



Staff Report

Report Title: Provincial Animal Welfare Services (PAWS) Act Update

Prepared By: Heather Falconer, By-Law Enforcement Officer

Department: By-Law Enforcement

Date: Feb. 1, 2021

Report Number: BLE-2021-02-5

File Number: C11-BLE21

Attachments: N/A

Recommendation:

That the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report Number BLE-2021-02-5 prepared by Heather Falconer, By-Law Enforcement Officer.

Background:

In March 2019, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA), which has enforced animal cruelty laws for 100 years, told the province it would no longer do so.

The agency's abdication followed a court decision that declared the OSPCA's enforcement powers unconstitutional. The judge said the province erred when it gave police powers to the charity without imposing reasonable standards of transparency and accountability.

A new Act had to be developed to allow another body of Government to take over the Enforcement of Animal Cruelty cases.

Discussion:

The new Act that was developed and is now called the Provincial Animal Welfare Services (PAWS) Act, which came into effect on January 1, 2020. The PAWS Act replaces the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and includes stiffer penalties for cruelty offences.

Penalties can range from the case of a first offence, to a fine of not more than \$75,000, to imprisonment for a term of not more than six months, or to both fines and can go up to fines of \$1,000,000.

The Act will be enforced by a team of provincial inspectors and also specialists in the fields of agriculture, livestock, horses, zoos and aquariums.

Financial Impacts:

There are no financial implications at this time.

Strategic Alignment / Link:

We are an accessible community that offers opportunities for everyone by being open and transparent.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Heather Falconer, By-Law Enforcement Officer

Approved By:

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer