



QUISPAMISIS TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

April 27, 2016, 6:00 pm
Council Chambers
Quispamsis Town Hall

Members Present: Mayor G. Murray Driscoll
Deputy Mayor Libby O'Hara
Councillor Gary Clark
Councillor Lisa Loughery
Councillor Kirk Miller
Councillor Emil T. Olsen
Councillor Pierre Rioux
Councillor Beth Thompson

Staff Present Brennan, Michael; CAO
Losier, Gary; Director of Engineering & Works
Deuville, Susan; Director of Human Resources/Assistant CAO
Richard McPhee, Town Solicitor
Snow, Catherine; Town Clerk

1. (Apr.27/16) Animal Control Issues

Mayor Driscoll called the meeting to order, noting several Councillors have received concerns from residents during their election campaign re recent animal control issues. He noted there is an Animal Control By-law in place that was supported by Council when initially passed. He has called a Special Meeting for the purpose of offering clarification on the Town's Animal Control Priorities, and turned the meeting over to the Director of Engineering & Works/By-law Enforcement, Mr. Gary Losier, who oversees enforcement of the Town's Animal Control By-law.

Mr. Losier made presentation on the Town's Animal Control Service, highlighted as follows:

- Specific decisions have been made to ensure the level of service, directed by the Animal Control By-law, is established and maintained. These include –
 - Regular patrols and responses;
 - Partnership with Animal Control Officer, KVPD, local Vets, Qualified Shelters, and Provincial SPCA;
 - Commitment to enforcement up to and including legal options.
- Most common complaint to the Town is Dogs at large – 100 to 150 calls per year over the past 5 years.
- Aggressive animals are an issue – defined as pursuing or biting people or other animals.
- Victims and complainants expect action, and it is the Town they call upon to provide such action.
- Level of service is based on reliable partners –
 - Council has approved contracting services to an Animal Control Officer who is dedicated to the community;
 - Regular communication with KVPF re animals they pick up or animals alleged to have bitten people or other animals;
 - Regularly seek input from local veterinarians;
- Shelter Partner –
 - Town currently directs the Animal Control Officer to utilize the services of the Greater Moncton SPCA as the Town's designated shelter service provider;
 - The Town had met with Managers of both SJ SPCA and GMSPCA in October 2015;
 - Both Provincially licensed shelters;
 - The Moncton SPCA were able to better provide the Town with the services it required -
 - Included the impounding of feral cats;
 - Surrendering to the shelter varying numbers of dogs in quantity and temperament;
 - Surrendering misc. animals, i.e. roosters, rabbits;
 - Moncton SPCA offers greater hours of operation.
 - The Town relies on its Shelter Partner to provide knowledgeable resources to assess any animals impounded;

- Once surrendered to a shelter, in accordance with the Town's Animal Control By-law, those animals then become the property of the shelter.
- Animal Control By-law is not an arbitrary By-law; similar to other jurisdictions;
 - Fierce and dangerous – similar to exact wording used in numerous municipal by-laws across the Province and this section most often applies after an alleged bite has been proven;
 - Seeks owner's guarantee and action to properly contain animal, with owners having the opportunity to present evidence and/or options for consideration;
 - In serious situations, if the owner refuses to comply, the Town will lay charges seeking action, which provides the owner opportunity to make representation to judge as an independent party.
 - The Three Infraction Policy was introduced as a deterrent to irresponsible pet owners; and applies to past history of owners with multiple infractions not paying fines and ignoring compliance, and is used in the most serious situations.

In closing, Mr. Losier noted the Town's Animal Control focus remains with the protection and safety of its residents and general public, noting the Town does not have any issues with responsible pet owners, and further that the Town recognizes dogs are part of the family structure, and have introduced a "Dog Friendly Swim" area at Gondola Point Beach, as well as developed a "Dog Park" across from the plex.

Mayor Driscoll thanked residents for their courteousness and offered those wishing to address Council the opportunity to do so by stating their name and address for the record.

Mr. Robert Hunt, 5 Hickory Court, speaking on behalf of the Quispamsis Animal Advocates, stated he is a 9 year veteran of the Canadian Air Force where he specialized as a dog behavioral specialist and trainer. He stated when a dog feels threatened, it will sometimes react with inappropriate behavior, which is different than when a dog inflicts an unprovoked serious injury to a person. He feels every effort should be made to use local shelter services when feasible. He

referenced a recent court case where the Judge ordered a dog be euthanized because the owner could not guarantee that it would never bite again, and expressed his view that dogs suspected of being a threat to public safety should be assessed and confirmed by a professionally trained animal behavior specialist. He expressed his willingness to meet with Town officials to review pertinent sections of the Town's Animal Control By-law.

Jennifer Lennox, 6 Lindwood Court, addressed Council detailing the events that led to her dog, Tucker, being ordered by the Courts to be euthanized as she could not respond, as required in the Animal Control By-law, that her dog would never bite again.

Steve Cosaboom of 4 Leesewood Drive, father of Jennifer Lennox, informed Council he was present during the incidents in question, and was told by Town officials that they were not asking for the dog to be destroyed, but for the dog to be controlled, but when they went to court, the Judge ordered the dog be put down due to the wording of the by-law.

Joan Richardson addressed Council noting she is not a resident, but works with the Saint John SPCA, and she feels some of the information presented about their services was misrepresented. She stated they do impound animals and that she would be pleased to meet and establish a relationship with the Town of Quispamsis.

Evelyn Magee, 8 Rockefeller Drive, addressed Council stating she has never had an incident with her dog who she keeps under control at all times. However, she noted, she walks extensively and there are dogs at large who have pursued her. She feels the current by-law is adequate as it seems fair, and she feels the Town foremost has a duty to keep the community safe and protected.

Julie Puglsey, 29 Herrington Drive, addressed Council stating she has a young family, and a dog. She stated she is fearful for her dog, who does not like other dogs on their property, and she fears that her dog might bite if a dog at large crosses over her property, and would be ordered to be put down. She noted she does not want to complain about neighbouring dogs running at large, as she fears after three complaints; these dogs would be put down.

Mayor Driscoll thanked residents for their presentations and attendance, and noted Council has listened attentively to their comments. Due to the closeness of the upcoming municipal election, the outgoing Council cannot at this point amend by-laws, however, it can move along the process to continue dialogue on this item and suggested Council refer it back to Staff to provide recommendations to the new Council.

Council Members spoke to the Animal Control issues and thanked residents for their attendance, encouraging residents to write in their concerns to be considered as part of the overall Animal Control review.

Moved By Councillor Olsen
Seconded By Deputy Mayor O'Hara

The issue of animal control be referred to Staff for review and report back to the new Council once sworn in, including discussions with both the Moncton and the Saint John SPCA.

Motion Carried

Moved By Deputy Mayor O'Hara
Seconded By Councillor Olsen

The Special Meeting adjourn.

Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.


G. Murray Driscoll
Mayor


Catherine P. Snow
Clerk

