

October 4, 2005

A meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee of Council was held this evening with Chair Deputy-Mayor Scott presiding and all members of the Committee in attendance with the exception of Councillor Levasseur. Staff members present were C.A.O., T. Lapierre, Treasurer, LeeAnn Eckford.

MINUTES:

On motion of Councillor White, seconded by Councillor Lowe, the minutes of the Regular meeting of September 6, 2005 were approved, as circulated. CARRIED.

1. ANIMAL CONTROL BY-LAW

Deputy-Mayor Scott welcomed Michael Street, the City's Animal Control Officer, to the meeting. He advised that the Province had recently enacted legislation banning pit bull dogs in the Province. Subsequently, Council had asked Mr. Street to review the City's Animal Control By-law with a view to incorporating this new legislation. This discussion tonight, he pointed out, will allow the public to respond and comment on the Animal Control Officer's proposed changes which will allow him to deal with the existing pit bull dogs in the City.

Mr. Street advised that he has reviewed the City's Animal Control By-law with a view to incorporating the new Provincial legislation as well as enhancing it in the areas where he feels it may be weak.

Continuing, Mr. Street noted that the majority of the amendments to the by-law have been incorporated into a new Section 15. This Section sets out the rules for initially registering the pit bull dog to have it classified as a "grandfathered" pit bull and then lays out certain fees, license renewal requirements and specific rules on how to manage and control the dog. Certain enhancements to the Province's legislation have been proposed, he said, noting that these will allow him some additional control. One, he noted, was the requirement to have a microchip implanted into the dog. As well, he noted he has included a clause requiring proof of third party liability insurance.

Regarding the proposed fines, he emphasized that he is quite comfortable with the proposed amounts as generally there are always those that need a reason to comply to the law and making the fine high enough generally deters them from doing it again.

Councillor White questioned how the City would be sure

the dog owners have liability insurance. Mr. Street explained that the onus is on the dog owner to have the insurance. When initially applying for registration of the dog, he noted, all the requirements of the by-law will be discussed with the owner. One of those requirements is the provision of proof of insurance. As well, the license will have to be renewed on an annual basis and proof of insurance will have to be provided each year.

Councillor Lafreniere pointed out that, in effect, this legislation, will conceivably annihilate the entire breed of "pit bull" once all the grandfathered pit bull dogs have died.

Councillor Henderson questioned who and how the dog would be identified as a pit bull. Mr. Street advised that the Provincial legislation has put the onus on the owner of the dog to provide the information as to the breed. Additionally, he, as the Animal Control Officer, will attempt to determine the breed if proof cannot be provided and, should be have difficulty, he has access to a veterinarian who has agreed to assist when needed.

In referring to Section 16, re Investigations, Councillor Henderson noted his concern about violating the individual's right to privacy. Mr. Street pointed out that this clause has been in the Animal Control By-law since 1998. It is used only in very exceptional cases where concern for public safety, or the safety of the dog itself, is a concern. He pointed out that Provincial legislation allows a By-law Enforcement Officer or a Police Officer to enter a residence without a search warrant in certain conditions. He assured Council that this is not done lightly and that usually, after an initial evaluation of the situation, if it is felt there is a valid concern, he would call in a Police Officer to assist him.

Responding to Mayor Jacyno's question about the number of pit bull type dogs within City limits, Mr. Street advised that there are probably close to 100 or so, although a number of those would be cross breeds.

Councillor O'Neill questioned whether being designated as a "Special Constable" would give him additional powers that would be of assistance to him in his duties as an Animal Control Officer. Mr. Street felt that it would.

Responding to Councillor Lowe's question about 'vicious' dogs, Mr. Street advised that charges can also be laid under the Province's Dog Liability Act. This legislation

provides for fines of up to \$10,000. Additionally, the dog can be ordered out of the City or destroyed, if circumstances warrant it.

Councillor O'Neill questioned what would happen if the offender does not pay his fine. Mr. Street advised that the fine is registered with the Ministry of Transportation records and is noted when they come for their vehicle license renewal. If they do not pay their fine they cannot renew their driver's license.

Deputy-Mayor Scott thanked Mr. Street for his presentation and advised that, following consideration of all comments received from the public and the Ministry of Attorney General's Office which approves the 'short form wording and proposed fines', the by-law will be brought forward to the November 1st, 2005 meeting for ratification.

2. STREET NAMING/BOUNDARY ROAD WEST

Deputy-Mayor Scott advised that the Street Naming Ad-hoc Committee had met and discussed the renaming of Boundary Road West. Noting that the businesses and residential owners had originally presented the petition requesting a name change, the Committee felt the name change would not cause any major disruptions. The Ad-Hoc Committee was, therefore, recommending the renaming of the street to "Blakely Crescent", which would include Blakely Street and Boundary Road West.

MOTION: Moved by Councillor Lowe,
Seconded by Councillor Lafreniere,
THAT Blakely Street and Boundary Road West be renamed
Blakely Crescent. CARRIED.

It was agreed that once the renaming of the street is finalized the Township of Laurentian Valley should be notified of the change in case they may wish to rename their portion of Boundary Road West for continuity sake.

OTHER BUSINESS

(a) September Monthly Report -Fire Department

Chief Boucher advised that the Fiddling Contest had gone off without a hitch and the Fire Department had not run into any difficulties.

He continued by advising the Committee that next week is "Fire Prevention Week". He advised that one of the major causes of death, by fire, in Ontario is the lack of working fire alarms. As part of Fire Prevention Week, he said, Fire Departments across the Province will be doing a Fire Alarm 'blitz'. Pembroke's fire crews will be out all next week checking homes for working fire alarms. He noted that the City has been divided into six sections. Several streets in each section will be chosen and the homes inspected for working fire alarms. Where alarms are found not working, new working alarms will be installed. He noted that a final review of all of the sections and the number of homes in each section not having working alarms may show a specific area where it is more prevalent. This information will tell them that follow-up is needed and they can then concentrate on these areas later.

Referring back to September's departmental report, Councillor O'Neill pointed out that 67 fines had been laid in 2005 for false fire alarms. To date 24 of those fines have not been paid.

Chief Boucher pointed out that the number of false alarms were up in July and August but he believed this was due to construction issues and, perhaps, the high humidity levels experienced during those months. He advised that the number of false alarms is back down in September.

Councillor O'Neill stressed that these fines are not given out lightly and there are avenues to appeal. The fines had been put in place, he said, to help recover some of the costs related to getting the fire fighters, volunteer fire fighters and equipment out when it is a false alarm.

The meeting then adjourned on motion of Councillor O'Neill, seconded by Councillor Henderson.