

Whitchurch-Stouffville politicians consider licensing cats in 2003

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
Staff Writer

Is Big Brother about to sink his claws into Whitchurch-

Stouffville's cats?

Last week, town council backed a staff recommendation to look into licensing

cats. When making the recommendation to council, town clerk Michele Kennedy pointed out that the cost of animal control, which includes cats, is about \$100,000 a year and rising.

Under the current Municipal Act, municipalities have the ability to license dogs. However, as of Jan. 1, 2003, the new Municipal Act will have no restrictions pertaining to cats.

"If a municipality wishes to license cats, the municipality now has the power to do so," said Mrs. Kennedy.

Council asked staff to prepare a report dealing specifically with licensing cats. The report is to include the costs. A cat tag fee would be less for cats than it is for dogs — currently \$25 — Mrs. Kennedy suggested.

"Dog owners have long complained that it is unfair

that cats are not licensed," Mrs. Kennedy said. "Many cat owners are against licensing cats as they object to putting a collar on their pet," Ms. Kennedy pointed out. "There are breakaway collars on the market now that will come off the cat if the collar becomes caught."

"Many pet owners are irresponsible and so not take care of their cats," said Ward 6 Councillor Sue Sherban.

Neighbours fight with each other because cats roam and end up messing in neighbours' gardens, she added.

Ward 4 Councillor Cliff Dunkeld said his pets get better medical checkups than his kids get. Ward 5 Councillor Harry Bowes isn't convinced that cats need to be tagged. "The next thing you know, we'll be licensing my budgie," said Councillor Bowes.

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