

ADOPTED by Council at its meeting held August 8, 2011 [M194-2011 PSSC10/11]
/RB
Windsor, Ontario August 8, 2011

REPORT NO. 10 of the
PUBLIC SAFETY STANDING COMMITTEE
of its meeting held July 20, 2011

Present: **Councillor Jones, Chair**
 Councillor Dilkens
 Councillor Gignac
 Councillor Maghnieh
 Councillor Payne

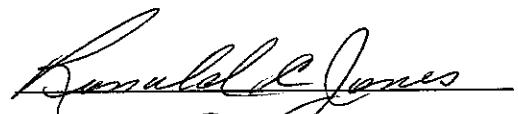
That the following recommendation of the Public Safety Standing Committee **BE APPROVED** as follows:

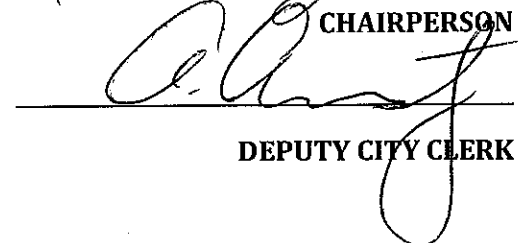
Moved by Councillor Gignac, seconded by Councillor Payne
That the establishment of a Voucher Program in the amount of 1000 vouchers with a face value of \$75 to assist with the spaying and neutering of cats **INCLUDING** feral cat colonies in Windsor **BE CONSIDERED** during the 2012 Budget Deliberations, and further;

That administration **REPORT BACK** on the benefits of voluntary licensing of cats.
Carried.

Councillor Dilkens voting nay.

Clerk's Note: The report from the Manager of Policy, Gaming & Licensing/Deputy Licence Commissioner and the Acting Coordinator of Policy & Procedures dated July 4, 2011 entitled "PSSC6/11 – Spay/neuter Voucher Program" is attached as background information.



CHAIRPERSON


DEPUTY CITY CLERK

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions.

2. It is essential to ensure that all entries are supported by proper documentation and receipts.

3. The second section covers the various methods used to collect and analyze financial data.

4. These methods include direct observation, interviews, and the use of specialized software tools.

5. The third part of the document details the procedures for conducting audits and ensuring compliance with regulations.

6. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in all financial reporting.

