2027 projected financial statements and notes.

Ozzy Garrett, CPA, CGA - Jan 29 / 24

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

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

Legal Services (as to Legal issues)

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

The information in this report align with OurWinnipeg 2045 as follows:

Good Health and Well Being
4.14 Community Safety

Enforce animal control and promote animal welfare standards awareness, to enable responsible pet ownership and safe interaction in the urban environment.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Consideration was given as to the whether this report connects to the Winnipeg Climate Action Plan, and it was determined that it is not applicable to this specific report.

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

The information in this report aligns with and advances the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021-2031) as follows:

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: January 29, 2024
File No.: CMS-2023-29

Attachments:

Appendix A: 2024 Business Plan

Appendix B: 2022 Audited Financial Statements

Appendix C: Advisory Board Members

Appendix D: Animal Services - Fees and Charges Schedule

Appendix E: Animal Services Newsletter