
2004 BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

2004 Public Health Operating Budget

Proposed Reduction versus Elimination of Animal Cadaver Pick up by Animal Services

Issue/Background:

The Executive Management Team (EMT) has recommended a \$123.5 thousand reduction in the service level of the animal cadaver pick up by Animal Services. This reduction equates to a reduction of 1.2 Animal Care and Control Service positions and approximately \$40,000 in related non-salary expenses. The total Animal Services Budget request for 2004 is \$6.8 million gross (\$5.4 million net). Approximately \$3.8 million provides for field services relating to the enforcement of the Municipal Code relating to animals. Cadaver pick-up costs are estimated to be \$0.25 million.

Key Point(s):

Current service that is provided by Animal Services regarding animal cadaver pick up and disposal:

- Animal Services picks up dead domestic and wild animals as requested by residents, elected officials and animal owners, on public or private property.
- In 2002 approximately 5,400 cadavers were picked up. This does not include birds picked up relating to West Nile Virus through 50:50 municipal/provincial funding.
- Approximately 28,000 field service calls are handled by Animal Care and Control Officers (ACCOs) based on priority assessment. Daily, an average 10 to 12 ACCOs are available to provide field services in the city. This translates to an average of approximately 8 to 10 calls per day per ACCO.
- Requests for service increase significantly during warmer months when wildlife are more active and pets are more inclined to roam. Wildlife represents the majority of cadavers, which increase significantly during the spring and summer months. Staff requests for vacation during these months result in somewhat reduced resources being available for field services.
- Response to pick up an animal cadaver is in general a lower priority than most other field service calls such as the investigation of a by-law infraction or the capture of a live animal. Requests for service for animals threatening public safety, injured animals, dog bite investigations and

dogs at large are service priorities.

- The pick up of a cadaver is listed low in the priority order of calls dispatched. Priority is given when the cadaver's location is impeding traffic, or is located near a highly utilised public facility, such as a school. When isolated out of other field service responses, the pick up time for cadavers may vary from thirty minutes to 24 hours from the receipt of the call.

Impact if the proposed budget reduction occurs (\$123.5 thousand):

- Response times are currently below desirable levels with only sporadic park patrols occurring and delayed response to non-emergency by-law enforcement efforts. The loss of an ACCO equates to approximately 1800-1900 lost service response hours annually, which will result in an **increase of the response time on all field service calls including priorities such as responses to public safety threats and injured/ distressed animal response calls.**
- **The current response time to requests for animal cadaver pick up range from thirty minutes to 24 hours. The proposed reduction will increase the response time to periods that could exceed 48 hours.**

Important issues relating to the pick of animal cadavers:

- Animal Service staff are equipped and trained regarding intake, handling, recording and cremation of animal cadavers. This reduces the potential for exposure to disease and increases the usefulness of the data on animal specimens collected.
- Animal Services "Lost Pet Service" advise pet owners of animals wearing identification that their pet has been killed and continued searching for the lost pet is not required.

Date:

March 9, 2004