



The Corporation of the **City of Kawartha Lakes**
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Memo

To: Members of Council
From: Agricultural Development Advisory Board
Date: January 30, 2018
Subject: Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program

Recommendation:

That the Council support the correspondence from the Township of West Lincoln,

That the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs be further requested to amend their claim review process within the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program such that when reviewing claims, the provincial staff shall reach out to the local Municipal Investigator and the livestock owner to seek further clarification if a claim is in question, prior to rejecting a claim, and

That this motion be sent to the Township of West Lincoln, AMO, Jane Widdecombe OWDCP Program Administrator (OMAFRA) Guelph, Ontario, the Honorable Jeff Leal, Minister of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs, and Laurie Scott, MPP, Halliburton, Kawartha Lakes, Brock.

Background:

At the Agricultural Development Advisory Board meeting of December 14, 2017, ADAB reviewed correspondence regarding the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program received from the Township of Oro Medonte; Peterborough County; Laurie Scott, MPP; Jeff Leal, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; and the Township of West Lincoln.

The Township of West Lincoln was circulating notice of the following resolution:

Whereas Municipalities in Ontario are required to appoint qualified, experienced and independent Livestock Evaluators to investigate all incidents of domesticated livestock killed or ravaged by predators;

Whereas the Evaluator is charged with independently writing up a report and submitting it to the Municipality for furtherance to the Province of Ontario for processing and payment,

Whereas the Province does not send inspectors out to review circumstances pertaining to the loss of Livestock at the site,

Whereas the Provincial Inspectors can and do reject claims submitted by Municipalities based on review of written reports and after the fact pictures, without consultation with the Independent Livestock Evaluators appointed by each Municipality,

Whereas the system discredits the discernment of the municipally appointed Livestock Evaluators and further discredits the judgement and credibility of the Livestock Evaluator and sadly puts the credibility of every Ontario Farmer at question;

Therefore Be it Resolved that the Township of West Lincoln requests that the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, immediately commence sending inspectors out to the field to adjudicate all incidence of livestock loss OR rely on the Municipally appointed Livestock Evaluators for the accurate accounting of incidence of loss and use their reports to support the payment of loss due to predatory animals; and

That this motion be sent to AMO and circulated to all Municipalities in Ontario, Mr. Sam Oosterhoff, MPP, Jane Widdecombe, OWDCP Program Administrator (OMAFRA) Guelph, Ontario and the Honorable Jeff Leal, Minister of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs.

The Agriculture Development Advisory Board passed the following motion:

Rebecca Parker moved and Bruce McKeown seconded,

THAT ADAB recommends that Council support the correspondence from the Township of West Lincoln; and

THAT the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs be further requested to amend their claim review process within the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program such that when reviewing claims, the provincial staff shall reach out to the local Municipal Investigator and the livestock owner to seek further clarification if a claim is in question, prior to rejecting a claim.

Rationale:

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs undertook a review and re-design of the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program, and while improved design may have been achieved in part, livestock owners feel there are significant flaws in the new program which prevent some legitimate wildlife predation claims from being compensated. Further adjustments to the program are imperative to achieve fair compensation to livestock owners experiencing legitimate losses.