



**REPORT TO THE
PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF FEBRUARY 22, 2012**

SUBJECT REGIONAL DEER MANAGEMENT

ISSUE

Proposed Terms of Reference for a Regional Deer Management Strategy.

BACKGROUND

Reports were presented to the Planning, Transportation and Protective Services committee (PT&PSC) on January 26, 2011, June 22, 2011 and October 26, 2011.

Background research was conducted on the deer population in conjunction with the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) and various ministries to establish a quantitative and qualitative snapshot of the current situation. This information was provided to PT&PSC in October. In response to the October report, the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board moved:

“That staff be directed to prepare the terms of reference for a Deer Management Plan, to include any applicable solutions from the goose management strategy, and seek out partnership interests to prepare and fund the plan and that staff report back to the Planning, Transportation and Protective Services Committee within three months.”

Staff has considered the CRD goose management strategy as well as the recently approved deer management plans of other BC communities, including Cranbrook and Penticton and the *British Columbia Urban Ungulate Conflict Analysis Summary Report for Municipalities* (the Hesse report). Staff has investigated funding opportunities but until the terms of reference are approved and the Board is ready to commit to the strategy development process, it's difficult to obtain funding commitments. Staff and the committee chair will be in a stronger position to negotiate government or private funding opportunities once approved terms of reference are in place.

Terms of Reference (ToR) for the development of a Regional Deer Management Strategy (RDMS) are appended as Attachment 1 to this report. The ToR propose a citizen-based approach to the development of a strategy, supported by an expert resource working group over a concentrated time period of March to July, 2012. The proposed Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) will be the body that guides the development of the RDMS. Effectively the CAG will be tasked with preparing and recommending the management strategy and action plan to address the deer-human conflicts in the region. Their final recommendations will be brought to the Board through the PT&PSC.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Staff be directed to finalize the Terms of Reference appended to Report No. PPS/RP 2012-01 for a Regional Deer Management Strategy in accordance with the following:

- a. that a citizens' group-based approach be used, supported by an expert working group and regional staff;
- b. that the CAG be composed as described in Attachment 1;
- c. that the RDMS includes consideration of the management options and measures as set out in Attachment 1;
- d. that the Communications and Consultations strategy consist of an online campaign as described in Attachment 1, followed by the option of a statistical survey after the Citizens' Group recommendations are reported to the Board; and
- e. that the additional costs associated with the development of the RDMS be budgeted at \$40,000, with \$20,000 allocated to the online campaign and provision for an additional \$20,000 at the option of the Board for the statistical survey.

And further, that the committee recommend to the Board the support of a single supplementary requisition for the Regional Planning 2012 budget of \$40,000.

2. Staff be directed to finalize the ToR appended to Report No. PPS/RP 2012-01 for a Regional Deer Management Strategy as in Alternative 1, with the following substitutions:
 - a. That the CAG be composed as described in Attachment 1 with the Chair as a Regional Board member and one alternate Director as a member;
 - b. That the RDMS includes the management options and measures as set out in Attachment 1, with exceptions, as directed by the committee;
 - c. That the Communications and Consultations strategy consist of an online campaign as described in Attachment 1, but not a statistical survey;
 - d. That the additional costs associated with the development of the RDMS be limited to \$20,000 in Attachment 1.

And further, that the committee recommend to the Board the support of a single supplementary requisition for the Regional Planning 2012 budget of \$20,000.

3. Staff be directed to finalize the ToR appended to Report No. PPS/RP 2012-01 for a Regional Deer Management Strategy, in accordance with instructions received at the meeting of the PT&PSC on February 22, 2012.
4. Receive Report No. PPS/RP 2012-01 for information and take no further action at this time.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Attachment 1 contains the proposed ToR for the development of a Regional Deer Management Strategy (RDMS). The ToR will be finalized once key directions as noted in Attachment 2 are provided by committee on a number of alternatives.

As proposed in the ToR, the full range of management options provided in the Hesse report will be considered by the CAG, including: conflict reduction, population reduction, fertility control, and status quo.

Proposed communications and consultations on the management options will be done through an online campaign utilizing the CRD website and dedicated e-mail address in conjunction with an online discussion board for interactive information exchange. Once the CAG has made

recommendations to the Board on the RDMS, the option of a statistical survey of recommended management options and measures may be undertaken at the Board's discretion. Such a survey would be carried out by a professional polling firm like Ipsos Reid or Malatest to provide an indication of community support for the recommendations of the CAG.

While staff also considered the consultation option of community events and workshops to be conducted by the CAG, it was felt that this technique might be necessary during implementation. Carrying out community events and workshops across the region would be time-consuming and burdensome to a volunteer citizens' group. It may also create expectations that the region has a higher role than one of coordinating a strategy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Considerable internal resources from the Regional Planning division will be dedicated to the RDMS process, including project management, information compilation and reporting as well as communications and administrative support. Communications and consultation support will be provided by the Corporate Communications staff with respect to the online campaign and public survey. Both cash and in-kind resources from these divisions are required to support the process.

Cash costs for the RDMS have not been budgeted in the Regional Planning 2012 budget. Support for additional cash costs of \$20,000 is required should committee opt only for the online campaign for communications and consultations. Following the report of management measures to the Board, where the option of conducting a statistical survey is supported, additional cash costs of \$20,000 are required, for a total of \$40,000 as a single supplementary to the Regional Planning budget.

It is noteworthy that the process will be supported by considerable external in-kind contributions of time and expertise from the CAG members and the expert working group members. Without their cooperation and assistance, the process would not be viable.

CONCLUSION

Staff has prepared ToR for a Regional Deer Management Strategy using a citizens' group-based approach as recommended in the Hesse report and used in other BC communities. The ToR are appended to this report, complete with appendices with proposed working group members, process timeline and proposed terms of reference for the CAG. Additional cash funding has not been found to support the process, so staff has endeavoured to keep costs contained through substantial in-kind contributions (both internal and external) and internet and survey based communications and consultation approaches. While the statistical survey is expensive, it will yield statistically valid public opinion on the proposed measures to inform the Board.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Planning, Transportation and Protective Services Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board that:

1. Staff be directed to finalize the Terms of Reference appended to Report No. PPS/RP 2012-01 for a Regional Deer Management Strategy in accordance with the following:
 - a. that a citizens' group-based approach be used, supported by an expert working group and regional staff;
 - b. that the citizen advisory group be composed as described in Attachment 1;
 - c. that the RDMS includes consideration the management options and measures as set out in Attachment 1;
 - d. that the Communications and Consultation strategy consist of an online campaign as described in Attachment 1, followed by the option of a statistical survey after the citizens advisory group recommendations are reported to the Board; and
 - e. that the additional costs associated with the development of the RDMS be budgeted at \$40,000, with \$20,000 allocated to the online campaign and provision for an additional \$20,000 at the option of the Board for the statistical survey.
2. Support of a single supplementary requisition for the Regional Planning 2012 budget of \$40,000 be approved.

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Attachments: 2