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**Item No. 3**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**January 12, 2010**

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**   
Frank A. Beazley, Chief of Police

**DATE:** December 4, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Trap, Neuter and Return (TNR) Program

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### **INFORMATION REPORT**

#### **ORIGIN**

On September 22, 2009, Regional Council passed a motion requesting a staff report be provided in time for next year's budget deliberations on a TNR (Trap, Neuter, Return) program for HRM's feral cat population.

#### **BACKGROUND**

During the Regional Council meeting of October 16, 2007, a Supplementary Report containing information on TNR programs was submitted and discussed. Regional Council defeated a motion to allow the non profit organization PACS to carry out a TNR program on behalf of the municipality. At that time, Regional Council had determined that a TNR program would not operate as a component of HRM Animal Services.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Estimated Cat Population:**

Based on our research there are numerous formulas used to estimate owned domesticated cat populations. The Calgary model would estimate HRM's owner cat population to be 39,248. The Consultant report of 2005, stated 93,600. Staff were unable to locate a formula that would calculate the stray/feral (untamed domestic) cat population; however, it has been suggested that the stray/feral cat population is equivalent to the owned domestic cat population, placing it between 40,000 and 94,000 stray/feral cats in HRM.

A TNR program consists of stray/feral cats being humanly trapped, then evaluated, vaccinated, and sterilized by veterinarians. Kittens and tame (stray) cats are adopted into homes and healthy adult feral cats are returned to their outdoor territories to be monitored and cared for. The intent of TNR is to lower the cat population by breaking the reproduction cycle.

Staff have completed research on 17 Canadian Municipalities and consulted other key stakeholder and experts. Based on the research completed there is no legislation in place regarding TNR programs. The TNR programs continue to be operated in Canada through various animal groups.

### **Current Situation:**

Through previous public hearings and discussions with stakeholders it appears there are individuals and groups within the HRM that currently practice a form of TNR. The HRM has previously supported through the Grants Program individuals and groups that are currently operating TNR Programs.

The HRM currently receives numerous Tier 1 complaints from citizens whose concerns are relative to stray/feral cats that are causing a nuisance in their area. The current legislation does not allow for enforcement of these issues. The Tier 1 complaints are addressed by the Corporate Call Centre. It should be noted that Animal Services has responded to 104 complaints since January 2009 regarding nuisance owned cat issues. A TNR program is a long term approach that may reduce the stray/feral cat population, however it would have a minimal impact on the current nuisance issues.

### **TNR Components:**

The components associated with a TNR program would include the following:

- capturing/trapping
- sterilization
- recuperation
- maintenance of the colony- includes housing, food, etc.

The forecasted additional operational costs for an HRM operated TNR Program is \$596,700.00 based on the following assumptions:

- additional FTE is required due to the expansion of the scope of work Animal Services currently provides;
- the current Animal Service fleet is sufficient to accommodate an additional Animal Service Officer, therefore no additional vehicles are required;
- 1300 cats trapped annually based on 5 cats/day x 5 days/week x 52 weeks; and
- a sponsored TNR program requires a volunteer maintenance program for the colonies.

Budget Breakdown

Animal Service Officer - annual salary, benefits and equipment	\$61,700.00
Average rate for sterilization and vaccination of a cat (less for neuter, more for spay) 1300 x \$150.00	\$195,000.00
Shelter costs based on an average 6 night stay for recuperation per cat 1300 x \$150.00	\$195,000.00
Annual costs for housing, food and ongoing vet care for 1300 cats/year	\$145,000.00
<b>Total annual costs</b>	<b>\$596,700.00</b>

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

There would be budget implications if HRM were to fund a TNR program. The total annual budget would be approximately \$596,700.00.

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN**

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

**ATTACHMENTS**

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Supt. William Moore, Halifax Regional Police, 490-4817



Report Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
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