**Agenda – Executive Policy Committee – December 9, 2025**

**Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – December 5, 2025**

Moved by Councillor

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.

**Item No. 1 2026 Business Plan – Animal Services Special Operating Agency**

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On December 5, 2025, the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the following to Council:

1. That the 2026 business plan for the Animal Services Special Operating Agency, including the 2026 budget, included as Appendix A, be approved subject to the adoption of the City's 2026 operating budget.

2. That the Agency's audited financial statements for the 2024 fiscal year, ending December 31, 2024, 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 be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

**Agenda – Executive Policy Committee – December 9, 2025**

**Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – December 5, 2025**

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On December 5, 2025, 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:** 2026 Business Plan - Animal Services Special Operating Agency

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

| AUTHORIZATION | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Author** | **Department Head** | **CFO** | **CAO** |
| Z. Austin | C. Fernandes | T. Graham | J. Dunford |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Animal Services Special Operating Agency ("the Agency") submits a Business Plan to Council each year. This plan explains how the Agency will continue providing animal control services. These services are carried out under The City of Winnipeg Charter and the Responsible Pet Ownership By-law ("RPO").

The Agency works to keep both people and animals safe and healthy. It enforces the RPO and educates the public about responsible pet ownership.

If the 2026 Business Plan and the Agency's Advisory Board are approved, Animal Services can keep protecting the community. It will also support a city where people and animals can live together safely and respectfully.

The Agency's audited financial statements for the 2024 fiscal year are included for information.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the 2026 business plan for the Animal Services Special Operating Agency, including the 2026 budget, included as Appendix A, be approved subject to the adoption of the City's 2026 operating budget.

2. That the Agency's audited financial statements for the 2024 fiscal year, ending December 31, 2024, 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 2026 business plan and budget.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The approval of the 2026 business plan 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 Animal Services Special Operating Agency continues to advance the goals set out in its Operating Charter. These goals are to:

- Achieve financial sustainability by minimizing reliance on tax-supported funding over the long term.

- Improve the health and safety of neighborhoods through enforcement of the Responsible Pet Ownership By-law and education on responsible pet ownership.

- Enhance customer service by strengthening front-line service delivery and accessibility.

- Increase public awareness and participation in licensing, adoption, and community programming.

- Strengthen the Agency's public image by demonstrating transparency, compassion, and measurable impact.

- Develop partnerships with the veterinary community, the Winnipeg Humane Society, community organizations, residents and stakeholders to improve outcomes for both people and animals.

Financial support is provided to the Agency through a mill rate tax supported transfer. Included in the 2026 budget is a tax supported transfer of $871,219 which is primarily dedicated to supporting the service agreement between the City of Winnipeg (the City) and the Winnipeg Humane Society (the WHS).

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

The current service agreement with the WHS expires on December 31, 2027. The 2026 budget includes funding of $602,000 to be provided to the WHS for general services and $410,000 for the provision of a subsidized spay and neuter program.

The total 2026 expenditure budget for the Agency is $4,514,450. After deducting value included for the WHS service agreement of $1,012,000, the net remaining expenditure budget is $3,502,450, which is financed from pet license fees and other service revenue. The budgeted deficit for the Agency in 2026 is $609,231 and is supported by the Agency's accumulated surplus (retained earnings).

This budget assumes that dog and cat license sales will remain consistent in 2026, as some licenses will not be renewed due to pets passing away, being rehomed, or community reluctance to pay increasing licensing fees. All fees, except for sterilized dog and cat licenses and select administrative fees, will increase by an inflationary rate of 2.5 percent as determined by the City's Chief Financial Officer.

While the 2026 budget conservatively reflects historical revenue levels of approximately 48,000 dog licenses, the Agency is planning to implement a new licensing campaign aimed to increase compliance. This campaign features in-field licensing opportunities, incentive programs, and community outreach efforts, all aimed at increasing annual license sales beyond current levels to boost revenue and sustain core services.

License revenues are the primary source of funding for Animal Services operations, enabling the Agency to deliver essential services that protect public safety and community well-being. The Agency also maintains an "open admission" policy for stray dogs, accepting all dogs regardless of temperament or health. No dog is turned away.

At present, approximately 40 different fees and charges exist for services offered at Animal Services (see Appendix D).

**Animal Services' Highlights:**

**Community-Focused Licensing**

Animal Services is balancing a zero-tolerance approach with a community-focused, incentive-based licensing program. Officers will provide in-field licensing opportunities during patrols and service calls, supported by initiatives which may include a rewards program, customizable tags, pop-up licensing events, and a streamlined online licensing platform. A 2026 campaign aims to increase annual dog licenses.

**Enforcement**
Animal Services Officers are the frontline of community safety, delivering 24/7 responses across Winnipeg. Their responsibilities are critical to protecting both residents and animals, and include responding to emergencies such as house fires, vehicle accidents, and other critical incidents where animals are at risk. Officers patrol the city to enforce the Responsible Pet Ownership By-law, resolve neighbourhood disputes, and address incidents involving animals that endanger residents or compromise public health. They also respond to aggressive or dangerous dog incidents, enforce bite quarantines to safeguard public health, reunite lost pets with their families, and investigate common by-law offences such as dogs running at large, excessive barking, and animal welfare concerns. In partnership with the Winnipeg Police Service, Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service, Sheriffs, and Child & Family Services, Officers provide emergency assistance and ensure that both residents and animals are protected during critical events.

Beyond enforcement, Officers play a vital role in education and prevention, offering in-field licensing opportunities, engaging residents in parks and off-leash areas, and attending community events to promote responsible pet ownership. When resources allow, Officers also assist in the rescue of injured wildlife, working with rehabilitation partners to provide safe outcomes. Their visible, trusted presence in Winnipeg neighbourhoods ensures a balance of enforcement, compassion, and public service.

**Spay/Neuter and Veterinary Initiatives**
The Agency continues to invest in spay/neuter programming to reduce overpopulation pressures, including funding support for low-income residents. In addition, Animal Services is exploring expanded in-house veterinary services, which may include vaccine and microchip clinics and spay/neuter services based on community needs assessments, to expand community access, improve welfare outcomes, and reduce shelter demand.

**Community Education and Engagement**
Over 30 community events are attended by the Agency annually, complemented by presentations to newcomer groups, student placements, and volunteer programs. A Community Relations Coordinator leads outreach, media presence, and social media initiatives. Partnerships such as Winnipeg Lost Dog Alert continue to strengthen pet reunification efforts.

**Adoption and Enrichment**
Animal Services maintains a progressive adoption program with a strong online and social media presence. The nationally recognized “Doggie Date” program enriches adoptable dogs’ lives while promoting resident wellness.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

**Financial Impact Statement** **Date:** November 5, 2025

**Project Name:** **First Year of Program** **2026**

2026 Business Plan Animal Services Special Operating Agency

| | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **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 - 2026 Business Plan for the 2026 to 2029 projected financial statements and notes.

*Ozzy Garrett, CPA - November 5/25*

Ozzy Garrett, CPA
Manager of Finance
Community Services Department

## CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

- Legal Services

## OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

The information in this report aligns 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 (CAP), and it was determined that the CAP 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 Special Operating Agency
Prepared by: Zoe Austin, General Manager and Oswayne Garrett, Manager of Finance, Community Services
Date: November 5, 2025

**Attachments:**

Appendix A: 2026 Business Plan
Appendix B: 2024 Audited Financial Statements
Appendix C: Advisory Board Members
Appendix D: Animal Services - Fees and Charges Schedule