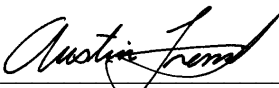




PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5, Canada

Item No. 3
Halifax Regional Council
March 23, 2010

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
Austin French, Acting Director, Community Development

DATE: February 23, 2010

SUBJECT: Municipal Funding of Trap, Neuter & Release Service for Feral Cats

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

A petition submitted to the February 9, 2010, meeting of Regional Council requesting funding from HRM to create a Trap, Neuter and Release (TNR) program for stray and feral cats.

BACKGROUND

A petition initiated by Healing Animals SCARS - Sonya's Cat & Animal Rescue was submitted to Regional Council requesting municipal funding to create a TNR program. This matter has been addressed previously in a report to the HRM Grants Committee dated November 24, 2008 (see Attachment 1) and in an information report to Regional Council dated December 4, 2009 (see Attachment 2).

DISCUSSION

As stated in the Information Report of December 4, 2009, Regional Council has determined that a TNR program would not operate as a component of HRM Animal Control Services. Hence, there is no budget allocation for this purpose.

As stated in the staff report, animal welfare projects are eligible for consideration under the Environment sector of the *HRM Community Grants Program*. Sonya's Cat & Animal Rescue Society is not registered with the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stocks and as such is ineligible for the 2010-2011 program. The program does not provide core operating and as such recurring expenses such as vaccination, spay or neutering, pet food, administration costs etc are ineligible. As with other animal welfare groups¹, the proponents of TNR have the option to incorporate as a non-profit society and sustain their programming through membership fees, donations, grants and fund-raising initiatives.

In summary, a core recurring operational subsidy to establish an on-going TNR program is ineligible for funding under the *HRM Community Grants Program*.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications.

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

1. Report to HRM Grants Committee dated November 24, 2008
2. Report to Regional Council dated December 4, 2009

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: Peta-Jane Temple, Team Lead Grants & Contributions, Community Development,
490-5469

Report Approved by: 
Andrew Whittemore, Manager, Community Relations & Cultural Affairs
Community Development, 490-1585

¹ For example the Bide Awhile Animal Shelter, SPCA, Hope for Wildlife etc.

6.3



PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

**HRM Grants Committee
December 15, 2008**

TO: Chair and Members HRM Grants Committee

SUBMITTED BY: *Bruce Fisher* (Andre MacNeil)
for Bruce Fisher, Manager, Tax & Fiscal Policy, HRM Finance

DATE: November 24, 2008

SUBJECT: Municipal Funding of Spay & Neuter Services for Ferrel Cats

ORIGIN

A request to make a presentation to Regional Council on the topic of Trap, Neuter & Release (TNR) programs was referred to the HRM Grants Committee. The proponent is advocating for a municipally subsidized spay and neuter program.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. The HRM Community Grants Program not provide core operating funding to a municipal TNR or animal sterilization program;
2. The matter of a municipal subsidy to spay and neuter programs be referred to HRM Police: Animal Control Services.

BACKGROUND

In 2007, Regional Council debated the harmonization of By-law A-300 Respecting Animals. A main source of controversy was the inclusion of cat licensing and the issue of ferrel cat colonies. Within the context of the by-law debate, two motions with respect to Trap, Neuter & Release (TNR) programs as an alternative were defeated (October 16th, 2007, and October 23rd, 2007). Reference to cats was subsequently removed from the by-law. HRM has not assumed responsibility for the delivery of a TNR program or its incorporation into any fee-for-service contract with existing animal shelters or non-profit groups.

DISCUSSION

The proponent advocates for a “....low cost spay/neuter program - perhaps subsidized in part by vet clinics and in part by HRM”. The projected cost of such a program is not provided. See e-mail correspondence: **Attachment 1.**¹

Community Grants Program

The *HRM Community Grants Program* does not provide any core operating funding to non-profit groups. Fee-for-service agreements are initiated and funded by the applicable department with responsibility for direct service delivery.

In 2008, a one-time project grant in the amount of \$5,000 was awarded to Pierre’s Alley Cats Society for a pilot project on Myrtle Street, Dartmouth. The aim was to establish the efficacy of a Trap, Neuter & Release Program (TNR) as the basis for an appeal to the public to raise funds to self-finance on-going operations. The applicant also stated their intention of encouraging HRM Animal Control Services to adopt TNR. The terms and conditions of the one-time grant specified that “....vet fees are a recurring operating expense and will be ineligible for further funding” (Report, May 26, 2008). The ineligibility of veterinary fees is not restricted to the grant recipient and shall be applicable to similar requests from other organizations.

For clarity, the Environment sector of the *HRM Community Grants Program* includes public education. An “....educational campaign or materials to promote animal control through spaying or neutering” would be eligible for assistance under a one-time project grant of up to \$5,000. Other eligible expenses include self-promotional and educational material, and small equipment.

In summary, subsidizing a regional TNR program or animal sterilization program is not recommended under the *HRM Community Grants Program*.

