

Date: February 7th, 2022

Report To: Mayor & Council.

From: Patrick Briere, By-Law Enforcement Officer.

Re: Request Letter from Best for Kitty.

As you will recall, Council on December 13th, 2021, deferred a request letter from Best for Kitty to the Planning & Development Executive Committee for further review. The Planning & Development Executive Committee at their meeting on February 7th, 2022, further discussed this request.

With that said, there has been no change to the report regarding the legislative requirements for our continued operation of the pound facility. Our office can continue to report that the Town of Fort Frances Animal Pound is currently permitted to operate under Provincial permit as an animal pound. Under this Act the Town is required to follow a legislated process with any animal in our facilities/operators care. This means that any animal that comes into our facility would have to fall under this process for us to maintain our operator's licence with the Province.

We have also received correspondence from our HR Department and our insurance provider with regards to a third party/volunteer personnel/groups using/operating within our facility, the response from our insurance provider is as follows:

There are some processes that will need to be addressed prior to the Town permitting such an arrangement:

1. If they only need daily access, we suggest that Town staff permit them on premises – we do not recommend unfettered access to the building. Further, whoever lets them in, must be assured that they will only access the animal shelter. Our understanding is that it is adjacent to public works, the Town must be able to restrict access to the remainder of the compound.
2. Prior to entering into this arrangement, a formalized agreement is recommended. The agreement ought to be that the BfK organization has a valid insurance policy in place. Further the scope of their work needs to be stipulated in the agreement: will they have permission to apprehend animals that they feel are strays? Will they have the authority to spay or neuter cats? Is there a process in place to advise the general public as to when BfK finds a cat so that if someone has lost their pet, they can retrieve them before the cat gets re-homed?
3. BfK needs to understand that their volunteers will not qualify or have access to WSIB benefits – this is a challenging problem because should one of their workers slip and fall whilst in the facility, the Town could have exposure as the occupier.

4. Our concern is the unfettered and unsupervised access to the building – there is no surveillance cameras or alarm. If the Town is going to proceed, at the very least, it is recommended that the Town have a staff member present when BfK is using the facility. Privacy issues could come into play as it relates to pet owners' information. This must be administered by Town staff only.
5. We also have concerns about communicable illness as it pertains to the other animals – granted, this could happen within the existing animal control program. Increasing the amount of animals in the shelter at any given time, there is a risk that contagious illnesses could be brought into the pre-existing shelter.

It is important to note that the facility was designed to operate as a Town pound facility and has a limited number of spaces within it. The facility only has 8 cat pens and 8 dog pens. This is enough for us to operate our facility as a pound efficiently. It is also important to note that our department has been operating with 1 officer for quite some time. This has been outlined in the monthly reports.

For this type of request to be permitted, Council would have to direct Administration to research what is required for the facility to be changed from a pound to a shelter facility.

Therefore, the Planning & Development Executive Committee is recommending that Council not approve the request from Best for Kitty for usage of the Town of Fort Frances Animal Pound.

Respectfully submitted,

Original Signed by

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