

Topic: Animal Control Bylaw 02-2012

### Introduction:

The Animal Control Bylaw is reaching its sunset clause date of 2359 hours on July 1, 2012 and therefore requires review and resubmission to Council for approval. Administration is planning public engagement to provide our residents with opportunities to learn more about the proposed bylaw; prior to initiating the formal approval process with Council. Administrations purpose for bringing this bylaw forth at this time is to share it as information prior to implementing our public engagement activities.

### Facts (Background Information):

This bylaw provides regulation and control of household pets, animals and birds.

### Analysis:

Administration has only made a few changes to the bylaw and they are as follows:

- I 4 (1) (b) Ensure the dog does not enter into or remain in or on a school yard or cemetery within the county. (Remove this section as the dog at large section deals with this)

Administration also gave consideration to adding a section under Vicious Dogs that would set out conditions for the owner of a dog declared vicious to be able to rehabilitate the dog and thus have the county take the vicious dog tag off of the dog. Administration carried out research in Alberta and found only Grande Prairie County to have a condition such as this and after contacting them they are in the process of removing this section of their bylaw as it is something that could become a civil issue. We are not looking at changing this in our current bylaw as we feel that the conditions set out have been working.

Consideration was also given to banning specific breeds of dog. Administration does not believe that there should be specific Dog Breed restrictions. There is not a clear objective method in determining or establishing cross breeds therefore it would be extremely difficult in stating that a particular dog is a pit bull or Rottweiler type of dog. We already have strict fines associated to an owner of a dog declared vicious and in non-compliance of our bylaw with fines ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500. Enforcement Services supports Responsible Pet Ownership and will continue with efforts to provide education to our rate payers in these areas of concern. Since children make up more than 50% of dog bite victims, teaching children how to be safe through our "Be a Tree" program as well as obedience classes for dogs may prove to be more effective in reducing the number of attacks across the county rather than the banning of certain Breeds or not allowing someone to own a dog at all. A memo with further background information is attached to the Governance and Priorities Committee report.

**Conclusion/Summary:**

Administration is pleased to provide this report for Council's information.

**Alternatives:**

None

**Summary:**

Administration has amended the current Animal Control Bylaw and is about to initiate public engagement for the purposes of informing the residents of the bylaw and its impacts. The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update of the amended bylaw and its changes prior to public engagement. Once public engagement activities are complete revisions, if deemed necessary, will be made and the bylaw brought to Council for the formal approval process.