
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report CLE-05-2024 Resolution from the City of Cambridge – Catch and Release Laws



For Consideration by Council in Committee on April 30, 2024

OBJECTIVE:

To provide Council with information regarding potential costs associated with requests for information from staff regarding non-municipal concerns, and to provide a high-level overview of resolutions passed by municipalities seeking support from Haldimand County.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report CLE-05-2024 Resolution from the City of Cambridge – Catch and Release Laws be received;
2. AND THAT Haldimand County Council supports the resolution from the City of Cambridge, dated February 14, 2024, Re: Catch and Release Laws;
3. AND THAT a letter of support be circulated to MP Leslyn Lewis, MPP Bobbi Ann Brady, and Chief Superintendent Dwight Thib (Commander, OPP West Region).

Prepared and respectfully submitted by: Chad Curtis, Municipal Clerk

Approved: Cathy Case, Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At the March 19, 2024 Council in Committee meeting, Haldimand County Council referred an item to support a resolution from the Council of the City of Cambridge regarding Catch and Release laws, to a future Council in Committee meeting. Haldimand County Council cited concerns with potential costs of the suggested program changes from the resolution and requested further information regarding budget implications from staff. As these types of resolutions are created and passed by Municipal Councils to advocate to higher levels of government for a cause outside the scope and expertise of municipal government and staff, staff are recommending Council support the original recommendation as it appeared on the March 19, 2024, Council in Committee agenda.

BACKGROUND:

At the March 19, 2024, Council in Committee meeting, a resolution from the City of Cambridge regarding Catch and Release Laws was brought forward to Council seeking its support. The resolution presented before Council read as follows:

1. THAT Haldimand County Council supports the resolution from the City of Cambridge, dated February 14, 2024, Re: Catch and Release Laws;
2. AND THAT a letter of support be circulated to MP Leslyn Lewis, MPP Bobbi Ann Brady, and Chief Superintendent Dwight Thib (Commander, OPP West Region).

Council referred this item to a future Council in Committee meeting in order for staff to investigate potential costs associated with changes to Catch and Release regulations. Information requested on costs involved in considering changes to provincial and federal legislation are unknown and not something that a municipality would readily have access to determining. Therefore, this report is to provide Council with general information on the topic of receiving advocacy motions from other municipalities, and how the process is intended to work.

ANALYSIS:

Haldimand County regularly receives resolutions sent from other municipalities and organizations across Ontario. A typical resolution from another municipality advocates to another body (e.g. the Provincial government) and highlights the concerns of the municipal Council, often proposes a solution and/or advocacy with respect to an issue that is outside of municipal authority. The solution or advocacy is often comprised of sending a letter of support to the government body that administers the issue, and other potential advocates. When received, these resolutions are placed on the Haldimand Council Agenda as part of the Information Package, by staff, for Council to review, and provides the opportunity for Council to request consideration of support for the resolution at a future Council in Committee meeting.

It should be noted that these resolutions are typically created by Councillors in response to issues that are outside of the municipal sphere of influence. The resolutions create a forum for municipalities to advocate for concerns that affect their population, but are administered by higher levels of government. As a result, resolutions are typically written by Councillors with little to no input from staff or other subject matter experts, and are intended for the purposes of drawing attention to an over-arching issue that municipal Council and staff do not have the expertise or resources to adequately influence or investigate, but would like to advocate for change. Instead, it is the responsibility of the recipients of these requests, typically higher levels of government, to determine if conducting research into the matter at hand and amend legislation or policy is warranted. It would be the level of government with jurisdiction over the matter that would determine costs involved and make the decisions related to any changes, expenditures, etc. Municipal staff would only be expected to provide general information on the matter as it pertains directly to municipal operations. If there is an aspect of the resolution that falls within the subject matter expertise of Municipal staff, staff may then be directed to provide their expert recommendations on that aspect to Council through the report process.

The Catch and Release resolution from the City of Cambridge proposed the City Clerk of the City of Cambridge send a letter (the resolution for this item that appeared as an attachment on the March 19, 2024 Council in Committee agenda) to the following individuals and/or organizations:

- Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada;
- The Honourable Arif Virani, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada;
- Attorney General of Ontario Doug Downey;
- Ontario Solicitor General Michael Kerzner;
- MP Bryan May;
- MP Valerie Bradford;
- MPP Jess Dixon;
- MPP Bryan Riddell;
- Police Chief Mark Crowell;
- Waterloo Regional Police Service;
- All Ontario Police Associations and Police Departments;
- Ontario Provincial Police;
- All Ontario MPPs and MPs; and

- All municipalities in Ontario

It is the intention of this resolution to have the individuals/organizations listed above advocate to change the Catch and Release legislation, a matter that would fall into the jurisdiction of the Federal and/or the Provincial government. It should be noted that Catch and Release legislation does not fall under the sphere of municipal jurisdiction.

In addition to municipalities passing advocacy motions and seeking support from other municipalities, there are alternate forms of advocacy a municipal Council can utilize, as follows:

- Sending a letter to other levels of government from the Head of Council;
- Meeting with provincial or federal representatives to express concerns or convey information;
- Working with relevant associations to advocate on behalf of the municipality.

All of the above options have been utilized previously by Haldimand Council and are often preferred over supporting a resolution from another Council without having the full benefit of knowing the discussions that took place by that Council or the factual details relevant to a topic. The alternate methods are often better suited to tying an issue directly to the experiences of the municipality that is advocating. However, when a motion from another municipality is provided, asking for support on a topic, it is within Council's purview to choose to support it generally, by sending a letter indicating such.

Staff are recommending that Council vote on the referred resolution that appeared on the March 19, 2024 Council in Committee agenda. If Council wishes to support the City of Cambridge motion as presented, it can vote in favour of the staff recommendation in this report. If Council does not feel there is enough information or a desire to officially support the motion as presented, it may choose not to vote in favour of the recommendation.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

When Council chooses to advocate on a topic that is not within the sphere of jurisdiction that municipalities operate within, it may result in costs to the County related to resources necessary to research and report back on a topic of interest. The degree of costs is dependent on whether or not Council wishes to simply support a resolution without further research into it, or have further research and reporting completed. If the latter, costs may be attributable to staff time (also impacting other priorities that need to be temporarily put aside), and expert advice from external sources.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

Not applicable.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

REFERENCES:

None.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. City of Cambridge Catch and Release Resolution
2. Catch and Release Resolution – Draft