7. The fourth section discusses the role of internal controls in preventing fraud and errors.

8. These controls are designed to provide a reasonable assurance of the reliability of financial information.

9. The fifth part of the document addresses the challenges faced by organizations in managing their finances.

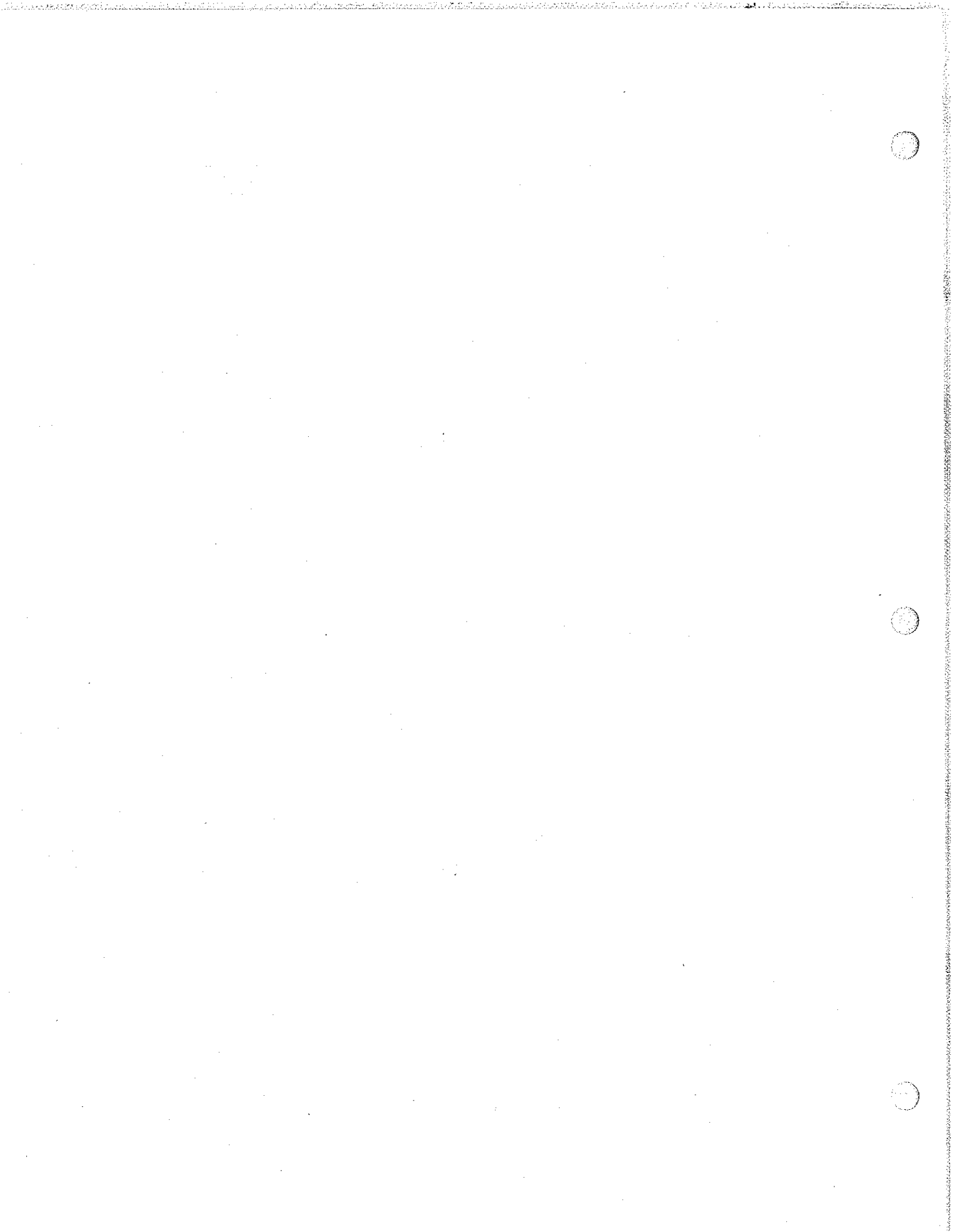
10. These challenges include budgeting, forecasting, and the integration of financial data with other business systems.

11. The final section concludes with a summary of the key findings and recommendations for improving financial management.

12. It stresses the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of financial practices.

NOTIFICATION :

Name	Address	Email Address	Telephone	FAX
Melanie Coulter, Executive Director – Windsor Essex Humane Society	1375 Provincial Road, Windsor, ON N8W 5V8	melanie@windsorhumane.org	519-966-5751	519-966- 2546



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF WINDSOR
Public Safety Standing Committee - Administrative Report

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

"The City of Windsor, with the involvement of its citizens, will deliver effective and responsive municipal services, and will mobilize innovative community partnerships"

LiveLink REPORT #: 15384 ACL/10884	Report Date: July 4, 2011
Author's Name: Sandra Bradt	Date to Standing Committee: July 20, 2011
Author's Phone: 519 255-6222 ext. 6532	Classification #:
Author's E-mail: sbradt@city.windsor.on.ca	

To: Public Safety Standing Committee

Subject: PSSC6/11 - Spay/neuter Voucher Program

1. RECOMMENDATION: City Wide: Ward(s): _____

THAT the Public Safety Standing Committee receive this report **FOR DECISION AND;**

THAT any action **BE REFERRED** to the 2012 budget process.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

N/A

3. BACKGROUND:

At their meeting of June 15, 2011 the Public Safety Standing Committee adopted PSSC6/11 which,

"Asks that administration **REPORT BACK** with budget estimates for a spay and neuter voucher program for low income cat owners which would bring about a potentially significant reduction in the cat population in the City".

4. DISCUSSION:

City Council and the community have discussed and debated animal control issues for over fifteen years. The Public Safety Standing Committee has requested details on the costs to provide a spay/neuter voucher program to allow low income guardians to alter their cats.

The provision of funding for the voucher program augments the initiative shown by the Humane Society in the building of their spay/neuter clinic. Municipal funding for vouchers shows public support to address the community problem of homeless cats.

Should a voucher program be adopted by City Council, Administration and the Humane Society will work together to develop an implementation plan, but some general considerations for the program are outlined below.

