



TO: CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2014 February 12
FROM: DIRECTOR FINANCE **FILE:** 43000-04
SUBJECT: BURNABY ANIMAL CONTROL BYLAW - PET STORE REGULATIONS
PURPOSE: To address questions raised by Council during the 2013 November 25 Council meeting regarding amendments to the Burnaby Animal Control Bylaw with respect to pet store regulations.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council adopt the recommendation to amend the Burnaby Animal Control Bylaw to require a provision for sterilization of cats prior to sale in Burnaby pet stores as outlined in this report.

REPORT

After providing an opportunity for input from citizens, pet store operators and other concerned stakeholders, Council at their meeting on 2013 November 25 adopted recommendations to amend the Burnaby Animal Control Bylaw with respect to pet stores to provide stronger regulations to protect both pets and the general public. In addition to the recommendations adopted staff was requested to report back on two issues of concern raised by the stakeholders during the presentations:

- the feasibility of requiring that pet stores either sterilize all cats prior to sale, or alternatively establish a voucher system that would require customers prepay for sterilization at the point of sale and have the procedure performed at a later date.
- the viability of implementing a bylaw amendment requiring that all pets sold in Burnaby pet stores be bred in British Columbia.

1.0 STERILIZATION OF CATS PRIOR TO SALE OR VOUCHER SYSTEM

The typical age that cats are sold in Burnaby pet stores is between eight and sixteen weeks. Research done by staff indicates that there is considerable debate on the appropriate age to spay or neuter cats. Some sources advocate undertaking the procedure in animals as young as eight weeks, while others suggest that the optimum age is five to six months.

When contacted by staff, all of the licensed veterinarian hospitals currently operating in Burnaby recommended that sterilization take place only when the animal has reached five to six months

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of age. By contrast BCSPCA routinely has the procedure successfully performed on animals as young as eight weeks of age. The BCSPCA's standard policy is to sterilize all animals prior to adoption however in some areas where local veterinarians are not willing to perform early age procedures the BCSPCA reported that a voucher system was implemented and has met with success.

Given that Burnaby local veterinary hospitals recommend that cats be sterilized when the animal has reached five to six months of age, staff recommend that a point of sale voucher program for the sale of all "unsterilized" cats be made a requirement for pet stores under the Burnaby Animal Control Bylaw. The inclusion of this requirement would provide businesses the option of sterilizing the animal prior to sale, or providing a voucher to cover the procedure at a later date.

Business owners would be responsible for funding the program and the voucher provided to the consumer would be required to cover 100% of the procedure costs. Pet store operators could look to partner with local veterinarians in an effort to reduce costs and provide customer convenience. Enforcement would be accomplished by random inspections conducted by the BCSPCA. Any pet store operator that failed to provide a voucher for the sale of an unsterilized cat would be subject to a Bylaw Violation Notice and a fine of \$500.

2.0 REQUIRING ALL PETS SOLD IN BURNABY PET STORES BE BRED IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Legal Department has received an opinion from outside counsel advising that a limitation on the sale of animals in pet stores requiring that they be born and raised in BC, would contravene international trade agreement provisions; it is therefore not viable to include this requirement as an amendment to the Burnaby Animal Control Bylaw.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

At the request of Council, staff has reviewed and found the requirement feasible to have pet stores sterilize all cats prior to sale, or establish a voucher system to require customers prepay for sterilization at the point of sale. It is recommended that Council amend the Animal Control Bylaw to provide for pet store cat sterilization at point of sale.



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