

Executive Summary

Purpose:

- Ban the sale, and/or give-a-way of Dogs/Puppies and/or Cats/Kittens in Toronto pet shops and/or retail markets/market places.

Overview:

- The purpose of this ban is to reduce the number of unwanted pets in Toronto and help promote the humane treatment of dogs and/or cats.

Recommendation:

- To ban the retail sale of dogs and/or cats in Toronto shops, flea markets, and/or any other retail shop or retail market place/venue. Registered humane societies and rescues would be exempt and may charge an adoption fee and use pet supply retail outlets for adoption purposes. The pet supply shops would be exempt from the by-law ban.

Letter of Support from Dr. Kenneth Hill, DVM

Background

Research based upon,

- Pet Shops in Toronto
- This ban is a very significant step.
- Toronto Animal Services
- Example of other animals the city banned from Pet Shops
- Statistics from the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (CFHS).
- Information from the Ontario SPCA
- Information from the Toronto Humane Society

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Date: April 27, 2010

Committee Chair: Howard Moscoe
Licensing and Standards Committee
100 Queen Street West
10th floor, West Tower
Toronto, ON
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Title

Ban the sale, and/or give-a-way of Dogs/Puppies and/or Cats/Kittens in Toronto pet shops and/or retail markets/market places.

Overview

The purpose of this ban is to reduce the number of unwanted pets in Toronto and help promote the humane treatment of dogs and/or cats. Housing puppies and/or kittens in a pet shop is not a healthy environment for the animal and may result in future behavioural problems. The Animal Services section on the Toronto.ca website suggests *that if you choose to purchase a pet from a breeder, take the time to observe both of the pet's parents. Observe temperament and behaviour; these are good indicators of your pet as an adult.* However, in a pet shop the puppy's/kitten's parents are not on site. The Toronto Sun reported that 25,003 dogs and cats were euthanized by the city's animal services between 2002 and 2007, the most recent years data is available. (<http://www.torontosun.com/news/torontoandgta/2009/04/01/8957591-sun.html>). For these reasons alone, banning dogs and cats from being sold in pet shops is an important step for happier and healthier pets.

Recommendation

To ban the retail sale of dogs and/or cats in Toronto shops, flea markets, and/or any other retail shop or retail market place/venue. Registered humane societies and rescues would be exempt and may charge an adoption fee and use pet supply retail outlets for adoption purposes. The pet supply shops would be exempt from the by-law ban.

The ban would also include giving away dogs and/or cats in hopes to entice people to purchase other items in a shop.

The pet shops that currently sell dogs/cats will be provided a one year grandfather period to sell the dogs/cats they already have in their inventory. However, those pet shops would not be allowed to sell any new dogs/cats after council approves this ban.

Amend the Toronto Municipal Code, Licensing, Article XX – Pet Shops, by banning the retail sale of companion pets (dogs and cats) from pet shops, flea markets, and/or any other retail store exempting registered humane societies and rescue organizations, including pet retail operations where animals from humane societies and rescue groups display their animals for adoption purposes. Chapter 349 – Animals may also need to be amended.

I would ask this is matter be brought before the committee at their August meeting and I would request to be permitted to make a deputation.

Regards,
Dean Maher

Toronto Veterinarian Support (letter)

Dr. Kenneth Hill, DVM
Bloor Mill Veterinary Hospital
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Etobicoke, ON
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April 9, 2010

To Whom it May Concern;

I am a practicing Veterinarian (1986 graduate of the Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph) who owns and run a small animal Veterinary Hospital here in Toronto. Over the past 24 years I have provided service to thousands of clients who have brought their kittens and puppies to me for examinations. In addition, prior to entering Veterinary school, I was employed at several Toronto region Pet Stores and have considerable insight into their workings behind the scenes. For these reasons, I have been asked to provide my professional opinion in regards to a by-law being introduced by Dean Maher (Ward 20) which seeks to prohibit the sale of dogs and cats via pet stores.

As a Veterinarian, one of the most difficult and sad times for us occurs when we must explain to the new owner of a recently acquired puppy or kitten that we have identified a potentially serious health or behavioural problem. Unfortunately, Veterinarians across Toronto face this situation on a much too frequent basis. This is particularly a problem

with puppies and purebred kittens purchased from pet store environments as they seem to be disproportionately over-represented.

The demand of the market results in puppy/kitten mills whereby animals are kept solely for breeding purposes to make profits with little or no concern for their well-being. Offspring produced can suffer from an array of breed specific genetic conditions because of poorly regulated breeding programs. Shutting down the sale of puppies/kittens through pet stores will have an impact on eliminating these often cruel practices which are required to meet the demand for the supply of pets through the retail market.

