



Corporate Report

NO: R132

COUNCIL DATE: June 16, 2003

REGULAR

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: June 12, 2003
FROM: City Solicitor FILE: 3900-20-14823
SUBJECT: Exotic Animal By-law (the "By law")

RECOMMENDATION

That Council enact the By law attached as Appendix "A" dealing with the prohibition of the sale in the City of endangered, exotic, wild and dangerous animals, and require staff to hold a public information meeting prior to the introduction of the By law for final reading.

INTENT

The intent of this report is to introduce a By law that would have the effect of prohibiting the sale of endangered, exotic, wild or dangerous animals.

DISCUSSION

To date Abbotsford is the only British Columbia municipality which has a by law that prohibits the keeping and sale of wild or exotic animals. The Abbotsford by law does not, however prohibit the ownership of such animals on agricultural lands. Many large cities outside the Province have by laws which restrict or prohibit the ownership, sale and display of these animals.

The By law attached to this report does not prohibit the possession of endangered, exotic, wild or dangerous animals. The City does not have the specialized staff, vehicles, buildings and equipment necessary to deal with the control or possession of these animals.

Section 6 of the By law allows certain facilities to house these animals such as an accredited veterinary hospital and facilities accredited by the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the By law

An advantage of the proposed By law is to ban the sale of wild animals which can be inherently dangerous to people. Safety and security is a significant concern whenever wild or dangerous animals are kept, particularly with potentially dangerous species such as large cats, wild canids and venomous snakes. The keeping of these animals can

result in escapes, injuries and deaths. The City has a by law which regulates dangerous dogs, however there is no by law that deals with the sale and keeping of wild or dangerous animals in general.

CONCLUSION

The prohibition and regulation of endangered, exotic, wild and dangerous animals would be a complex and costly undertaking for the City. It is a field which the provinces have left to local governments across Canada. This has resulted in a patchwork of different by laws and inconsistent approaches in dealing with these animals. Therefore, it is recommended that only the sale of these animals be prohibited at this time. The City's efforts to reduce the proliferation of these animals will be assisted if other lower mainland municipalities join in banning their sale.

It is therefore recommended that the approach taken by the attached proposal be the subject of public consultation and discussion. It is also recommended that the Province and public health authorities be involved in this discussion and that provincial regulation and funding of endangered species and wild animal control be thoroughly studied as an alternative to local government regulation of a province wide public health and safety issue.

CRAIG MacFARLANE
City Solicitor

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Attach.

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