

TO: CITY MANAGER
FROM: DIRECTOR FINANCE
SUBJECT: CATS

DATE: 1999 MAY 26
File: A53

PURPOSE: To provide information to Council

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** this report be received for information.

REPORT

Council, at its meeting of 1999 May 17, requested information about forwarding a resolution to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) to call upon the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to change the Municipal Act to permit the licencing of cats. This report provides the information requested by Council.

The Municipal Act grants municipal governments general powers to regulate the keeping of animals. While, municipal governments in British Columbia are empowered to licence dogs, there is no such authority to licence cats. In 1990 and 1997, resolutions were submitted to the annual UBCM convention that called upon the UBCM to petition the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to amend the Municipal Act to provide municipalities with the authority to require licensing of cats. At its 1990 convention, delegates to the convention endorsed the resolution.

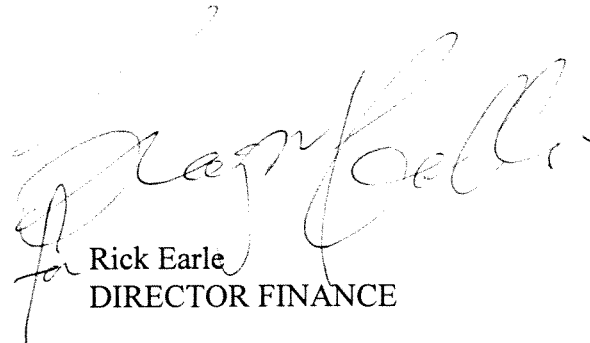
In response to the resolution, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs expressed its concern with the viability of cat licencing, citing safety issues related to the placement of tags and associated collars on cats and the possibility of cats becoming entangled in tree branches.

Delegates to the 1997 annual UBCM convention defeated a similar resolution that again called upon the UBCM to petition the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to amend the Municipal Act to allow for licencing of cats.

Staff have discussed the possible effects of amending the Burnaby Animal Control Bylaw to require the licencing of cats with the Animal Shelter Superintendent and Shelter staff. Enforcement of a cat licencing requirement is considered difficult in that:

- many cats reside in an exclusively indoor environment,
- cats are naturally elusive, and resources would be required to provide a consistent and effective licencing program, and
- public acceptance of cat licencing is questionable.

Given the disposition of the previously UBCM resolutions on cat licencing and the resources Burnaby has provided to assist cat owners with the costs of spaying and neutering their pets, a resolution to the UBCM is not recommended at this time. Unless otherwise directed, staff will continue our non-regulatory efforts to promote responsible pet ownership among cat owners through education and the Burnaby spay and neuter rebate.



Rick Earle
DIRECTOR FINANCE

BP:dh

cc: Animal Shelter Superintendent

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