

# Staff Report to Council

**Title:** Dog Control By-law

**Report Number:** Legislative Services-2024-30

**Director:** Corporate Services

**Manager:** Legislative Services

**Meeting Date:**

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

**Date to be considered by Council:**

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

---

## Recommendation:

That Council approve the draft Dog Control By-law.

---

## Executive Summary:

The Municipality's existing Dog Control By-law was passed in 1999 and has had few amendments since that time. Staff undertook a review of the existing By-law and have provided a new draft by-law for Council's consideration. This new draft modernizes the Dog Control By-law and provides greater clarity and guidance for the Council, the public and staff. The draft by-law maintains the basic principles of the existing by-law and includes all previous amendments. The by-law has been updated to include more guidance on impoundment of dogs, dangerous dogs, kennels, and enforcement.

## Strategic Priorities:

C.13-Protect people, property and the environment from the effects of dangerous conditions caused by people and nature

## Financial Considerations:

There will be no new financial considerations with the approval of the existing by-law.

The current budget for revenue from Dog License Fees is \$20,000 and in 2024 the actuals were \$22,023. The fees related to dog licences including kennel licences and the dog reclaim fee for 2025 were approved in the 2025 Rates and Fees By-law.

Although one municipality in Bruce County has eliminated the annual renewal fee for dog Licences, staff are recommending that this fee remains in place. The annual renewal fee provides the municipality with important contact information regarding the updated address and status of the dog. Without this annual renewal, the municipality's system may not be up to date, which will lead to increased staff time during enforcement. For reference, 22% of the

calls for service (136 complaints) have been received by By-law Enforcement in relation to dogs in 2024.

The By-law also allows that if a fee due to the Municipality is not paid within 30 days, it may be added to the municipal tax roll and collected like taxes.

### **Policy:**

Dog Control By-law No. 1999-51 as amended

Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act, 2019, S.O. 2019, c. 13

Dog Owners' Liability Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. D.16

### **Context and Background Information:**

When Legislative Services was established under the new organizational structure, the role of by-law enforcement fell under this newly created department. As part of the turnover of these responsibilities, staff began to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of some of the existing enforcement by-laws.

The Dog Control By-law No. 1999-51 is one of the by-laws that staff have been reviewing, as it is one of the oldest of our existing enforcement by-laws. Staff worked with the enforcement staff at Municipal Support Services and legal counsel to draft an entirely new dog control by-law with updated Set Fines.

The draft by-law maintains the basic principles of, as well as incorporates the existing amendments to, the existing by-law. The basic principles still include:

- Section 3 – the basic care for all dogs remains consistent with updated wording;
- Section 4 – Registration and licensing of dogs remains consistent (i.e. age of dog to be registered, timelines for registration, requirements for registration, and annual re-licensing), with updated wording;
- Section 4 – dog tags remain the same;
- Section 7 – maximum number of dogs remains the same with updated wording;
- Section 12 – Dog Off Leash Park has been included in this by-law and By-law No. 2009-106 as amended will be repealed; and
- Section 19 – Enforcement and Penalty remain the same with updated wording.

The draft by-law also included the following to provide Council, the public and staff more guidance:

- Section 8 Control of Dogs - now includes considerations for guide dogs, service dogs, livestock guardian dogs, hunting dogs and police dogs running at large. The existing by-law referenced only hunting dogs and police dogs.
- Section 9 Impoundment - the basic process of the impoundment of dogs remains the same including the time limit for claiming the dog (three (3) days excluding weekends and holidays) but more explanation has been made to the process for claiming the dog and requirements of the owner if unclaimed. Reclaim fees have been removed as they are part of the Rates and Fees By-law.
- Section 10 and Section 11 refer to dangerous dogs and hearing for muzzle orders as required by Section 105 of the Municipal Act. Although this was mentioned in Section

5.1.4 and 5.1.4.1 of the existing by-law, more explanation and guidance have been provided.

The significant addition to the draft by-law, has been the expansion of the requirements for kennels. The existing by-law requires a kennel licence without any guidelines for the issuance or requirements for kennels. The draft by-law provides for more guidelines for kennel applications, keeping of kennel records, kennel inspections and the cancellation of kennel licences.

The new draft also confirms that all kennels must comply with the requirements set out in “[A Code of Practice for Canadian Kennel Operations of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association](#)”. This standard is in the current by-law and is used in local kennel inspections.

Going hand in hand with the new draft by-law, the Province has recently also adopted [Bill 159, Preventing Unethical Puppy Sales Act, 2024](#) which will amend the [Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act, 2019, S.O. 2019, c.13](#). This Act prohibits the operation of puppy mills including the provision of offences and penalties. Our by-law officers will report suspected puppy mills to a Provincial Animal Welfare Inspector. Members of the public can contact the Provincial Animal Welfare Services at 1-833-9-Animal (264625) if they suspect an animal is in distress or is being abused.

#### **Consultation Overview:**

Staff have consulted with Municipal Support Services and worked closely with legal council to produce the draft by-law.

#### **Origin:**

Staff review of Dog Control By-law No. 1999-51

#### **Implementation Considerations:**

Once approved by Council, the new by-law will be posted on the Municipal website and will be distributed to all current kennel licence holders.

#### **Risk Analysis:**

The risk of staying with the existing by-law is that there is still little guidance in various areas of dog control.

---

**Attachments:** Draft Dog Control By-law, Dog Control By-law No. 1999-51

**Prepared by:** Jennifer Lawrie, Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk

**Submitted by:** Jennifer Lawrie, Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk