



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

Municipal Hall
1229 Esquimalt Road
Esquimalt, B.C. V9A 3P1

Legislation Text

File #: 19-533, **Version:** 1

REQUEST FOR DIRECTION

DATE: December 2nd, 2019

Report No. CSS-19-014

TO: Laurie Hurst, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Blair McDonald, Director of Community Safety Services

SUBJECT:

Deer Management Update

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

Does Council wish to take further action relating to Deer Management prior to reviewing the results of the current immuno-contraception study being conducted in Oak Bay?

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee of the Whole receives Staff Report No. CSS-19-014 for information, provide any additional direction to staff as the COTW considers advisable, and direct staff to prepare a report for Council's consideration.

BACKGROUND:

In 2016 Esquimalt embarked on the first phases of a deer management strategy. As part of its Deer Management Strategy, the Township completed a community survey in October of 2016 to better understand resident's attitudes in relation to urban deer. Additionally, the Township is in the midst of its third in a series of annual "deer count" as well as conducting an ongoing Public Awareness campaign.

In March of 2019, Council passed a Notice of Motion containing the following three resolutions:

1. That the Township seek BC government approval to develop and implement, working with the UWSS and drawing upon the Oak Bay approach, an immuno-contraception strategy to manage and gradually reduce the deer population in Esquimalt.
2. That the Township seek DND agreement to design and implement an immuno-contraception strategy that would complement and align with the Township's approach.
3. That the Township advocate with the Capital Regional District for the development and implementation of a region-wide (or sub-region-wide, e.g., Esquimalt, Victoria, View Royal,

Saanich and Oak Bay) deer management strategy based on, in part, immuno-contraception.

ISSUES:

Staff consulted with the Urban Wildlife Stewardship Society (UWSS), which is primarily a volunteer organization, about the possibility of the UWSS leading a parallel immuno-contraception study in Esquimalt, coinciding with the current study being conducted in Oak Bay, or as a stand alone “Esquimalt only” study. The President of the UWSS advised that the organization is at capacity and would not be in a position, from a personnel aspect, to be able to develop, plan and seek Provincial approval for an immuno-contraception program within Esquimalt.

If Council wished to pursue a program of this nature, it would be necessary for staff to contract a biologist or similar professional to design and develop an immuno-contraception research plan and to apply to the Province for authority to enact the plan. The Township would also require that professional or another similarly qualified individual(s) to manage the program.

Staff also consulted the Department of National Defence (DND) regarding a joint immuno-contraception strategy. DND representatives agreed to present a report to DND Command Staff seeking direction on the matter. In early November, a representative from DND advised that DND management has decided that they will wait for the results of the Oak Bay study before considering any immuno-contraception program, and further that it is the DND’s preference that any steps towards controlling urban deer is done on a region-wide basis.

It is expected that in either January or February of 2020, UWSS will be presenting the results of the third deer count to further inform Council’s decisions.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. That the Committee of the Whole receives Staff Report No. CSS-19-014 for information, provide any additional direction to staff as the COTW considers advisable, and direct staff to prepare a report for Council’s consideration.
2. That the COTW request further information from staff.