



Date 29 July 2013

City Council Committee Report

To: Mayor & Council

**Fr: Charlotte Caron, Manager of Property & Planning
on behalf of the Deer Management Committee**

Re: Deer Hunting Season for 2013

Recommendation:

That Council hereby approves an amendment to the Discharge of Firearms By-law #148-2010 to authorize an extension to the areas in which deer hunting is allowed within City limits for 2013 for the period September 1, 2013 up to and including 15 December, 2013, with the following restrictions:

- Hunting shall be restricted to hunting of deer only south of Highway 17A (the By-pass);
- Firearms authorized to be used for hunting within City limits south of the by-pass shall be restricted to archery equipment as defined per the rules and regulations of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act;
- Hunters eligible to hunt within City limits south of Highway 17A (the By-pass) shall be restricted to those eligible to hunt under the Resident – Open Season, as defined within the Ontario hunting regulations;
- Hunters shall have all required licenses and courses and comply with the rules and regulations as set out in the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act and adhere to all related Provincial and Federal statutes;
- Hunting shall only be permitted on parcels of land of an area of five (5) acres (metric equivalent is 2.023428 hectares) or greater;
- Hunting shall be prohibited on all city owned land;
- Hunting shall only take place on either crown land or private property which lies within the designated hunting areas and related size restrictions;
- Hunters must obtain written permission to hunt on private land from the property owner and display written permission at request of a law or by-law enforcement officer;
- Discharging a bow and arrow within 75 metres of an occupied dwelling or roadway is prohibited;
- No bow and arrow shall be discharged in the direction of any human, roadway, structure or domestic animal within reasonable range of the

weapon at an angle which might allow the projectile to strike at, or dangerously near these objects;

- Field dressing shall be done in accordance with the wishes of the property owner and remains shall not be disposed of on City property; and further

That the appropriate by-law be passed for this purpose.

Background:

In 2011, the City amended its Discharge of Firearms By-law to allow bow hunting south of the by-pass for deer only for a trial period in 2011 with certain restrictions. This amendment was based on a recommendation from the Deer and Wolf Conflict Task Force which was formed following a number of concerns expressed by various members of the public. A report was submitted to Council on behalf of that task force. The contents and justification contained within that report have not been repeated within this one, other than the specific recommendations. It is worth noting that the recommendation was amended from the original report to eliminate the section contemplating allowing feeding of deer within City limits north of the by-pass.

Since that report was brought forward, this task force has continued to be active in implementing steps that will bring the City to a longer term resolution of the current deer issue within City limits. This includes:

- A public consultation session on September 15, 2011 to allow the public an opportunity for feedback into the trial hunting season for 2011
- Survey related to the fall hunt, gauging success of that hunt – the results were reviewed at the task force December 14, 2011 meeting, as well as discussion on changes that could be made in considering future hunts
- Recommendation approved by Council at their April 2012 meeting approving some updates to the City's Feeding of Wild Animals by-law for minor wording changes following a review which confirmed the enforceability of this by-law.
- May 16, 2012 task force meeting to update on status, provide discussion with regards to a recommendation to Council for a fall 2012 proposed hunt, as well as discuss the opportunity for a cull with representatives of the Ministry of Natural Resources or MNR
- Continued education strategy, including public service announcements from our media partners that provide seasonal information related to deer and related strategies for minimizing deer / human conflicts, as well as extensive distribution of the "got deer?" information pamphlet with pamphlets being made available at several local businesses and other locations.
- The committee met again on June 28, 2013 following attacks by deer on local citizens. Three citizens attended the meeting to describe the attacks and look for solutions.

This task force is recommending to City Council to allow a fall bow hunt south of the by-pass within City limits for deer for 2013, with some minor

amendments being recommended in comparison to the second hunt approved for 2012. These amendments are as follows:

- Extension of the hunting period to begin on September 1st, 2013 rather than October 1st. The hunt will once again end at the end of hunting season.
- Size of parcel of eligible property to be reduced from 4 hectares to 5 acres or 2.023428 hectares. The reduction is based on owners of smaller properties wishing to hunt on their properties.

The City received feedback during the public consultation session in September 2011 that the City should consider opening up City owned parcels as part of this hunt. The City owns a number of properties that are recreational in nature, as well as properties representing important partnerships. These properties should not be considered eligible for hunting purposes. Once these properties were removed, there were only a few small parcels of City owned land that could be considered. As such, the recommendation is being made to continue to exclude City properties from this hunt.

All other restrictions that applied to the 2012 hunt are recommended to remain in force for the 2013 hunt. They are as follows:

- Adhere to hunting regulations as strictly as possible – keep it simple
- Hunting shall be restricted to hunting of deer only south of Highway 17A (the By-pass);
- Firearms restricted to archery equipment to limit distance of firearm discharge
- Only Resident hunters eligible for expanded hunting areas
- Hunters shall have all required licenses and courses and comply with the rules and regulations as set out in the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act and adhere to all related Provincial and Federal statutes;
- Hunting prohibited on all city owned land;
- Hunting shall only take place on either crown land or private property
- Hunters must obtain written permission to hunt on private land
- Discharging a bow and arrow within 75 metres of an occupied dwelling or roadway is prohibited;
- No bow and arrow shall be discharged in the direction of any human, roadway, structure or domestic animal within reasonable range of the weapon at an angle which might allow the projectile to strike at, or dangerously near these objects;
- Field dressing shall be done in accordance with the wishes of the property owner
- Remains shall not be disposed of on City property

Budget:

It is anticipated that all related preparations, with the exception of advertising in advance of the hunt, can be coordinated through internal staff time, resulting in no incremental costs to the City.

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:

The City will continue to work on its communications strategy with regards to the urban deer issue. In addition, the hunting package information and maps will be updated based on the amendments, once approved by Council, and will be made available in conjunction with the fall hunt. Advertising, and a press release, will be made available closer to the start of the fall hunt.