

NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

2. Prohibition of "No Pets" Clauses in Rental Contracts

Submitted by: Councillor Swanson and Councillor Fry

WHEREAS

1. Under the guidelines set forth by Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry, British Columbians have been strongly encouraged to practice physical distancing with all but one's own household. Social distancing is particularly difficult for seniors, under housed individuals, and those who live alone. It has become clear that pets can help ease this isolation;
2. COVID-19 has exacerbated an already existing problem: the current legislation discriminates against renters that have pets and are trying to find affordable housing in BC. The BC SPCA reports that "no pets" policies are the leading cause for surrender and abandonment of pets;
3. Ontario prohibited "no pets" policies in rental units, and this law has brought benefit to renters and pets for decades in Ontario. As the two provinces face similar pressures in rental housing, this model could be studied and applied within BC; and
4. The Renters' Advisory Committee has asked its liaison councillors to bring forward this resolution.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council ask the Mayor to advocate to the province for the prohibition of "no pets" clauses in rental contracts, and ask staff to look into what mechanisms the City can use to curb landlords' right to refuse rental on the basis of pet ownership.

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