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MEETING OF FEBRUARY 9th, 2016

FROM: Senior Peace Officer Mark Becker

DATE: February 9, 2016

Subject: Enforcement Services 2015 Annual Report

FILE:

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for the Town of Slave Lake Enforcement Services to report on 2015 activity.

BACKGROUND

2015 Year End Review

Staffing

In 2015, Enforcement Services had some changes in staffing. Senior Peace Officer McDonald resigned from his position in May. Peace Officer Becker filled the position and became the new Senior Peace Officer. Peace Officer Gantz, formerly one of the Animal Control Officers, but trained as a Community Peace Officer 2 (CPO2), filled the full time position as the new Level 1 CPO. CPO Gantz will still be required to complete the six weeks of CPO 1 training and is currently only able to enforce nonmoving traffic violations and bylaws until he is appointed a CPO2. Animal Control Officer Colt Pierson continues to work as a part-time Animal Control Officer, and has picked up the extra hours.

Policy Development

The Province of Alberta Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General (SOLGEN) suggested that all Peace Officer agencies establish a "Body Worn Camera" "BWC" Policy as new technology is developing in their use and how videos are stored and pulled for court and disclosure purposes. SOLGEN also suggested Peace Officer agencies establish a policy for the arrest, control and detention of persons to establish identity with respect to bylaw offences and provincial statutes that are on the peace officer's appointment. Policies are currently being developed as part of the standard operating procedures for the peace officers.

Legal

Legal advice was obtained as to when court orders should be utilized to remedy properties with statuses ranging from severe neglect to simple grass calls. There was a suggested streamlined process that could be utilized, that does not involve court orders.

As a result of the advice obtained, we have implemented a procedure that will result in quicker action if compliance is not reached.

Legal counsel was utilized for several bylaw matters for trial in 2015. These files range from animal abuse/neglect, animals at large, dog attacks and unsightly properties. With the economic down turn, there is an increase of severe property neglect as a result of mental health issues (i.e. depression) therefore leading to the start of unsightly property investigations which sometimes, as a last resort end up in the court system. The Crown's Office will not prosecute any municipal bylaw therefore it is up to the enforcement agency to obtain counsel for prosecution. The same can be said for the increase of animal abuse and neglect files. Files such as these are on the rise. We have noticed the majority of these files are triggered by persons suffering mental health challenges. The issues range from depressions, persons failing to take their prescribed medication etc.) Therefore these files may result in animal neglect investigations where in rare cases may reach a criminal level.

January-May

During the winter months, the call volume was steady for public complaints and assisting the RCMP with motor vehicle collisions. Snow removal complaints were low, however calls remained steady in response to internal and public calls for service relating to abandoned vehicles on the road. Internal calls from Public Works were usually generated during snow removal when equipment operators observe vehicles on the road that appeared to have been sitting stationary for several months. Compliance to move the vehicles was 90% with the remaining 10% of vehicles being ticketed and towed.

In March officers from all enforcement agencies joined together to conduct "Joint Force Operations" (JFO's) in the area. The law enforcement partners include the RCMP, MD Peace Officers, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement, Fish and Wildlife, Conservation Officers and Slave Lake Peace Officer's. Several violation tickets were issued relating mostly to uninsured and unregistered motor vehicles, suspended drivers, lose load violations, etc.

In May, a fire was ignited in the Lesser Slave Lake region in the area of the Old Smith Highway and was significant enough to warrant immediate evacuations of homes in the area. Slave Lake Peace Officers provided RCMP co-response to that area and assisted them until their services was no longer required. Animal control services was also provided to the MD and made the pound available for any pets requiring a home during the evacuation time.

In May also Animal Control joined Animal Rescue in their open house at the Treatz R Uz building. A total of 88 dogs were registered.

June-September

During the summer months, traffic enforcement was steady and the enforcement was conducted as per the Alberta Traffic Safety Calendar. JFO's were continuous during this time, partnering with the RCMP, MADD, EMS, and Victim Services, EPIC, and Provincial

Officer's speed, car seat violations, alcohol and impaired driving were targeted. Speeds on highway 88 and 2 remain high. These offenders are often from out of town and are just travelling through Slave Lake.

Peace Officer's partnered with Slave Lake RCMP and MD Peace Officer's to step up patrols during Riverboat Daze. Regular traffic enforcement, community patrols and foot patrols were conducted throughout the community. Riverboat Daze was an uneventful evening in terms of criminality against persons or property.

October-December

September was back to school and Peace Officers partnered with Slave Lake EMS in the school zone safety blitz during the first few weeks of September. There is high compliance in school zones relating to speed, crosswalk safety and parking. With the number of verbal warnings issued, CPOS found that very few tickets were written.

Peace Officer's adjusted their shift for community patrols during Halloween night. No tickets were issued and people were exercising caution while driving and walking in the dark.

DISCUSSION

It is important to note that a file is created whenever an event takes up significant officer time or response. This past year Enforcement Services has seen an increase in calls. There were 704 calls for 2015 and in 2014 there was 642, an increase of 62 files.

In the attachment slide show, the statistics show that Enforcement Services had investigated 167 complaints from the public and created 78 files by conducting self-generated files.

Out of the 704 files, 129 of them were animal control related. The remaining files consists of traffic related matters, vehicle seizures, arrests, jfo's and summons issued.

Legal costs this year was significant for enforcement. This was due to a provincial directive to create policies relating to BWC's and an arrest policy. Other legal costs is for the prosecutions of municipal bylaws in court, which is not covered by the Crown's Office. Some courts costs may be recovered through the victim of crimes fund which is available to the organization once a court case has been finalized. This process however cannot be a reliable source of revenue as it depends solely on the decision of a justice.

OPTIONS

RESOURCE IMPACTS

Legal costs for 2015 were close to \$12,000 with only \$2,000 budgeted.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

No Policy Impacts

COMMUNICATIONS

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

To accept report as information.

MOTION

Motion: To accept report as information

1.

Attachments

1) 2015 Statistics

Report Prepared by:

Report Approved for Council by:

**Sr. Peace Officer Becker
Enforcement Services**

**Brian Vance
Chief Administrative Officer**

