

RE: LETTER FROM MR. E. LAIRD WHICH APPEARED ON THE AGENDA
FOR THE 1978 AUGUST 14 MEETING OF COUNCIL (ITEM 4 i)
ANIMAL CONTROL - LICENSING OF DOGS

ITEM 0
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 60
COUNCIL MEETING 1978 09 05

The following is a report from the Chief Licence Inspector resulting from correspondence Council received 1978 August 14 regarding licensing of dogs less than six months old.

Mr. Laird in his letter comments on his understanding that the course "Burnaby Municipal Government" will be offered again this year. This course was offered to the public in the spring of 1976 and winter of 1977. Although plans are not now sufficiently complete for referral to Council for consideration, it is the opinion of staff that this course should probably be offered again in the fall of 1979 to coincide with the civic election which will be taking place at that time. This will be the subject of a future report to Council. There is, however, no intention to offer the course again in 1978.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the Burnaby Dog Tax and Pound and Animal Regulation By-law 1972, No. 6191, not be amended to provide dog owners an exemption from licensing until their dog is six months of age; and
2. THAT Council authorize the Chief Licence Inspector to arrange for the sale of dog licences by veterinarians who are willing to do so; and
3. THAT participating veterinarians be permitted to retain 25% of the amount of licence fees collected by them and remit the balance to the Municipal Treasurer; and
4. THAT Mr. E. Laird receive a copy of this report and be urged to obtain the required dog licence; and
5. THAT the Chief Licence Inspector bring down a further report on the cost of administering the \$6.00 per year fee.

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TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER

1978 August 30

FROM: CHIEF LICENCE INSPECTOR

RE: ANIMAL CONTROL - LICENSING OF DOGS

At the meeting of 1978 August 14, Council received correspondence from Mr. E. Laird, 6792 Humphries Avenue, concerning the licensing of his dog. Mr. Laird proposed that owners of dogs should not be required to obtain a licence for them until they are six months of age.

Council directed that action regarding the licence be delayed until a staff report on the subject is received, and requested further information on:

- (1) The administration costs of administering the \$6.00 per year fee.
- (2) How many dogs are licenced in Burnaby?
- (3) Comments from staff regarding the feasibility of veterinarians in Burnaby selling licences on their premises.
- (4) Is there some method whereby the veterinarian would not administer treatment to the dog unless it has the required licence?

The Burnaby Dog Tax and Pound and Animal Regulation By-law 1972, No. 6191, provides that every person within the Municipality who owns a dog shall have a valid licence for it. Annual dog fees are:

Male	\$21.00
Neutered male	6.00
Female	21.00
Spayed female	6.00

124

The by-law does not provide a minimum age requirement for licensing. The previous by-law specified six months, but was amended in 1972 because it is almost impossible

ITEM	6
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	60
COUNCIL MEETING	1978 09 05

-2-

125

to determine the correct age of young dogs. The poundkeeper found that when impounding such dogs, or when engaged in enforcement action for licensing them, it was inevitable that they were "just five months old". This regularly resulted in a confrontation with the owner.

We believe that the age of a dog has little bearing on its capabilities to create nuisances when running at large. Often, it is the exuberant younger dog that does the most damage to gardens.

Administratively, a licence is sought when a dog is weaned from its mother, usually at six to eight weeks of age. It is at this age that breeders usually turn a dog over to the purchaser or make it available for sale.

In 1977, the by-law was amended to enable persons to obtain a refund of \$15, this being the difference between a full fee and the fee for sterilized dogs, if the dog is sterilized within six months of the owner purchasing a licence and within the calendar year. This amendment was introduced because sterilization is generally not medically feasible until dogs are approximately six months old. The dog owner must provide medical certification that the dog has been sterilized. In 1978, the by-law was further amended to provide for licences at the sterilized rate if a veterinarian certifies that a dog is too old or is medically unfit to undergo the necessary surgery.

This method of licensing enables dog owners to comply with licensing requirements immediately upon becoming an owner and encourages them to have their dog sterilized at the earliest possible time. Persons who own dogs for show or breeding purposes do not have them sterilized. However, it is not a prerequisite to licensing that they be tattooed or registered with the Canadian Kennel Club. Administratively, it is neither practical nor equitable for such owners to be eligible for a trial period of ownership to determine if a dog will develop the characteristics which they are seeking. Accordingly, Mr. Laird is urged to obtain the necessary licence for his dog.

With respect to Item 1 of Council's enquiry, examination of the administration costs of administering the \$6.00 licence fee requires study of the costs of impounding animals, operation of the animal shelter and operation of the incinerator. This information will be the subject of a further report to Council.

With respect to Item 2, to 1978 July 31 we have licenced 7,411 dogs. This comprises 4,738 dogs at the \$6.00 rate and 2,673 at the \$21.00 rate. Total sales for 1978 are estimated at 8,360 licences.

With respect to Item 3, a canvass of the veterinarians operating the four clinics located in the Municipality determined:

Participation indicated	1
Possible participation	2
Non-participation	1

The veterinarians indicating possible participation are prepared to do so if licence sales and accounting procedures do not interfere with regular duties of their clerical staff, and if the program is of service to their customers. They are not prepared to undertake enforcement action; purchase of licences must be entirely voluntary. Also, those prepared to participate advise that reasonable reimbursement for clerical duties would be necessary.

Regarding reimbursement for such services, we deem that the provisions of the S.P.C.A.'s contract would be appropriate; that is, 25% commission of the amount of licence fees collected by them.

With respect to Item 4, the veterinarians unanimously advise that any refusal to administer treatment to an unlicensed dog would be deemed professionally unethical and therefore the proposal is not feasible.

ITEM	6
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	60
COUNCIL MEETING	1978 09 05

-3-

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4. THAT Mr. E. Laird receive a copy of this report and be urged to obtain the required dog licence.


P. A. Kenzie
CHIEF LICENCE INSPECTOR

PK:gw

cc: Municipal Treasurer