



GRAND VALLEY

## Town of Grand Valley Operating Budget 2025

### Canine Control

#### Current Status

The Town's contract with AgapiK9 expires in 2025. RFP will be required, and a review of the types of services that the Town requires is needed before decided next steps.

#### Budgeted Expenses

- Costs for canine control contract
- 2024 dog tag revenue was less than expenses, so no reserve contribution in 2024. If dog tag revenue exceeds expenses, a transfer to reserves can take place to build reserves for dog park

#### Second Draft:

- \$10,000 remaining for canine control contract, which will be tendered out this year before the expiration of the existing contract

#### Discussion:

- Dog Count
  - o Not currently in the budget, unless conducted in house by staff
  - o "Count" could take place in different forms:
    - Education only – production of information brochure, obtain additional marketing materials from Docupet, and then mass email distribution to all dwellings in the Town
      - Pros – provides clarity on Town policy, encourages compliance, 'first step' in process
      - Cons – does not provide an estimate on the number of dogs in the community
    - Home visits with Education only – same as Education, but staff or contractor visit all residences in the Town
      - Pros – provides clarity on Town policy, encourages compliance, 'first step' in process but with potential ability to provide an estimate of the number of dogs
      - Cons – cost for staff or contract time

- Home visits with Education and Enforcement notices – same as above, but with warnings for dogs not on the enrollment list
  - Pros – provides clarity on Town policy, encourages compliance, provides enforcement mechanism for those found to be non-compliant, provides an estimate of the number of dogs in the community
  - Cons – cost for staff or contract time, discovery of illegal dogs and Town obligation to report

#### Challenges and Observations:

- 2 neighbouring municipalities have conducted canine count measures. One did the Education only method and has had great success after providing information. They were quite pleased not to have spent the money on a door-to-door count and could not find anyone willing to do the count for them had they wanted to go that route. The other spent extra to have their canine control contractor conduct a door-to-door count in the urbanized areas only but did not realize enough revenue to cover the additional costs.
- The Town's bylaw provides mechanisms to enforce a 2-dog limit in urban areas, and the grandfathering of that clause expired in 2014. A 'count' will result in the discovery of homes with more than 2 dogs and require enforcement by by-law, unless Council directs otherwise.
- The Province of Ontario bans the ownership of certain types of dogs, within the "Pit Bull" category. The Dog Owner's Liability Act states that if the municipality's by-law is less stringent on owning these dogs, the Provincial legislation prevails. During a count, such dogs may be found, increasing the Town's liability and obligation to report and enforce the provincial restrictions. The Town should not provide licenses to own illegal dogs, either, or we are supporting the contravention of the Provincial legislation.

#### Recommendation:

- Staff recommend that \$2000 be spent to produce and distribute educational materials to all dwellings in the Town by mail, instead of using staff or contractors for a door-to-door canvassing of the community that could result in limited return or the need for pro-active enforcement against dog owners.