



Executive Committee

Scoop Lewry Room, 2nd Floor, City Hall

Monday, June 11, 2018

To commence immediately following the City Council Meeting.

TO: MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mayor F. Tolmie

Councillor C. Warren, Chairperson

Councillor C. Froese

Councillor S. McMann

Councillor D. Mitchell

Councillor B. Swanson

Councillor D. Luhnig

Please be advised that Chairperson, Councillor Warren, has called an Executive Committee meeting on Monday, June 11, 2018 immediately following the City Council meeting in the Scoop Lewry Room, 2nd Floor, City Hall, in order to deal with the following:

AGENDA

1. Report dated May 22, 2018 from the Department of Parks and Recreation, **re: Request for Exception to Bylaw No. 5432.**
2. Confidential Matter.
The confidential procedural matter may be considered in closed session pursuant to section 94(2) of *The Cities Act* as it contains information that is within one or more of the exemptions in Part III of *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, in particular section 17 and 18.
3. Confidential Procedural Matter.
The confidential procedural matter may be considered in closed session pursuant to section 94(2) of *The Cities Act* as it contains information that is within one or more of the exemptions in Part III of *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, in particular section 15.

The Next Standing Committee Meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 25, 2018 (provided there are items to consider).



City of Moose Jaw

COMMUNICATION #NA

TITLE: Request for Exception to Bylaw No. 5432

TO: Executive Committee

FROM: Parks & Recreation Department

DATE: May 22, 2018

PUBLIC: This is a Public Document.

IN-CAMERA: Not applicable to this Report.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Executive Committee approve the use of sheep and goats for noxious weed control in Britannia Park on an annual basis.

JUSTIFICATION FOR IN-CAMERA

Not applicable to this report.

TOPIC AND PURPOSE

To request that Executive Committee approve the keeping of sheep and/or goats in Britannia Park for the purposes of noxious weed control, particularly the control of leafy spurge.

BACKGROUND

No past actions relating to sheep or goats by Council or a Committee could be found. There are currently horses being kept in Britannia Park.

DISCUSSION

Leafy spurge is designated a noxious weed under *The Weed Control Act* (ss 2010). The subdivision of Britannia Park, which is primarily used as pasture land, has an ongoing infestation of leafy spurge. This infestation decreases the value of the land as it reduces the quality of the pasture. Additionally, there is risk that the infestation may spread to surrounding areas, creating further problems.

In previous years the leafy spurge has been controlled by the Parks and Recreation Department with the herbicide Tordon 22K. This herbicide was previously subsidized through the Invasive Plant Control Program, allowing the City to purchase the herbicide at 50% of the normal price. This program has been modified for 2018 so that cities are no longer able to claim expenses related to noxious weeds, leading the Parks and Recreation Department to look for alternative control methods due to the cost increase. In 2017 the City spent \$6,451.20 on leafy spurge control. To apply the same amount of chemical in 2018 will cost approximately \$10,655.00 due to the increase in cost of the herbicide.

Sheep and goats have been proven to be an effective tool for control of leafy spurge. The sheep and goats are able to eat the leafy spurge and other noxious and nuisance weeds that are unpalatable to other grazing animals such as cattle and horses. This prevents the leafy spurge from setting seeds and weakens the plants, reducing their ability to spread and increasing the likelihood of plant mortality. Additionally, the forage plants, such as native grasses, present in the pastures are able to recover from grazing more quickly than the weeds, increasing their competitive advantage and further hindering the growth of the weeds. This is a significant advantage over applying herbicides, which also kill many non-target broadleaf plants and damage trees, shrubs and grasses.

Several cities, including Calgary, Edmonton, and Fort Saskatchewan, are currently using either sheep or goats as a way to control noxious weeds. These programs have been successful both from a weed control and public relations perspective.

OPTIONS TO RECOMMENDATION

- Approve only the keeping of sheep for the purposes of noxious weed control.
- Approve only the keeping of goats for the purposes of noxious weed control.
- Do not approve the keeping of sheep or goats for the purposes of noxious weed control and continue to use herbicides exclusively.

PUBLIC AND/OR STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Several parcels of land in Britannia Park have been leased out. Under the lease agreement, the lessees are responsible for noxious weed control on the lands they lease. Letters have been sent out reminding lessees of their responsibility to control leafy spurge. This year's letters included an invitation to participate in the sheep pilot project, with the lessees paying for half the cost of the sheep used on the land that they lease. This is in the collaborative spirit that the Parks and Recreation Department has used in previous years, when we offered to cover the total cost of herbicide if the lessees used our contracted herbicide applicator. We believe that this collaborative spirit has helped encourage lessees to take thorough action in managing leafy spurge.

The Parks and Recreation Department acknowledges that we lack the appropriate knowledge in-house to properly manage and care for a herd of sheep or goats. Staff has been in contact with the Ag Knowledge Center and the Saskatchewan Sheep

Development Board, who will assist with the initial project planning and finding a suitable herd and shepherd with whom the City may enter into a contract.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Lessees of land in Britannia Park have been notified by mail of the possibility of the Parks and Recreation Department using sheep or goats for leafy spurge control and have been invited to participate in the pilot program. If the program goes forward, those interested in participating in the program will be notified by mail prior to the start of the program.

A press release will be distributed in conjunction with the beginning of the program to notify the public that the Parks and Recreation Department is using sheep or goats to help control the spread of leafy spurge and reduce our pesticide use.

STRATEGIC PLAN

This report supports the Strategic Priority of Community Wellness.

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

This report supports Objective 13.1 (b) of the City of Moose Jaw Official Community Plan:

“To manage all forms of the open space system in a planned and environmentally sensitive manner.”

BYLAW OR POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Bylaw 5432, Keeping of Animals Bylaw prohibits the keeping of goats and sheep within City Limits. However, section 4(k) states, “Special exemption may be applied for, in writing, through the Committee and approved by Council.”

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The exact cost of using sheep or goats for weed control in Moose Jaw is not known at the time of writing and will depend on the number of lessees who respond to the invitation to participate in the pilot program, as the number of acres will determine the size of the herd required. Funds will come out of the approved budget for noxious weed control.

PRIVACY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable to this report.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable to this report.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice pursuant to the Public Notice Policy as incorporated into the City Administration Bylaw No. 5175 of 2016 is not required.

PRESENTATION

VERBAL: X

AUDIO/VISUAL:

NONE:

ATTACHMENTS

Not applicable to this report.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Sarah Regent

Sarah Regent, Parks Gardener

SR/

APPROVAL OF REPORT RECEIVED

COMMENTS RECEIVED

Ted Schaeffer

Ted Schaeffer, Director of Parks & Recreation

Brian Acker

Brian Acker, Acting City Manager

Fraser Tolmie

Fraser Tolmie, Mayor