In my experience, staff at pet stores are often poorly trained and not equipped to provide prospective pet owners with sound advice regarding the type of pet which is best for their household. This results in pet owners who become dissatisfied with their pet or who are unable to cope with breed-specific behaviour and health issues. Dogs and cats are then prone to suffer neglect or in worse case scenarios show-up in veterinary offices to be euthanized. The problem is further exacerbated by impulse buying. Kittens and puppies are irresistibly cute and appealing and consumers buy without consideration to the long-term commitment required for responsible pet ownership.

I am fully supportive of Dean Maher's new by-law to prohibit the sale of dogs and cats via pet stores. I believe this by-law would have a major impact on reducing animal cruelty and suffering. It has the potential to reduce the numbers of puppy/kitten mills and promote more thoughtful and responsible pet ownership. There are millions of loving pets euthanized annually at Humane Societies and Animal Shelters across North America because there are not enough people to adopt the volume of animals going through the system. Through public education, Mr. Maher's by-law can help reduce dog and cat over-population and increase the number of homes available to rescued animals.

Yours Sincerely,
Dr. Kenneth Hill, DVM
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Toronto Veterinarian Support

Dr. M. Samson, Kingston Road Animal Hospital
Kelly Gredner, Registered Veterinarian Technician

Background

Reason 1.

As of March 28, 2010, there were 27 registered pet shops in Toronto.

City of Toronto Pet Shops

Street	City	Operating as:
2149 WESTON RD	YORK, ON	MARTHA'S PET & AQUARIA
549 PARLIAMENT ST	TORONTO, ON	MENAGERIE PET SHOP
590 GERRARD ST E, BSMT	TORONTO, ON	WONG'S AQUARIUM
739 OSSINGTON AVE	TORONTO, ON	OSSINGTON PET SHOP
280 SPADINA AVE, #1-BSMT	TORONTO, ON	DOWNTOWN AQUARIUMS CO
2300 YONGE ST	TORONTO, ON	PJ'S PET CENTRE
25 THE WEST MALL, G3-BOX 195	ETOBICOKE, ON	PJ'S PET CENTRE
300 BOROUGH DR, #28B	SCARBOROUGH, ON	PJ'S PET CENTRE
835 EGLINTON AVE E	EAST YORK, ON	PETSMART #935 CRITTER'S CASTLE PET SHOPE
1607 QUEEN ST E	TORONTO, ON	MAPLE GARDEN AQUARIUM
673 GERRARD ST E	TORONTO, ON	PJ'S PET CENTRES
3291 YONGE ST	TORONTO, ON	PET CORNER
404 OLD WESTON RD, #124 & 125	TORONTO, ON	PJ'S PET CENTRES
3401 DUFFERIN ST	NORTH YORK, ON	GROOM PET SHOP
2203 BLOOR ST W	TORONTO, ON	THE FRIENDS PET SHOP
328 SILVERTHORN AVE	YORK, ON	REPTILE KINGS
5418 YONGE ST, #14	NORTH YORK, ON	PET'S PARADISE
5555A DUNDAS ST W, B 206-208	ETOBICOKE, ON	333 PET DEPOT INC
4779 STEELES AVE E, B07	SCARBOROUGH, ON	PETM CANADA
12 WILLIAM KITCHEN RD	SCARBOROUGH, ON	TUNG HOI AQUARIUM CO.
4465 SHEPPARD AVE E, #7	SCARBOROUGH, ON	FEED ME MORE PET FOODS
451 CHURCH ST	TORONTO, ON	M & J AQUARIUM
2101 BRIMLEY RD, #101	SCARBOROUGH, ON	ALL REPTILES
1911 KENNEDY RD, #99	SCARBOROUGH, ON	PETS 153
1925 EGLINTON AVE W	YORK, ON	DOG CARE WONDERLAND
383 FRONT ST W	TORONTO, ON	HAPPY TAIL
5 NORTHTOWN WAY, #3	NORTH YORK, ON	

Two pet shops offer adoptions that promote, and assist, registered humane societies and/or shelters. Eleven pet shops sell dogs and/or cats. I learned of these eleven shops by calling all 26 shops on Sunday, March 28, 2010 posing as a customer interested in purchasing a puppy and/or kitten.

One of the pet shops had no phone number and I had to email. That pet shop later emailed me back and explained that I would have to visit their location to learn about the puppies. I copied a picture from their website and attached it to this letter. It is the first picture of a puppy in the steel cage.

On April 18, 2010 I visited another pet shop I called and took a picture of two Toy Poodle puppies. The enclosure had a glass front door with an opening near the bottom for air flow. If there was a ventilation system within these enclosures I could not see it.

