



## The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh

Corporate Services & Clerk

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council

**From:** Laura Moy, Director Corporate Services & Clerk

**Date to Council:** October 8, 2019

**Report Number:** CS-2019-26

**Subject:** Dog Tag and Licensing Enforcement Program - 2019

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### Recommendations

It is recommended:

**That Report CS-2019-26 Dog Tag and Licensing Enforcement Program - 2019 be received.**

### Background

In accordance with the Town's Dog Control By-law No. 2003-91, as amended, every dog owner must make application, annually, for a dog licence(s). The licence will help ensure a dog's safe return should it be found running at large, or found and reported by a neighbour. The Dog Tag and Licensing Program (Licensing Program) is a protective initiative intended to offset the costs associated with regulating and controlling dogs running at large, providing a dog catcher and maintaining the Dog Pound.

In 2018, the dog licence (tag) fee was increased from \$15.00 to \$20.00 for dog tags purchased before March 31 and from \$30.00 to \$35.00 for tags purchased after March 31 each year.

In an effort to increase compliance with the Licensing Program and to create awareness of the new fees, additional enforcement services were recommended to ensure responsible dog ownership, by-law compliance and to maintain community safety. The enforcement services would further assist in updating the Dog Tag Registry for accuracy, future notifications and enforcement.

An agreement was entered into with the Commissionaires, a local enforcement service, to assist in the collection of the fees and updating the Dog Tag Registry for 2018. Following the

success of the 2018 campaign, funds were allocated in the 2019 Animal Control Budget to continue the Commissionaires' services.

## **Comments**

### **Public Awareness / Advertising**

In keeping with past practice, registered dog owners were notified by direct mail in December 2018 regarding the annual dog tag(s) licensing renewal. Notices were also placed in the local newspapers, as well as promoted on the Town's website, social media pages and in the annual Collection Calendar.

The Town's Everbridge callout phone system was also utilized to send a further 'friendly reminder' to registered dog owners to renew their dog licence prior to March 31 and in advance of the Commissionaires beginning a door-to-door canvass.

On March 5, 2019, a callout was sent to all residents who purchased a licence in 2018 and had not yet purchased a licence in 2019. Approximately 1,123 calls were sent to registered dog owners. Following the callout, 459 dog tag forms were received, either renewing or notifying that they no longer have a dog.

As well, the callout provided a further opportunity to update the dog registry for use in the Commissionaires' canvass.

A notice was placed in the May 23 and 24 publications of the Essex Free Press and Shoreline Week, respectively, to provide advance notice to residents that the Town would be conducting a door-to-door canvass.

A News Release was issued, along with promotion on the Town's website, social media pages and coverage was provided in the local media such as the Windsor Star. Reminders were given on the Town's social media during the canvassing period to bring continuous awareness that the Town had retained the services of the Commissionaires.

Information regarding the dog tag canvassing initiative was also conveyed to the OPP for their awareness and to assist with any inquiries they may receive from residents.

### **Commissionaires' Schedule**

The Commissionaires conducted a door-to-door canvass starting May 28 through to and including June 29, 2019. During the five-week period, the Commissionaires canvassed Tuesday through to Saturday. Taking into consideration residents' varying work schedules, shifts were scheduled as follows:

Tuesday and Thursday 12:00 pm – 7:00 pm;  
Wednesday and Friday 1:00 pm – 8:00 pm; and  
Saturday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm.

Shifts included the Commissionaires' travel time to and from the Windsor branch location, as well as rest breaks.

The Commissionaires, two (2) trained security guards wearing identifiable uniforms and having identification, worked together to canvass the remaining urban area north of County Road 22 that was not captured, due to time constraints, in the 2018 canvass.

Following concentrating in the remaining areas north of County Road 22, the Commissionaires then focused on areas south of County Road 22 for the remainder of the canvass. The Commissionaires successfully canvassed 3,679 homes during the 2019 canvass period. In 2018, the Commissionaires canvassed 3,584 homes.

The attached map provides an overview of the completed canvassed area following the five-week period. ([Attachment 1](#))

The light and dark green on the map symbolizes properties that were canvassed with the dark green indicating properties canvassed in 2019 and the light green denoting properties canvassed in 2018. The red indicates dog owners who had purchased a dog tag in 2018 and had yet to renew for 2019, as of the completion of the canvass. The purple depicts dog tags purchased at Town Hall in 2019.

## **Commissionaires Dog Tag Collection**

To effectively maximize and manage the efficiency of the Commissionaires' services, an 'App' was created by the Information & Communications Services Department using the dog tag database for the Commissionaires to record the canvassing and collection of dog tag fees. The App, accessed by a Town provided cell phone, allowed the Commissionaires to identify which properties had already purchased dog tags in 2019 and those that had yet to do so.