Reports regarding low-cost clinics state that users tend not to have an ongoing relationship with a private veterinarian. Therefore, a voucher program targetting low-income guardians is not cannibalizing the existing client base of private vets; it is bringing in new clients who would not otherwise be providing surgery for their animals.

Vouchers should be honoured at private clinics in the city, in addition to the Humane Society's new clinic. Private veterinarians and the Society would be given equal consideration under the program and all would be able to share in any potential revenue. Voucher recipients have a choice of service provider and can schedule appointments to suit their location and schedule. This system also provides additional opportunity to educate veterinarians as to the local animal welfare issues and allows established animal care providers to participate in a solution to the problem.

A study undertaken in Los Angeles and Vancouver reports that 94% of the cat owners who don't spay or neuter their pets do not do so because of cost. Another 1994 study stated that low-cost neutering doubles the number of owners who get their pets altered and reduces shelter intakes by as much as 50%. Petsmart Charities released the results of a new survey of pet parents who acquired a dog or cat in the previous year. 31% said that they didn't fix the animal because it was too expensive.

Although the recent percentage does not seem as compelling as the statistics from the early 1990's, it should be considered in the context that the survey was done in the United States, where there is much more access to low-cost spay/neuter clinics. These clinics are making surgery available for free or less than \$50. In reviewing information regarding spay/neuter, Administration found that many of the American low-cost clinics started in the mid-1990's. This increased access to affordable surgery may be the reason the statistic has dropped. In Canada, low-cost clinics are just beginning to open. Here it is difficult to find spay/neuter surgery for less than \$100. Should a similar survey be undertaken in Canada, the expectation is that the percentage rate for those who don't alter their animals because of the expense would be higher.

Between the Humane Society and the City of Windsor there are several methods by which to communicate the program to residents. These include pro-active media relations campaigns including news releases and news conferences, through the City and Society websites, outreach to poverty organizations such as Pathway to Potential, 311/211, and Society newsletters. Should other communications activities be required to ensure the success of the new program, consideration should be given to allocating adequate resources to do so.

311 reports that as of June 15, 2011, there have been 55 Keeping of Animals complaints, 19 of which were regarding cats. In 2010 there were 96 Keeping of Animals complaints, of which 48 were for cats. From 2005 when 311 began keeping statistics to present day, the department has registered 212 service requests and 150 information calls pertaining to cats. Although the City does not receive a large number of cat complaints, the Humane Society reports frequent calls related to stray/feral/homeless cats.

5. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

The decision to allocate any funding to a voucher program rests with City Council and the recommendation of this report is that any action on spay/neuter vouchers be referred to the 2012 budget process. The intent is that a voucher program be an annual consideration. However, the Committee and Council are reminded that there are many priorities competing for scarce financial resources.

The College of Veterinarians of Ontario prohibits any veterinarian from advertising his or her fee for services, including spay and neuter surgeries. Administration conducted a brief telephone survey and found that the average price to alter a cat was \$253.

Discussions regarding vouchers have suggested that the face value could be in the range of \$50 to \$75. Vouchers in amounts less than \$50 may not provide sufficient incentive for their use, but an amount of \$75 provides enough of a discount to make the fee manageable. City Council can choose to subsidize the surgeries to a small or large degree. As the entity left to deal directly with the unwanted cats, the Humane Society is advocating for vouchers in the higher amount of \$75 each. They also suggest that vouchers be issued in sufficient numbers to impact on the problem. The Society has submitted a letter of support for a voucher program, suggesting that there would be sufficient demand for 1500-2000 vouchers. The Society cautions that to offer less than 1000 vouchers may lead to frustration if residents cannot access vouchers once the program is announced. The support letter is attached to this report as Appendix B.

In anticipation of a discussion regarding vouchers, the City included the program in the RFP for animal control services. The Humane Society responded to the RFP quoting an administrative fee of \$2.50 per voucher.

The level of work involved with each voucher depends on the delivery method chosen. For example, a program which requires evaluation of an application and proof of income takes more time to administer than making a number of vouchers available on a first-come, first-served basis to residents, regardless of income. If a more simplistic delivery method is chosen, then the City could potentially administer the program within existing resources, thus eliminating an additional administrative fee.