I have requested Toronto Animal Services to investigate these two pet shops. I was concerned the two pet shops were not in compliance with by-law, The Toronto Municipal Code, Licensing, Article XX - Pet Shops, section 545-249, E, 3a and 3b.

§ 545-249. Regulations for pet shops.

Every keeper shall comply with and ensure compliance with the following requirements in the operation of the pet shop kept by him or her:

E. Every cage or other container used for the keeping or housing of any animal or bird shall:

(3) In the case of all other cages or containers, have a floor of either solid or wire mesh construction or any combination thereof, provided that:

(a) All spaces in wire mesh shall be smaller than the pads of the foot of any animal confined therein;

(b) Any such wire mesh shall be of a thickness and design adequate to prevent injury to any such animal.

The next two pictures show the floor as a wire mesh that does not look like it is smaller than the pads on the puppy's feet. The names of those two pet shops have not been included because my request for an investigation is under review by the Toronto Animal Services. Only Toronto Animal Services can conclude if these pet shops are not compliant with Regulation 545-249.

Although there are only eleven known licensed pet shops in the City of Toronto selling dogs and/or cats, you can see the potential problems from just two of them.





Breed: Toy Poodle
DOB: 3/11/2019
Gender: F
Price: \$1050

Reason 2.

This small step is a very significant step.

Banning the retail sale of dogs/cats from Toronto pet shops will not make a major reduction in unwanted pets, shut down puppy mills, or stop some people from over-breeding their dogs for profit (backyard breeders). However, when Canada's largest city imposes this ban; other municipalities can take Toronto's lead and implement their own similar ban. As more municipalities do pass this ban, then there will be a significant reduction in unwanted pets. This may shut down puppy mills because the shops they sold to can no longer accept their puppies. Pet Brokers will also not be able to use puppy/kitten mills to sell dogs/cats to pet shops. .

Reason 3.

Toronto Animal Services (TAS)

This ban may help the TAS achieve their goals included in the notes for the Municipal Licensing and Standards, Analyst Briefing Notes, for the 2010 Operating Budget (documented February 16, 2010 for the Budget Committee).

The total for Toronto Animal Services (TAS) is (Recommended Gross Budgeted Amount) \$11,412,000 and the recommended Net Budgeted Amount is \$7,407,500. This ban may help the TAS by improving education and promoting responsible pet ownership.

TAS also wants to increase the number of licensed dogs and cats and promote responsible pet ownership through public education and the enforcement of City and other animal related regulations and by-laws. Banning the retail sale of companion pets (dogs/cats) can help promote responsible pet ownership by encouraging people to investigate which pet is best suited for them instead of having them impulse purchasing a pet shop puppy and/or kitten based on their "cuteness" factor.

Toronto Animal Services (TAS) - notes from the Operating Budget

- Sheltering, impounding and providing medical care for stray animals.
- Providing lost and found animal services.
- A 24-hour emergency response in assisting sick or injured animals and animal threats.
- Animal sterilization.
- Investigating and enforcing the animal related provisions of the Municipal Code and The Dog Owners' Liability Act.
- Licensing of dogs and cats with 94,800 and 46,700 licenses targeted for 2010 respectively.
- Develop a cat (stray & feral) over-population strategy and promote cat adoptions.
- Explore partnership and sponsorship opportunities towards improving service to pets in the City.
- To increase the number of licensed dogs to 60% and cats to 30% by 2012.
- To ensure that 100% of all dogs and cats adopted from TAS are sterilized.

Reason 4.

Toronto City Council can approve such a ban; they have already banned some animals from pet shops.

§ 545-260. Regulations concerning the sale of poultry.

No keeper shall:

- A. Sell or permit the sale of any dyed chick or other dyed live poultry;
- B. Sell or permit the sale of any chick, duckling or other live poultry in quantities fewer than 12 per sale; or
- C. Sell, give away or otherwise dispose of any chick, duckling or other live poultry as a bonus to a sale of, or as part of a sale of, any other goods, products or services.

Reason 5.

This is an excerpt from the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (CFHS).

Positioning Statement listed on their website,
(http://cfhs.ca/info/companion_animals#link_eight)

#8. Sourcing for Acquiring a Pet

The CFHS strongly advocates the adoption of animals from reputable shelters, rescue organizations or their satellite adoption centres. The CFHS also accepts the acquisition of animals from responsible breeders.

The CFHS condemns puppy mills and opposes the sale of cats and dogs in markets or pet stores other than satellite adoption centres. The CFHS also disapproves of large-scale commercial breeders and ‘backyard breeders’.