Using the App, the Commissionaires were able to select each property, indicate they attended that property, and if a dog(s) resided at the property, whether a dog tag was issued, the issued dog tag number and the method of payment, as well as provide notations. The Commissionaires also recorded if the owner was home or not home at the time of their visit.

The App was 'live' to allow Administration to view which area of the municipality the Commissionaires were canvassing and to provide for current data. If a dog tag(s) was issued at Town Hall as the Commissionaires were canvassing, the App would update to reflect same.

The Commissionaires provided residents with a Dog Licence Application, together with correspondence outlining the door-to-door initiative and explaining the Licensing Program. If a resident was not home at the time of the visit, an information pamphlet and application was left at their door.

Residents were able to provide payment in the form of cash, debit or cheque to the Commissionaires. Arrangements were made to provide the Commissionaires with a cash float and debit machine, for ease of payment. Alternatively, residents could have elected to return their Dog Licence Renewal Application and payment to Town Hall Offices in person or by return mail.

Following the five-week canvass period, the Commissionaires issued 107 dog tags at the door, generating \$3,745 in dog tag sales, for 2019. In 2018, 113 dog tags were issued by the Commissionaires at the door, generating \$3,505 in dog tag sales, inclusive of the \$20.00 and \$35.00 dog tag fees for new dog owners and existing dog owners purchasing after the March 31 deadline, respectively.

In addition to the dog tags issued at the door, approximately 228 dog tags were issued at Town Hall during the canvass initiative. Information pamphlets left by the Commissionaires and/or social media posts and local media coverage contributed to the increased responsiveness.

By comparison, 388 dog tags were issued at Town Hall during the inaugural 2018 canvas initiative.

The canvassing also provided an opportunity to bring awareness of the Licensing Program to new home owners and/or new dog owners.

The additional enforcement services provided by the Commissionaires successfully contributed to increasing compliance with the Licensing Program. A summary of the dog tags purchased over the past three (3) years is as follows:

	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Tags</b>	1,050	1,478	1,627 (to date)
<b>Revenue</b>	\$20,452	\$36,506	\$36,090 (to date)

Improved accuracy of the Dog Tag Registry was a further benefit provided by the service. Following the 2018 canvass, the updated database provided appropriate notification to residents and, in turn, more dog owners purchased their tag prior to March 31 which is reflective of the 2019 dog tag fees paid to date. Additionally, greater awareness of the Town's Licensing Program was achieved through the canvass initiative.

With customer service at the forefront, the dog tag and licensing enforcement initiative provided a convenient opportunity for residents to purchase their dog tag(s) at their doorstep and/or notify the Town should they no longer have a dog, resulting in increased compliance and updated records.

## Consultations

Information & Communication Services  
Financial Services  
Commissionaires

## Financial Implications

Funding of \$10,000 was included in the 2019 Animal Control Budget for the Commissionaires' services. When preparing the 2019 Budget, the cost of the service was estimated to be recoverable from fees collected for 300 new dog tags at the \$35.00 late dog tag fee (\$10,500).

The five-week canvass period cost for the Commissionaires' services was \$11,310.49, including HST. Minor miscellaneous incidental costs for the debit machine rental and Town cell phone were also incurred.

At the conclusion of the canvassing initiative, approximately 335 new dog tags were issued, inclusive of late fee and new home owner/new dog owner tag fees, exceeding the estimated 300 tags needed to recover the Commissionaires' cost (approx. \$11,725 [335 new dog tags x \$35.00 late fee]).

## Link to Strategic Priorities

Applicable	2019-22 Strategic Priorities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make the Town of Tecumseh an even better place to live, work and invest through a shared vision for our residents and newcomers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that Tecumseh's current and future growth is built upon the principles of sustainability and strategic decision-making.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Integrate the principles of health and wellness into all of Tecumseh's plans and priorities.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steward the Town's "continuous improvement" approach to municipal service delivery to residents and businesses.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate the Town's leadership role in the community by promoting good governance and community engagement, by bringing together organizations serving the Town and the region to pursue common goals.

## Communications

Not applicable

Website  Social Media  News Release  Local Newspaper

This report has been reviewed by Senior Administration as indicated below and recommended for submission by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Prepared by:

Christina Hebert, BA (Hons), MA, Dipl. M.A.  
Manager Committee & Community Services

Reviewed by:

Laura Moy, Dipl. M.M., CMMIII HR Professional  
Director Corporate Services & Clerk

Recommended by:

Margaret Misek-Evans, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Administrative Officer

<b>Attachment Number</b>	<b>Attachment Name</b>
1	2019 Commissionaires Dog Tag Canvass Map