The \$2.50 fee has been negotiated into the Animal Control contract and will be available to Council as an option should the decision be made in the future to partner with the Humane Society to deliver a voucher program.

Given the comments above, the options in the table presented below provide parameters for Council's consideration.

Option	Face value of voucher (\$)	Number of vouchers issued	Cost of voucher (\$)	Admin Fee (\$2.50 per voucher)	Total cost (\$)
1.	0	0	0	N/A	0
2.	50	2,000	100,000	5,000	105,000
3.	75	2,000	150,000	5,000	155,000
4.	253	2,000	506,000	5,000	511,000

Variations on Options #2, #3, and #4 are attached as Appendix A.

As previously noted, consideration should also be given to developing a comprehensive communication plan to inform the intended audience of the new initiative. Based on past programs delivered by the Communications unit, a preliminary cost estimate to develop a communications plan for vouchers ranges from a few hundred to several thousand dollars.

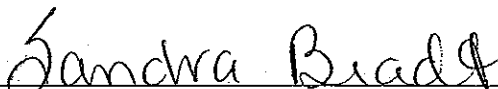
6. CONSULTATIONS:

Policy, Licensing and Gaming; Finance; Building (Compliance and Enforcement); Corporate Communications; and the Humane Society were consulted in the preparation of this report. Information regarding spay/neuter programs in other jurisdictions was also reviewed again.

7. CONCLUSION:

City Council has recently discussed a variety of options to address the issue of homeless cats, high euthanasia rates for cats, and responsible pet ownership in the City of Windsor. As directed, this report identifies the costs to deliver a cat voucher program targetting low-income guardians.

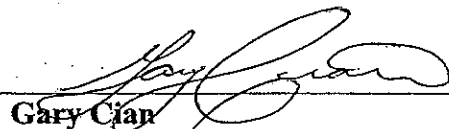
The annual budget process allows for the opportunity to introduce and fund new programs and services. Should Council decide to adopt a voucher program, Administration recommends that the discussion be referred to the 2012 budget.



Sandra Bradt
Corporate Policy Coordinator (A)



Valerie Critchley
City Clerk and License Commissioner



Gary Cian
Manager of Policy, Licensing & Gaming/
Deputy License Commissioner



Onorio Colucci
Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer



Lee Anne Doyle
Chief Building Official

SB

APPENDICES:**Appendix A – Voucher cost variation chart****Appendix B – Letter of support from Windsor-Essex County Humane Society****DEPARTMENTS/OTHERS CONSULTED:****Melissa Bainbridge, Branch Manager –****Barrie Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals****By-law and Enforcement Department – City of Greater Sudbury****James Wilke, City of Saskatoon****Town of Essex****P.A.W.S of Georgina, Keswick, ON****Animal and By-law Services, City of Calgary, AB****Hamilton/Burlington SPCA****Palm Beach County****City of Costa Mesa, CA****NOTIFICATION :**

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Melanie Coulter, Executive Director, Windsor Essex County Humane Society	1375 Provincial Road, Windsor, ON N8W 5V8	melanie@windsorhumane.org	519-966-5751	519-966- 2546
Jazzpurr Society for Animal Protection	647 Ouellette Avenue, Windsor, ON N9A 4J4	jazzpursociety@gmail.com info@jazzpurr.org	519-258-9299	
Lori Coulter, Program Manager Spay Our Strays		lcoulter@idexcorp.com	519-259-4261	
Ms. Mary Chaborek			519-948-2101	
Mr. Don Kearns		beginings@acm.net		

Appendix A – Cost Variations on Options #2, #3 and #4

Option	Face Value of Voucher (\$)	Number of Vouchers Issued	Cost of Voucher (\$)	Administration Fee (\$2.50 per voucher)	Total Cost (\$)
2.1	50	500	25,000	1,250	26,250
2.2	50	1,000	50,000	2,500	52,500
2.3	50	1,500	75,000	3,750	78,750
3.1	75	500	37,500	1,250	38,750
3.2	75	1,000	75,000	2,500	77,500
3.3	75	1,500	112,500	3,750	116,250
4.1	253	500	126,500	1,250	127,750
4.2	253	1,000	253,000	2,500	255,500
4.3	253	1,500	379,500	3,750	383,250



Windsor / Essex County Humane Society

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www.windsorhumane.org · info@windsorhumane.org

July 2, 2011

Public Safety Standing Committee
City of Windsor
Via email: sbradt@city.windsor.on.ca

Dear Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Windsor/Essex County Humane Society, I ask that the City of Windsor support a voucher program as outlined in the report prepared by administration, and include the amounts necessary to implement such a program in the 2012 budget.

