

Monday, August 12, 2019

Subject: Additional Budget Request for 2019/2020
Gypsy Moth Program Coordination

Recommendation:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Report #2019-0049; and

THAT Council approve additional expenditures of \$21,550 to retain a forestry consultant for the purposes of completing fall infestation surveys, and coordination of the 2020 Gypsy Moth control program if required; and

THAT Council approve a 2019 Operating Budget adjustment to increase Supplemental tax revenue by \$25,000 and increase Beautification contracted services by \$25,000 with a net budget impact of \$0.

Background:

In response to the Gypsy Moth infestation in 2019 the Town of Pelham partnered with a local forestry consultant to coordinate two aerial applications of the biological insecticide Foray® 48B. To develop the spray program, infestation surveys were completed in April of 2019 under tight timelines in order to receive authorization and permits from Transport Canada and the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP), as well as coordination with the aerial spray provider. In all, the Town of Pelham sprayed 161.2 acres of public and private property within the urban boundary at a total cost of \$89,388.82+hst. Post spray surveys conducted in all areas that received aerial application have shown a reduction in caterpillars by 90% and tree defoliation (with some exceptions) of less than 20% which is considered very good to excellent, especially due to the initially severe Gypsy Moth infestation numbers. Without the spray program in place both public and private properties could have experienced greater than 80% defoliation by the caterpillars leading to the potential loss of large mature trees that would have long term impacts on the health of our urban forest.

Analysis:

Because little can be done to entirely halt the spread of Gypsy Moths, the Town of Pelham must continue to focus on the suppression of outbreak populations to protect our urban forest and canopy. While the aerial spray program was effective in reducing caterpillars and tree defoliation inside the spray zones, areas that received no control measures have experienced an increase in caterpillar and moth activity as the infestation has spread. Large numbers of Gypsy Moth caterpillars and moths have been reported in all areas throughout Pelham. Although there is some evidence to suggest the population has been affected by the Nucleopolyhedrosis virus (NPV) which indicates the population is unhealthy it is difficult to plan and budget effectively for next year without performing egg mass and infestation surveys this fall. Staff are currently working to develop an Integrated Pest Management and Urban Forestry Policy to be better positioned to respond to future infestations, however these should be considered long term goals as full implementation can take many years and will not assist in the current infestation. Performing infestation surveys in the fall will provide council and staff sufficient time to plan, coordinate, and communicate the control program in 2020 more efficiently.

Financial Considerations:

In April of 2019 an operation budget of \$25,000 was approved to control the Gypsy Moth infestation. The coordination of the rural and urban control program had a cost of \$9,972 and the cost of spraying municipal properties was \$11,578 for a total of \$21,550+hst. The remaining \$3,450 is not sufficient to perform infestation surveys and prepare and develop a budget for the control of gypsy moths in time for 2020 budget consideration. Staff are requesting additional funds of \$21,550 to accommodate the tendering of consultation services through the competitive bid process to complete fall infestation surveys, public open houses, spray zone development, and spray budget estimation for consideration in the 2020 budget process. The additional expenditure of \$25,000 would result in an unfavourable budget variance within the Beautification department – contracted services (expenditures would exceed 2019 approved budget). As of July 2019, Supplemental Tax Revenue has exceeded budget by over \$25,000 (a favourable budget variance). Supplemental tax revenue is predominantly a result of growth assessments received from MPAC during the year. This



excess revenue can offset the additional expenditures resulting from the gypsy moth control program. Staff recommend a 2019 Operating Budget adjustment to increase budgeted Supplemental Tax Revenue by \$25,000 and increase Beautification contracted services by \$25,000, resulting in a net budget impact of \$0.

Alternatives Reviewed:

The “do nothing” option was considered however the consequences of doing nothing have many environmental and social impacts including: increases in soil and stream temperature, increased run-off, reduction in air and water quality, loss of aesthetic value, enjoyment of property as well as increase costs to property owners for gypsy moth treatment, tree removal and replacement of dead or damaged trees and shrubs.

Strategic Plan Relationship: Build Strong Communities and Cultural Assets

The urban forest and rural woodlots are vital to increasing the quality of life within the Town of Pelham and are assets that set us apart from neighboring municipalities.

Other Pertinent Reports/Attachments:

N/A

Consultation:

City of Burlington – Urban Forestry

City of Hamilton – Forest Health

Forestry Canada

Legal Consultation, If Applicable:

N/A

Prepared and Recommended by:

From the Department of



Jason Marr, Director of Public Works

Approved and Submitted by:

David Cribbs, Chief Administrative Officer

