

To:	Finance and Administration Committee	Item:	FA-07-217	Date of Report:	November 27, 2007
From:	Rick Stockman Commissioner, Corporate Services	File:	F-3012	Date of Meeting:	December 4, 2007
Subject:	<i>Animal Adoption Fees</i>			Ward(s):	All
<i>Public Meeting</i>					

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide a review of the fees charged for animal adoptions.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Finance and Administration Committee recommend to City Council:

- 1) That report FA-07-217 concerning animal adoption fees be received for information; and
- 2) That a public meeting concerning the change in fees be held in January 2008.

3.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2003 Animal Services increased adoption fees to reflect the increased value added by ensuring that all animals adopted from the facility were spayed or neutered, microchipped, and vaccinated against most animal diseases except Rabies. In the case of animals adopted by residents of the City of Oshawa, the fee also included the provision of a lifetime licence. The City also adds six weeks of Pet Insurance to the adoption package at no cost.

Since 2003, costs for vaccines, food for the animals, and the spay or neuter surgery have increased, but adoption fees have not. Value has also been added to the service in the form of more after care and pain medication for the animals being adopted. The increased costs warrant a review of the adoption fees and staff is recommending that the current fees be increased to reflect the associated costs and value added.

The recommended fee increases would be as follows:

- Dogs : from \$200 to \$230 (15%) (including a vaccination against Rabies), and
- Cats : from \$120 to \$150 (40%) (including a vaccination against Rabies).

4.0 INPUT FROM OTHER SOURCES

4.1 General

- N/A

4.2 Auditor General

- The Auditor General was not consulted in the preparation of this report

5.0 ANALYSIS

- In 2003, adoption fees were increased to \$200 for dog adoptions and \$120 for cat adoptions.
 - The increased fees reflected changes in policy that adopted more responsible pet ownership. As a result abandoned or turned in dogs and cats were routinely vaccinated and dewormed upon entry to the building in an effort to decrease the incidence of contagious disease. Adopted animals are spayed or neutered and microchipped once an adoption application has been approved in order to ensure they are permanently identified and do not contribute to pet overpopulation.
 - When the fee changes were implemented, the costs for each type of animal ranged as follows:
 - Dogs: \$168 to \$201 (fees for surgery vary depending on the size and sex of the dog), and
 - Cats: \$111 to \$149.
 - Service providers in the area, providing a similar service were surveyed and adoption fees at the time were comparable for the level of service being offered.
 - The adoption fees are not reflective of the length of time the animal had been in the care of Animal Services. For animals that are impounded and claimed by an owner, or are quarantined by the Regional Health Department the fee charged per day for boarding is \$15.00.
- Since 2003, costs have increased significantly.
 - Value was added to each service provided in the form of additional pain medication provided during surgery, pain medication sent home with the adopter and a buster collar (a plastic cone type collar) provided to ensure the animal did not remove stitches or infect the incision after being sent home.
 - These measures were required based on changes to currently accepted pain modification practices and to reduce the revisits required by a few animals that had removed sutures.
 - In May of 2007, a 3% increase in surgery fees was levied by the service provider, as was permitted under the blanket purchase order entered into in 2003.

- The result is an increase in costs associated with providing the service which now range as follows:
 - Dogs : \$193 to \$218, and
 - Cats : \$120 to \$165.
- During the adoption process the prospective adopter is provided with literature outlining the services that are included in the adoption. This includes staff reviewing with them the recommendation that animals be seen by the veterinarian of their choice within three to five days of the adoption, as well as the fact that the animal still requires a vaccination against Rabies.
- In discussion with pet owners after the adoption it appears that a large percentage are not following up with the Rabies vaccination.
 - In an effort to ensure that every adopted animal leaves the care of Animal Services fully protected and continuing to promote our support of responsible pet ownership, the addition of a Rabies vaccination would add approximately \$10 to the cost for each adoption.
- In 2006, 190 cats and 87 dogs were adopted resulting in revenue of \$40,200.
- Year to date in 2007, 223 cats and 69 dogs have been adopted resulting in revenue of \$40,560.
- An increase in adoption fees is warranted based on the cost of value added services and the inflationary increases attributed to drugs, veterinary services, etc.
 - The resultant increase in fees that are recommended are as follows:
 - Dogs (including Rabies vaccination) \$250 (increased from the current fee of \$200), and
 - Cats (including Rabies vaccination) \$150 (increased from the current fee of \$120).

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Projected revenue at the proposed adoption rate would reflect an increase of approximately \$10,000 resulting in revenue of \$50,700.
- Increasing adoption fees to the proposed amounts will increase our ability to recover costs for services provided.

7.0 RESPONSE TO THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

- Providing adopted animals that have been vaccinated against Rabies will assist in meeting the goals set out in the Community Strategic Plan – Goal C1 by enhancing health and safety.
- Increasing the fees for animals adopted in order to assist in the recovery of costs will assist in meeting the goals set out in the Community Strategic Plan – Goal C3 by ensuring accountability.

Original signed by

Jerry Conlin, Director
Municipal Law Enforcement and Licensing Services

Original signed by

Rick Stockman, Commissioner
Corporate Services

RS/JC/KD/lle