As Council is aware, the Humane Society is in the process of constructing a veterinary clinic which will be focused on delivering a high volume of spay/neuter surgeries to the community. In other communities with similar clinics, admission and euthanasia at local shelters has dropped by more than 70 percent. With cat intake continuing to rise (on one day this week 43 cats were dropped off in a 10 hour period), the Humane Society is very excited about the opening of the clinic to help curb these rising numbers. The clinic will add to the efforts we have already made to increase the number of animals we are able to find homes for with a more welcoming adoption centre, extended hours, and an exceptional adoption package. Year to date, adoptions have increased 54% over this period in 2010 – another fact that we are very excited about.

Yet the fact remains that the Humane Society cannot solve the cat overpopulation crisis on our own. This is a community issue, and needs community solutions. If the City decides to adopt a voucher program, that program will further increase the number of cats in our community who are spayed or neutered, and thus help to reduce the overpopulation. It will also help to decrease the number of free-roaming cats. A study by Dr. J. Scarlett at Cornell found that sterilized pets are kept in the home two to three times more often than un-sterilized pets. More fixed cats in our community would not only result in fewer cats reproducing and increasing the population, but it would also decrease the number of free-roaming cats and their accompanying nuisance behaviours. A 2003 study in Michigan reported that 80 percent of the animals turned in to shelters statewide were unaltered. The correlation between shelter overpopulation and the need to provide spay/neuter programs is unavoidable.

We recommend that the minimum value of vouchers offered be \$75. The more affordable that the surgery is, the more willing residents will be to proceed with the surgery. Vouchers that covered the full cost of the surgery would be even more welcomed and effective, however, would increase the costs of the program substantially. However, an option to address that concern would be to require (as New Hampshire has) that veterinary clinics that participate in the

program discount their usual surgery costs by twenty percent. About three quarters of the veterinarians in the state participate in the program, likely because the reduction in fees is offset by the increase in business.

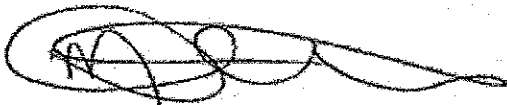
Another key question is the number of vouchers that the City should offer in order to make a difference. Based on population statistics, there are approximately 31,000 low income individuals in the City who would be eligible for the voucher program. Research indicates that more than half of all households have pet cats. Given these numbers, there is little doubt that there would be demand for 2,000 vouchers per year. However, we would support a program that offered 1,500 vouchers per year as well. Although there would still be a more limited benefit, we believe that a program offering less than 1,000 vouchers per year would lead to a great deal of resident frustration and complaints about their lack of access to vouchers once the available vouchers were distributed.

We at the Humane Society understand that City's desire to hold the line on taxes for your residents, however, we believe that this is a program that is long overdue. We have heard from many of your residents who believe that the City has an obligation to do more to address the cat overpopulation crisis than simply to provide animal control services that offer a place for people to deliver unwanted cat to. With the new Humane Society veterinary clinic opening in addition to a new voucher program, we would expect to see a drop in the number of unwanted cats within a few years. Over the longer term, this drop could help the City reduce costs spent on animal control. According to information from the state of New Hampshire (as reported in "Animal Control and Management - A Guide for Local Governments") taxpayers saved about \$3.23 for every dollar that the state spent on subsidized spay/neuter programs.

As noted by Administration, the Humane Society is willing to administer this program at a subsidized cost because we believe so strongly that the program is necessary and will make a difference. We anticipate that it will cost at least double the \$2.50 per voucher fee that we are charging to properly and effectively implement the program including steps to reduce the risk of fraud and abuse.

As stated by Mahatma Ghandhi, "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be measured by the way in which its animals are treated." We sincerely hope that the Committee and Council will decide to no longer be content with simply offering animal control services to your citizens, but to take real and lasting steps to reduce the number of unwanted animals and create a greater and more humane community.

Sincerely,



Melanie Coulter
Executive Director