Banning the sale of dogs/cats in a pet shop is a first step in the ongoing problem of too many unwanted pets. Below are statistics showing there are too many dogs and cats being admitted and euthanized. With the cost (both in dollars and animal life) there is no need to sell more in a pet shop and add to the problem.

(http://cfhs.ca/athome/shelter_animal_statistics/)

Statistics were collected from August till October 2009. Results were received from 100 shelters – 88 of these were humane societies/SPCAs, including BC and Ontario branches and 12 were rescue organizations. This represents about a 60% response rate from humane societies/SPCAs.

The latest statistics for 2008 confirmed by the National Shelter Statistics 2008

Animals	Dogs		Cats	
Total Admitted	36,651		84,301	
Died in Shelters	304	0.8%	1,537	1.8%
Total Euthanized	6,962	19%	45,388	54%

Reasons for Euthanasia:	Dogs		Cats	
Physically or Behaviourally Unhealthy	60%		60%	
Physically or Behaviourally Healthy	6%		9%	

Reason 6.

This is an excerpt from the Ontario SPCA website showing we need to address the overpopulation of unwanted pets and selling them in a pet shop is not needed, (<http://www.ontariospca.ca/5-faqs.shtml#B1>)

Sadly, in some cases animals may be euthanized due to shelter overcrowding. Overcrowding threatens the lives of all the animals in our care due to stress, weakened immune systems and increased risk of disease transmission. This requires us to make difficult decisions about euthanasia based on health, physical, emotional and psychological suffering, and the best interests of the hundreds of animals receiving lifesaving care in a facility. In 2007, 1.2 percent of the dogs admitted to our branches were euthanized due to overpopulation. 9.6 percent of admitted cats and 14.1 percent of small animals, such as mice, rabbits, guinea pigs and hamsters, were also euthanized due to space limitations. These numbers can be reduced with the help of the public.

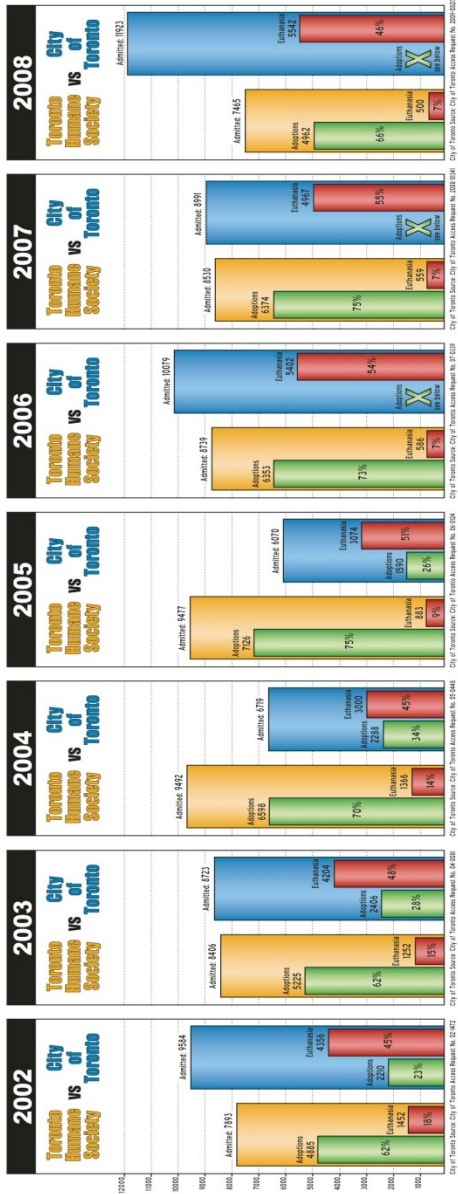
Reason 7.

The Toronto Humane Society (THS)

Information provided by Ian McConachie, Senior Communicator
For 2009 the stats for the Toronto Humane Society are:

Admitted 4701 cats & 1382 dogs
Euthanized 394 (6.4%)

Combined Cat & Dog Activity Comparison 2002-2008



City won't tell anymore

Note: These graphics compare adoption and euthanasia activities for dogs and cats combined. The charts do not show other activities such as lost animals claimed by owner, etc.

There are numerous reasons why this ban would make sense and I have only provided a small fraction of those reasons. Since there are only eleven registered pet shops selling dogs and/or cats this would not be a major financial impact on the pet shop business in Toronto because they can easily sell other products. We can also offer the grandfather period to help sell the current stock of dogs/cats in retail shops. This ban is the right thing to do and I believe the majority of Torontonians would support it.

Regards,

Dean Maher

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