HRM Animal Control

Any recommendation to implement a publicly funded Trap, Neuter & Release Program, animal sterilization program irrespective of origin (eg. all pets, animal shelters, pet stores etc), or regional network of service

¹ Note: claims with respect to the efficacy of the program are those of the proponent. Final reporting with respect to a grant to Pierre’s Alley Cats is pending. Arguably, efficacy has already been asserted in background materials presented to council during the By-law A-300 debate based on programs already in existence. Hence, HRM’s grant towards a pilot project was primarily intended to demonstrate local support for the project and elicit public donations for the on-going operation of such programs.

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providers would be the prerogative of HRM Police: Animal Control.

Funding for such an approach would have to be considered through the regular business planning and budget process through the general tax rate. HRM's Interim Area Rate Guidelines restrict the application of an area rate to services that the municipality would otherwise provide. Therefore, in the absence of a municipal spay and neuter service, this type of program could not be funded through an area rate.

Animal Shelter Services

SPCA: Metro Branch and Bide AWhile Animal Shelter Society.

Both the SPCA and Bide Awhile promote spaying and neutering of animals. Animals adopted through the shelter are sterilized and vaccinated and the cost included in an adoption fee paid by the new owner. The SPCA charges a fee of ~\$120 for a cat or kitten of which ~\$50 is the cost of spay or neuter. Bide Awhile charges ~\$100 of which ~\$68 is for sterilization². By using a limited number of veterinarians these groups, and HRM, are able to secure discounted fees. Nevertheless, actual costs are higher than the adoption fee and the shelter absorbs the loss using its own budget capacity. It should be noted that the Bide Awhile Society does not receive any core municipal funding or fee-for-service contract and are self-funded through fundraising events, donations, adoption fees, and membership dues.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

None. The *HRM Community Grants Program* does not provide core operating funding.

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.

ALTERNATIVES

1. The suggestion of a publicly subsidized TNR or animal sterilization program has been referred to HRM Police: Animal Control Services.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Email from office of Municipal Clerk to HRM Grants Program dated November 21, 2008.

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: Peta-Jane Temple, Team Lead, Tax, Grants & Special Projects, HRM Finance 490-5469

² Fees will vary and are negotiated with individual veterinarians.

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December 15, 2008

Attachment 1.

Christen MacDonald 21/11/2008 4:17 pm
Good Afternoon Ms. Miller:

Councillor Adams submitted your request to my attention for follow up. All requests for financial support are reviewed by HRM's Grant Committee and a recommendation is then forwarded from the Committee to Regional Council for consideration.

Your request has been referred to the Committee and a report to Council will be forthcoming on the matter. I would ask via this E-mail that Ms. P.J. Temple, the staff liaison for the Grant Committee, contact you directly should more information regarding your request be required.

Thank you.

Christen MacDonald
Coordinator
Office of the Municipal Clerk

tapa@accesscable.net> 22/10/2008 12:43 pm

Hi Councillor Adams:

Thanks very much for your email. Last year, we started with caring for one colony of cats in Dartmouth, and we now have 6 colonies we are helping with. In addition we receive many calls from people who have a few (or many) cats in their backyard, and they don't know what to do. Except for small groups (such as mine), there isn't a program available to provide assistance. Sadly, the SPC tells people that if they can trap the cats, they will euthanize them. I find this appalling, that our SPC (the prevention of cruelty), supports euthanasia rather than the humane alternative of trap, neuter, return.

One of the groups I am helping with is Pierre's Alley Cat Society, who was successful in getting a one-time grant from HRM for a pilot project for TNR in Dartmouth. To date, more than 50 cats and kittens have been removed from that location, many of which have been spayed or neutered and returned. The kittens have been removed from the colony and adopted. There has been a huge improvement in the numbers of cats in this location, and this project will be a great example of the success of TNR.

What we desperately need in HRM is a low cost spay/ neuter program - perhaps subsidized in part by the vet clinics and in part by HRM?? The average cost for spays is \$200 plus vaccines and \$150 plus vaccines for a neuter. I can certainly appreciate that people just cannot afford that kind of money to resolve a problem that isn't theirs in the first place. One or two cats show up in someone's yard, and the next thing they know, they have kittens, and those kittens end up having kittens, etc. If a low cost spay/ neuter program were available, then these situations could be resolved before they get out of hand.

We would love to have someone give a presentation to Council on TNR and would be happy to arrange it. Please let me know what you think, and feel free to contact me. My home number is 864-3368 (evenings/ weekends).

*Thanks so much for your interest,
Angela*

**Animal Control
Committee Report**

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December 15, 2008

From: Steve Adams <adamss@halifax.ca>

Date: Tuesday, October 21, 2008 6:34 pm

Subject: TNR

Angela:

I am very interested in learning more about your programme. Over the past few weeks, I have had numerous calls regarding stray, feral and multiplying cats. I had tried to get this type of programme included in our by-laws, but was unsuccessful.

If there is any assistance I can offer, please let me know.

Stephen

477-0627

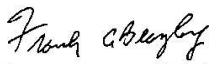


PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5, Canada

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

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.

Trap, Neuter and Return (TNR) Program - 3 - Council Report

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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
Total annual costs	\$596,700.00

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.

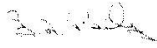
**Trap, Neuter and Return (TNR) Program - 4 -
Council Report**

January 12, 2010

ATTACHMENTS

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/agenda.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: Deputy Chief F.A. Burbridge, Halifax Regional Police, 490-7138