

Ministry of Agriculture and Food
BRIEFING NOTE FOR DEPUTY MINISTER FOR INFORMATION FOR MEETING WITH BC SPCA

Ref: 198356

Date: August 10, 2022

Title: Deputy Minister Meeting with British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA) Executive

Issue: BC SPCA Executive have requested a meeting with the Deputy Minister to discuss BC SPCA facility closures and capital construction, and the results of the farm inspection pilot.

Background:

The BC SPCA is a not-for-profit society and registered charity with the mission to protect and enhance the quality of life for domestic, farm and wild animals in British Columbia (B.C.). The role of the BC SPCA includes enforcement and community outreach. The BC SPCA was created in 1895, and it has authority under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* (PCAA) to conduct animal welfare inspection and enforcement activities. The PCAA is part of B.C.'s legislative framework that protects the welfare of domestic, livestock and working animals.

The BC SPCA is almost entirely funded by private donations. Over the last decade the Provincial government has provided over \$12 million in funding to the BC SPCA to support facility construction, repairs and upgrades, inspector and agent training, and pandemic response.

A meeting was requested with the Deputy Minister to discuss:

- 1) BC SPCA Commercial Farm Animal Inspection Pilot Program: Report to the British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture and Food (Report)
- 2) BC SPCA facilities update

Discussion:

Commercial Farm Animal Inspection Pilot Program

In a letter to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (the Ministry) dated June 23, 2021, the BC SPCA advised it was planning to complete unannounced compliance inspections of commercial turkey, pork, eggs, chicken, and beef farms. In April 2022, BC SPCA inspections were concluded. The Report (Appendix A) was submitted to the Ministry on August 2, 2022.

s.13; s.15

BC SPCA Facilities

The BC SPCA operates several facilities throughout B.C.:

- approximately 43 community animal centres (animal shelters),
- three farm animal recovery and adoption facilities (Surrey, Nanaimo, and Kelowna),
- one wild animal rehabilitation centre (Victoria),
- two veterinarian hospitals (Vancouver and Penticton),
- one provincial office (administration),
- two spay neuter clinics (Prince George and Kamloops), and
- two tri-cities education and adoption centres.

A facility review in 2013 by the BC SPCA, and updated in 2019 to include all BC SPCA facilities, resulted in their adoption of a long-range Facilities Development and Services Plan (FDSP). The FDSP seeks to improve or replace facilities over a 16-year period (2014 to 2029) at a cost of \$117.5 million. The first phase of FDSP is complete (2014 to 2018) and covered facility replacement or redevelopment at six facilities (at a total cost of \$18.97 million). The second phase of FDSP covers a five-year period (2019 to 2024), and the projected total cost of this phase is \$51.4 million. The latest version of the long-range FDSP has not yet been approved by the BC SPCA Board. See Appendix B for government funding for BC SPCA facility upgrades and repairs.

The BC SPCA recently announced, as of August 11, 2022, permanent closure of the Burnaby Veterinarian Hospital due to lack of licensed veterinarians in B.C. In addition, the BC SPCA community animal centres in Fort St. John and Quesnel have been closed due to facility structural issues.

The BC SPCA is currently advancing two capital projects, one in Cowichan and the other in Vancouver. In Cowichan, an existing community animal centre is being replaced and will also serve as an animal behaviour centre, the first of its kind in Canada. In Vancouver, the largest capital project in the history of the BC SPCA^{s.17} is being undertaken to replace and upgrade the provincial office, Vancouver animal shelter, and Vancouver Animal Hospital and Education Centre.

Suggested Response:

- Thank you for sharing the Pilot Program Report. I have asked Ministry staff to review the Report.

- Thank you for sharing the updates on BC SPCA facilities. I would be interested to review the revised long-range Facility Development and Services Plan once it is approved by the Board.
- Specific grant requests for facility repairs or upgrades will need to be submitted to my office for review by Ministry staff and consideration by the Minister.
- Thank you for meeting with me today. The Ministry appreciates the work and dedication of the BC SPCA in ensuring the welfare of domestic, livestock and wild animals in B.C.

Contact: Jacqueline Cushing, Senior Policy Analyst, 778-974-2976

A/DIR LY A/ED BO DM PP

Appendix B – Summary of Past Government Funding for BC SPCA Facilities

Past government funding received by the BCSPCA for facilities:

Fiscal Year	Amount (in millions)	Description
2020/21	1.463	Funding for Animal Care Facilities, pandemic response.
2016/17	5.000	<p>Contribution to new facilities construction. The grant was allocated to two projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal care facility in Prince George, including community animal care centre with facilities for seized companion animals, and an emergency facility. • Flagship BC SPCA campus in Vancouver which will include a large community animal centre, veterinary hospital, and provincial office. <p>A \$5 million grant will remain intact in a capital fund until construction on one or both projects begins. Precise allocation of \$5 million to each project is currently unavailable.</p>
2014/15	5.000	<p>To fund repairs and upgrades to several facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelowna – large animal recovery and adoption barn (\$100k) • Surrey – cat intake and seizure facility (\$400k) • Nanaimo – community animal centre (\$1.3M) • Castlegar – community animal centre (\$900k) • Dawson Creek – community animal centre (\$800k) • Kamloops – community animal centre and vet hospital (\$1.5M)