



Markham Animal Services #2

**Budget Subcommittee Meeting
November 20, 2020**

Martha Pettit, Deputy City Clerk



City of Markham Animal Services

At the November 17, 2020 Budget Committee meeting staff presented options for Markham's future animal service delivery.

Brief Recap:

- The City's contract with the OSPCA ends on March 31, 2021 – OSPCA willing to continue offering domestic animal sheltering service but will no longer be providing enforcement services to Ontario municipalities.
- Staff recommend: 1) continuing to contract with OSPCA for domestic animal sheltering for a period of 3 years; and, 2) moving animal enforcement in-house.
- Staff will continue to investigate future opportunities for shared domestic animal services with other municipalities.
- Budget Committee requested additional details on current service levels, proposed staffing levels and associated implications as well as on current/potential revenue streams to offset service delivery costs.



OSPCA Enforcement Service Levels

- OSPCA receives approximately 3,000 animal related calls in Markham each year - responses can require immediate action (such as the impounding of an animal); or provision of information, advice and direction to residents
- 80% of calls require an onsite visit by an OSPCA Animal Care Officer, including the following: severe dog bite, off-leash dog complaints, licensing follow-up, and barking dogs complaints.
- OSPCA Officers are also responsible for the transportation of injured wildlife to Shades of Hope (SOH) – this year to date 467 animals have been transported to SOH by Officers (average 400/year).
- Once the injured wildlife are fully rehabilitated, they need to be picked up and released back into the wild – this responsibility is carried out by the OSPCA Officers (143 this year to date) (average is 150/year).
- Animal Care Officers also conduct proactive park patrols – walk the parks for off-leash dogs, licensing compliance, poop & scoop contraventions, etc. – persistent problem areas are monitored more closely.



Animal Services Enforcement Staffing Levels

- Current staffing levels provided by the OSPCA include 1 Full time Supervisor, 4 Full time Officers, and additional part time staff to provide coverage for vacation & sick time.
- 2 Officers on patrol at any given time during the following shifts - 8 AM – 8 PM Monday thru Friday and 8 AM - 4:30 PM Saturday and Sunday.
- Staff recommend that we maintain this same level of service that residents have enjoyed for over 20 years.
- Animal Care Officers (ACOs) have specialized training specifically relating to animals – this differs from the specialized training of Municipal Law Enforcement Officers (MLEOs).
- Our research indicates the majority of municipalities have their own Animal Care Unit which is separate from their By-law Unit.
- Current workload prevents us from adding to the existing portfolio of the By-law Supervisors.



Markham's By-law Services Staffing Levels

- The By-law & Regulatory Services Division is led by a Deputy Clerk (currently under recruitment) and 3 Provincial Offences Supervisors. The Division is comprised of 3 units:
- The **By-law & Property Standards Unit** has 12 Full-Time Officers who enforce a wide range of standards regarding residential, commercial, industrial & heritage properties, etc.
- The **Licensing & Animal Services Unit** is comprised of 3 administrative staff and 2 Full-time Officers dedicated to licensing-related Special Projects. The Unit is responsible for administration of the City's rules around Stationary & Mobile businesses as well as management of the City's various animal services contracts.
- The **Parking Control Unit** is comprised of 2 administrative staff, 16 full-time Parking Officers and 8 on-call casual Parking Officers. The Unit is responsible for enforcing parking standards on all Markham streets - including high traffic areas like school zones & commercial plazas.



Synchronization of Efforts

- A healthy collaboration already exists between the OSPCA Enforcement Officers & Markham's By-law Services staff.
- Existing synergies can be strengthened with both units reporting under the City's Legislative Services Division.
- To clarify the distinct roles, between the units:
 - Animal Care Officers (ACOs) deal strictly with animal related calls as they relate to the City's Animal Protection & Services By-law and the Provincial legislation (*Dog Owners Liability Act*).
 - Municipal Law Enforcement Officers (By-law & Parking Enforcement Officers) deal with calls related to property standards contraventions & parking violations.



Animal Services Revenue

- Based on staff research and as outlined in the DPRA report, the City of Markham has the lowest cost per resident for animal services delivery.
- Animal Services is not a cost recovery program in any municipality; similar to other public services, it is a requirement to ensure public safety and nuisance control.
- It is important to note that all residents utilize this service not just domestic pet owners i.e. wildlife services are utilized by all residents.
- The City standardized the animal licensing fees in 2019. The current revenue budget is \$99,000 ; Markham's animal license fees are among the highest among comparator municipalities.
- The increased revenue generated from the standardization of fees is used to assist in partially offsetting the costs of the City's animal service delivery program.
- There is potential with the implementation of AMPS, Phase 2, for revenue sources through non-compliance of the City's Animal Protection & Services By-law.



Revised Financial Considerations

Based on comments from the Budget Committee, staff have revised the start times of the required staff to reduce the staffing costs in the first year. A revised financial chart is provided below:

Program Operating Costs	2021 Initial Year	2022 Annualized
Base Contract		
OSPCA Contract (sheltering and enforcement) - January 1 to March 31, 2021	\$144,514	\$0
Animal Sheltering cost - April 1, 2021 and onwards	138,750	185,000
Subtotal Base Contract	283,264	185,000
Personnel In-house Enforcement (including benefits)		
1 Supervisor - starts on February 1, 2021	112,702	122,948
4 FT Officers - ramp up start on March 1, 2021	314,618	377,542
2 PT Officers - starts on April 1, 2021	55,494	73,992
Subtotal Personnel In-house Enforcement	482,815	574,482
Non-personnel In-house Enforcement		
Non-personnel costs (Uniforms, annual training, cell phones, vehicle fuel and maintenance)	25,230	26,400
Subtotal Non-personnel In-house Enforcement	25,230	26,400
Total Operating Costs (A)	791,309	785,882
Sources of Funding		
Operating Budget	578,056	578,056
Total Sources of Funding (B)	578,056	578,056
Operating Budget Shortfall (A)-(B)	\$213,253	\$207,826



Option #3 Recommended – Hybrid Model

Option #3: The Hybrid Model - Contract with OSPCA for domestic animal sheltering, and the management of the Cat Adoption and Education Centre, and establish in-house enforcement services.

- **Recommended**, based on staff's research and the limited service options immediately available.
- Staff request approval for Option 3 as an interim measure for the next 3 years:
 - Sole source contract with the OSPCA for domestic animal sheltering services and the continued management of the CAEC (3 year contract with potential for 2 additional years if required).
 - Establish new Animal Services enforcement unit staffed by an Animal Care Supervisor and Animal Care Officers (ACOs).
 - The potential for a shared service model among YR municipalities will be actively explored during the interim period.



Staff Recommendations

1. That Council approve an increase in 2021 operating budget for Animal Services of \$213,253 to accommodate the change in service delivery; and,
2. That Council approve a new 2021 capital budget request of \$142,464 for the procurement of 2 animal care enforcement vehicles with funding as follows: \$124,769 from the Ramp-Up Reserve and \$17,695 from donations; and,
3. That staff be authorized to enter into a 3 year contract (plus possible 2 year extension) with the OSPCA for domestic animal sheltering services and CAEC management services, subject to the satisfaction of the City Clerk and City Solicitor; and,
4. That staff be authorized to hire 1 Fulltime Animal Care Supervisor, 4 Fulltime Animal Care Officers, and 2 Part Time Animal Care Officers at a cost of \$482,815 for 2021 and \$574,482 annually for 2022 for the delivery of the City's animal enforcement services to maintain current service levels; and
5. That staff be directed to continue to explore opportunities with other municipalities for future shared domestic animal services delivery; and further,
6. That staff be directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.