



MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 15, 2024

BRIEFING NOTE - TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

DOG ISSUES - UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the County of Vermilion River Policy and Priorities Committee receive the Dog Issues update for Information

DETAILS

Background: Council has requested information regarding additions to the *Public Safety Bylaw* pertaining to dogs in the area of; loose, stray and/or abandoned dogs.

The *Public Safety Bylaw* has provisions for noise (barking) as well as an additional bylaw for *Aggressive Dogs*, passed in 2023. The Public Safety Bylaw could be easily amended to include provisions for stray, abandoned or surrendered dogs.

The County of Vermilion River currently has an MOU with the old SPCA of Lloydminster, now called Border Paws (no affiliation with the SPCA) that cost \$12,000.00 a year. That MOU expires at the end of 2024 and a recent quote from the Manager of Border Paws requested \$50,000.00 annually, with an additional \$1,000.00 per dog and \$500.00 per cat. Potentially this could equate to just shy of \$80,000.00 annually based on previous numbers. This would include vet care and adoption fees. Insp. Garner has been tasked with negotiating a better rate. There is no guarantee that space would be available for any strays or surrendered dogs, and that if “at capacity, Border Paws would not be able to take any additional animals”, meaning that, if the bylaw was amended, the County must make arrangements for animal care. That could either mean, transporting the seized animal to another shelter (Bonnyville, Strathmore, Edmonton, etc. - if capacity exist), enter into alternative housing arrangements with third party private contractors or initiated an independent kennel system.

Third party private contractors include boarding kennels, veterinarians (Wier, Lloydminster Animal Hospital, Southside, etc.) and animal care companies (“doggy daycares”, breeders, etc.). The difficulties would be ensuring adequate space at those facilities, and determining the requirements for admission (for example – to board a dog at most kennels you need complete



vaccinations). Cost for this service varies depending on which option is available, however, estimated costs for a 5-7 day stay (minimum under most Dog Bylaws) is about \$35.00 - \$65.00 a day. After the standard waiting period, if the animal is not claimed by their owner, a decision has to be made for determining disposal [adoption or euthanasia]. In regards to dealing internally with adoption, these can be quite time consuming with some animals going months without being adopted. If the bylaw calls for euthanasia, the cost for that service is estimated at \$120.00 - \$400.00/per animal.

Operating a County Kennel would include the cost of construction, overtime or third party pay, and also the cost associated with adoption or euthanasia as mentioned. Construction for a 4 kennel system for dogs, averages about \$5,000.00 with shelter and bedding. Land would need to be allocated for this. Staff would then need to be hired, or compensated, to check regularly on the animals, feed, water and walk them. If the animal requires care, they'd have to be taken to the vet for treatment.

Discussion: Council Direction or alternatives

Relevant Policy/Legislation Practices:

- Public Safety Bylaw
- Aggressive Dog Bylaw
- Municipal Government Act
- Animal Control Act

Desired Outcome (s):

Response Options:

IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION

Organizational: Contract(s)

Financial: Implications to Operational Budgeting

Communication Required:

Implementation:

Pertains to this Corporate Goal:



ATTACHMENTS

- None

PREPARED BY: Kirk Hughes, Director of Protective Services

DATE: 9 October 2024