
2016 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

Assessment of Staffing Complement for Overnight and Weekend Enforcement of Noise By-law

Issue/Background:

Budget Committee requested the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards (ML&S) provide a budget briefing note assessing the staffing complement necessary to provide overnight and weekend enforcement of the Noise By-law, whether through additional full time employees or shift changes.

Key Points:

- ML&S enforces the Noise By-law through the Investigation Services, By-law Enforcement and Animal Services units.
- Investigation Services is responsible for enforcement of the Noise By-law for noise generated by activities such as construction, outdoor concerts and noise emanating from private residences; By-law Enforcement is responsible for enforcement of noise issues emanating from bars, nightclubs, restaurants and parks; and Animal Services is responsible for enforcement of noise issues related to barking dogs.
- Utilizing existing staff complement, Investigation Services extended its' hours of coverage for weekdays (6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.) and implemented a weekend day shift of 4 MSO's (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) in September 2015. This change was made without an impact to current service levels related to response times.
- The current hours of work for the By-Law Enforcement team, including responding to noise complaints at licensed establishments are Sundays to Thursdays (6:00 am to 11:00 pm); Fridays and Saturdays (6:00 am to 3:00 am the next day); and Holidays (8:00 am to 4:00 pm.).
- The mobile enforcement team in Animal Services is on duty 7 days a week (7:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m., the next day). The night shift is primarily responding to animal cadaver removal from the public realm.
- An analysis of the noise-related service request data shows that ML&S received approximately 12,600 noise related service requests in 2015. This represents 13% of the total volume of service requests received by the division.
- Approximately 77% (9,000) of these calls are directed to Investigation Services.

- An initial review of the data indicates that approximately 4,000 calls are received during off-duty hours. However, a more detailed review of the calls is necessary to determine the nature of the complaints and whether valid enforceable contraventions were reported or identified.
- A change in shifts utilizing existing complement is possible, but may result in a negative impact to the current service levels for overall response, as there are limited service requests that could be reasonably addressed through the night.
- To mitigate an impact to current service levels, additional staff positions would be required.
- A more comprehensive analysis of the data including validating complaints, volumes and sources/locations of noise is necessary in order to provide an accurate estimate of the number of enforcement staff necessary, whether from existing complement or new staff positions.
- The implementation of a night shift to provide 24/7 coverage would require additional Supervisory personnel, and an operational change from the current practice for response to an immediate response model would also have staffing and potential technological impacts.
- The current wage and benefits expense for a Municipal Standards Officer (MSO) is approximately \$94,000. The current wage and benefits expense for a Supervisor is approximately \$115,000. These are exclusive of any additional costs for uniforms, vehicles, equipment, etc.
- An assessment of the operational and/or technological enhancements necessary to implement an immediate response to service requests would need to be undertaken.
- It is important to note, that ML&S has just completed a comprehensive review of Chapter 591, Noise and is submitting a report to the January 22, 2016 meeting of Licensing and Standards Committee.
- It is anticipated that the proposed amendments, should they be adopted by City Council, will assist in mitigating some of the more frequent causes of overnight and weekend noise, i.e. construction related noise due to continuous concrete pours.
- The results of these changes may mitigate the instances of noise throughout the overnight and weekend hours, which would also impact call volumes and staffing estimates.

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